AN ANALYSIS OF THE BURIAL RITES CONFLICT BETWEEN AGIRIAMA CHRISTIANS AND AFRICAN RELIGIOUS ADHERENTS, KILIFI COUNTY KENYA

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Religious studies of Pwani University

NOVEMBER, 2018
DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university or any other award.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents Pascal Charo and Mariam Pola, my grandparents Mangi Mariaka and Kadzo Mangi and my daughter Rehema Nduku.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to the Almighty God, the creator of the universe, whose faithfulness has been my strength and courage.

I am deeply indebted to all the people who have supported, guided and influenced me during the difficulty time of producing this work.

My supervisors, Prof. Stephen Muoki Joshua and Dr. Tsawe-Munga wa Chidongo for providing the necessary guidance, critical comments, insight, constant encouragement, supportive attitude and their patience throughout the study.

I appreciate the participants for their willingness to spend their valuable time and to take part in this study to share their experiences.

My husband Pastor Altred Musya, thank you for allowing me to undertake this study. Our children Elisha Muasya, Naomi Kavata and the entire family who joined me in prayer which made me complete this study.

I also thank my colleagues in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies for the cooperation during my study.
ABSTRACT

This work is an analysis of the burial rites conflicts between Agiriama Christians and the adherents of ATR in Kilifi County Kenya, a case study of PEFA. The objectives of the Study were: i) to analyze the Agiriama A.T.R adherents’ burial rites. ii) To analyze the Agiriama Christian burial rites. iii) To establish areas of conflict between the Christians and the ATR adherents’ burial rites practices. iv) To determine suitable methodology of addressing the differences between the Christians and ATR adherents’ burial rites practices among the Agiriama community. The study was guided by inter-faith dialogue theory and Native/non-Native relations by Jonathan Napier and ‘the interpretation of culture’ theory by Clifford Geertz. These theories were used together with some biblical texts for better understanding of the problem. Secondary materials such as books, journals and articles were used to gather the necessary information. The study equally utilized some primary sources gathered through oral interviews, focus group discussion and participant observations. Through snow ball sampling technique seventy respondents of Agiriama community took part in the study. The study sample comprised of pastors, church elders, kaya elders and some bereaved family members. The data was analyzed in the themes following the objectives, thus forming the chapters of the study. The findings include: the similar burial practices between the Christians and the adherents of ATR, are treatment and care for the sick, prayers, unity preparing the body upon death, breaking the news of a death and burring the body. The differences include many restrictions to the close family member, categorizing death, and the funeral songs, talking to the dead, the belief that death is a rite of passage, the burial of young babies and the way the body is laid in the tomb. The study recommends that more research on the topic be carried out for more clarification of the findings.
# TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION AND APPROVAL ........................................................................................................ ii  
DEDICATION ........................................................................................................................................ iii  
ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................................................ v  
LIST OF TABLES ............................................................................................................................... xiii  
LIST OF PLATES ............................................................................................................................... xiv  
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION ..................................................................................... xv  
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS ......................................................................................... xvi  
CHAPTER ONE ..................................................................................................................................... 1  
INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................................... 1  
1.1 Background information .............................................................................................................. 1  
1.1.1 The Concept of Death ............................................................................................................ 1  
1.1.2 The Agiriama People ............................................................................................................. 7  
1.1.3 Agiriama Religious Beliefs on Death .................................................................................... 9  
1.1.4 Causes of death .................................................................................................................. 11  
1.1.5 Burial Rituals ...................................................................................................................... 12  
1.3 Statement of the Problem ........................................................................................................... 14  
1.4 Objectives of the Study ............................................................................................................... 17  
1.4.1 General Objective ............................................................................................................... 17  
1.4.2 Specific Objectives .............................................................................................................. 17  
1.5 Research Questions .................................................................................................................... 17  
1.6 Rationale of the Study ............................................................................................................... 18  
1.7 Scope of the Study .................................................................................................................... 19  
1.8 Literature Review ...................................................................................................................... 19  
1.8.1 Agiriama Worldview on Death and Funeral rites ............................................................. 19
1.8.2 Christian Concept of life after death ..............................................................27
1.9 Theoretical Framework ....................................................................................33
1.10.2 Study Area and Population ..........................................................................38
1.10.3 Sampling Procedure and Sampling Technique ..............................................38
1.10.4 Secondary Sources ......................................................................................41
1.10.5 Primary Sources ..........................................................................................42
1.10.6 Participant Observation ...............................................................................43
1.10.7 Focus Group Discussion ..............................................................................46
1.10.8 Interviews and Interview Schedules ............................................................48
1.10.9 Data Presentation and Analysis ...................................................................49
1.10.10 Research Reliability and Validity ...............................................................50
1.10.11 Ethical Issues .............................................................................................51
1.10.12 Research Challenges ................................................................................52
1.11 Conclusion ....................................................................................................55

CHAPTER TWO ..................................................................................................57
THE AGIRIAMA BURIAL RITES AND PRACTICES ..............................................57
2.1. Introduction ...................................................................................................57
2.2 Agiriama Burial Rites and Practices ..................................................................57
2.3 Primary Burial Rituals Practices ......................................................................59
2.3.2 Breaking the news of a death ......................................................................61
2.3.3 Holding the ear/ Kugwirwa sikiro .................................................................64
2.3.4 Shaving the hair of the deceased .................................................................68
2.3.5 Washing the deceased ................................................................................70
2.3.6 Agiriama mortuary rites ..............................................................................72
2.3.7 Guarding the body ......................................................................................74
2.3.8 Preparations for burial .......................................................... 75
2.3.9 Dressing the deceased .......................................................... 77
2.3.10 viewing the Body/ kuona mwiri ....................................... 79
2.3.12 Consultations (Njama) .................................................... 82
2.3.13 Vigil/ Kuchesa ................................................................. 84
2.3.14 Instructions for closer relatives ........................................ 86
2.3.15 Singing/ maira ga hanga.................................................... 88
2.3.16 Digging the Tomb/ Kitsimba mbira ................................ 90
2.3.17 Burial/ Kuzika ................................................................. 94
2.3.18 putting the body in the grave ........................................... 96
2.3.19 Closing the tomb/ kusirira mbira .................................... 99
2.4 Post Burial Rites .................................................................. 100
2.4.1 Washing Jembes and the Burial attendants ...................... 100
2.4.2. Agiriama Mourning Days ............................................... 101
2.4.3 Shaving the hair/ kunyola nyere ....................................... 108
2.4.4 Slaughtering animals .......................................................... 109
2.4.5 Cleansing the home and the mourners/ Kuzizinya mudzi .... 110
2.4.6 Throwing of the death/ Kutsuha Kifo ............................... 113
2.4.7 Remembrance/ Ukumbusho ............................................. 117
2.4.8 The significance of Death and Funeral rituals .................. 121
2.5 Conclusion .......................................................................... 122

CHAPTER THREE ..................................................................... 125

THE CHRISTIAN BURIAL RITUALS AND PRACTICES ............. 125
3.1 Introduction .......................................................................... 125
3.2. The Christian Burial Rituals .............................................. 126
3.2.1 Liturgy for Christian funerals ................................................................. 127
3.3 Rituals performed upon death .................................................................. 130
  3.3.1 Closing the Eyes, the mouth and trimming hair .................................. 130
  3.3.2 Death Announcement ........................................................................ 133
  3.3.3 The Christian death is death with Christ ........................................... 135
  3.3.4. Prayers ............................................................................................. 136
  3.3.5 Trimming of the Hair ......................................................................... 137
  3.3.6 Washing the body of the deceased ..................................................... 137
  3.3.7 Clothing the Deceased ..................................................................... 138
  3.3.8 Mourners Clothing .......................................................................... 139
  3.3.9 Vigil/Singing ...................................................................................... 141
  3.3.10 Theological Meaning for the Vigil .................................................... 142
  3.3.11 Grave Digging .................................................................................. 143
3.4 On the Burial Day .................................................................................... 144
  3.4.1 Speeches ........................................................................................... 144
  3.4.2 Eulogy / biography .......................................................................... 145
  3.4.3 Ritual for the Word .......................................................................... 148
  3.4.4 Viewing the Body ............................................................................ 149
  3.4.5 Singing .............................................................................................. 151
  3.4.6 Escorting the Body to the Grave ....................................................... 152
  3.4.7 Burial ............................................................................................... 153
3.5 Post Burial rituals ..................................................................................... 154
  3.5.1 Placing Flowers at the Tomb ............................................................. 155
  3.5.2 Prayers ............................................................................................. 156
  3.5.3 Tribute ............................................................................................. 156
3.5.4 Sharing the Wealth of the Deceased ................................................................. 157
3.6 Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 159
CHAPTER FOUR ........................................................................................................... 161
AREAS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND INDIGENOUS AFRICAN BURIAL RITUAL PRACTICES AMONG THE AGIRIAMA COMMUNITY ........................................................................................................... 161
4.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................... 161
4.2.1 Treatment for the sick ..................................................................................... 162
4.2.2 At the death bed ............................................................................................... 164
4.2.3 Death Calls for Togetherness .......................................................................... 165
4.2.4 Closing the Eyes and the Mouth ..................................................................... 169
4.2.5 Restrictions to the family members ................................................................. 171
4.2.6 Categorising death ......................................................................................... 172
4.2.7 The Christian and Agiriama songs .................................................................. 173
4.2.8 Talking to the dead ......................................................................................... 176
4.2.9 The belief in death as a rite of passage ........................................................... 177
4.2.10 Instructions for Close Relatives .................................................................... 179
4.2.11 Burial of young babies/ Kuzikaahoho ............................................................ 182
4.2.12 Putting the Body into the Tomb .................................................................... 184
4.3 The post Burial Rituals and Practices ................................................................. 184
4.3.1 Mourning Days ............................................................................................... 185
4.3.2 Shaving the Hair / Kunnyola Nyere ............................................................... 186
4.3.3 Throwing of the Death/Kutsuha Kifo ............................................................. 187
4.3.4 Remembrance /Ukumbusho .......................................................................... 189
4.3.5 Summary of the findings and further insights ................................................. 190
CHAPTER FIVE ........................................................................................................... 202
TOWARDS A DIALOGUE BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND THE A T R ON BURIAL RITUALS AND PRACTICES: THE SEARCH FOR A POSSIBLE SOLUTION

5.1 Introduction

5.2.2 A Way Out of the Conflict between Christianity and the A T R on Burial Rituals and Practices

5.3 The Urgent Need for a Dialogue

5.4 Proposal for a Dialogue as a Tool for Success

5.5 Benefits of the Inter-Religious Dialogue

5.6 Challenges of Dialogue with Christianity and ATR on Burial Rituals

5.6.2 Financial problem

5.7 CONCLUSION

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Summary of the findings and conclusions of the study

6.2.1 Primary burial rituals

6.2.2 The post burial ritual practices

6.2.3 The Christian’s burial rites practices

6.4 Recommendations for further research
APPENDICES .......................................................................................................................... 236

Appendix 2: Informed consent form..................................................................................... 240

Appendix 4: Confirmation and approval of Masters Research proposal ......................... 242

Appendix 5: Interview guide for the bereaved Adults......................................................... 243

Appendix 6: Interview Guide for Bereaved family members............................................ 245

Appendix 7: Interview Guide for Kaya Elders, Clan Elders ............................................ 247

Appendix 8: A map of Kenya to show where Mariakani is located ................................... 249

Appendix 9: Agiriama Funeral song..................................................................................... 250

Appendix 10. A giriama prayer for holding the ear............................................................ 251
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Categories of the Sampled Respondents..................................................41
Table 2: Mourning Days After burial .......................................................................101
Table 3: Similarities and differences of the two burial ritual practices .................190
Table 4: Differences and points of conflict...............................................................192
Table 5: Summary of how the three key questions were answered .......................209
LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: The researcher participated in activities such as cooking......................... 45
Plate 2: A cross section of a tomb................................................................. 93
Plate 3: Grave viewed from above................................................................. 93
Plate 4: Putting the body of Kahunda Ngala in the tomb .................................. 95
Plate 5: A religious specialist cleansing the home before burial ......................... 111
Plate 6: Feast for remembrance of the dead.................................................... 120
Plate 7: Mabumbumbu dance........................................................................... 120
Plate 8: Family members who had lost a grandmother................................. 140
Plate 9: Family members viewing the boy of their beloved grandmother ............ 149
Plate 10: Mourners gathering around the grave waiting for the body for burial .... 153
Plate 11: Family members, relatives and friends placing flowers on a sealed tomb .... 155
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIR</td>
<td>African Indigenous Religion also known as African traditional religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGDs</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEFA</td>
<td>Pentecostal Evangelical Fellowship of Africa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

(i) **African Indigenous religion** - refers to the indigenous religious beliefs and practices of the African people, excluding foreign beliefs and practices.\(^1\) In other words; indigenous religion is the African Traditional Religion, a religion which originated from Africa for the African people.\(^2\) For the case of this study, it is the traditional beliefs and practices of the Agiriama community which include those surrounding death and burial.

(ii) **Beliefs** - are strong feelings that something exists or is true, confidence that something is good or right-belief in God; an opinion about something that you think is true.\(^3\) The Agiriama adherents in traditional African religion have strong opinion about the performance of burial rituals and they are confident that to bury a person properly means performing the burial rituals.

(iii) **Burial** - it is an act of putting a dead body in its final resting place. For this study, the Agiriama adherents in African traditional religion, burying a person means putting the body in the final resting place and performing ceremoniously to ensure that the soul rest in peace in the world of ancestors.

(iv) **Conflict** - is a disagreement or an argument between two or more people; it is the differences between two or more ideas or wishes. It’s a situation in which there are opposing ideas, opinions, and feelings or wishes. For the sake of this study, it is a situation in which there are opposing ideas particularly cultural ideas specifically on burial rites.


\(^3\) Ibid.
(v) **Inter-religious dialogue** - Is discussions between two groups of people from different religious backgrounds. It is about people of different faith coming to a mutual understanding and respect that allows them to live and cooperate with each other in spite of their differences. The Agiriam Christians and the adherents of African traditional religion have to come together for discussion which will enable them to understand each other on matters concerning burial rituals.

(vi) **Practices** - a way in which the Agiriam Christians and the adherents of African traditional religion bury their loved ones.

(vii) **Rites** - traditional ceremony carried out particularly, for this study during death and burials.

(viii) **Rituals** - for the purpose of this study, are practices that are routinely performed in the similar way, in specific during death and burials. They can be performed by individuals, who may be religious specialists or as a group in this case, the mourners.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background information

This chapter gives the background of the study by examining the concept of death, life and rituals associated with death. It also discusses the background of the Agiriama and their worldview. It outlines the problem under investigation, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study. It also underlines the theoretical framework which guides the researcher and discusses the research methodology which was used to carry out the study.

1.1.1 The Concept of Death

According to the English Oxford dictionary, death can be defined as the permanent end of the life of a person or a living organism.\(^4\) One is said to be dead when the physical body ceases to function and starts to decompose.\(^5\) To Merriam Webster death is the cessation of all biological functions that sustain a living organism.\(^6\) Equally, Atinga explains that death is the cessation of breath that sustains a person’s life.\(^7\) Death is a return home, it is the finality of life which occurs when the vital breath ceases, the body decomposes, and the spirit goes to God the creator, man is soil and returns to the soil.\(^8\) The spirit returns to God who gives it.\(^9\) The soul returns to the unseen world.

\(^5\) Ibid.
\(^6\) The definition of death dictionary.com Retrieved on 13\(^{th}\) April 2018.
\(^8\) Good News Bible (Genesis 3:19).
\(^9\) Good News Bible (Ecc. 12:7).
where it came from. Death is the separation of the soul and the body. In the African worldview, death is seen as a transition from the visible to the invisible spiritual ontology where the spirit, the essence of the person is not destroyed but moves to live in the spirit of the ancestors’ realm. It means when a person is dead the spirit lives in the spiritual world. Gunga, S. argues that in African communities, death is seen as a great and irredeemable tragedy even when such death occurs in old age. This finality of life makes the human being feel frustrated as man desires to hold on to his life by every means possible, as there is the fear of the unknown.

According to Mbiti, it is not clearly known what really happens when one dies. Michael Karisa confirmed this by using a Swahili saying “Adhabu ya Kaburiajuaye maiti” by this he meant that only those who are dead can know what exactly happens after death. The concept of death among the Agiriama community in particular and many African communities in general is that of a journey with no return “endayekuzimu kauya” it means that he who goes to the world of the dead does not return. It is considered to be a return trip home. It is a departure going to the

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10 Good News Bible (psalms 9:17).
11 Ibid.
15Michael Karisa in an oral interview with the researcher on 21st April 2016 at Mariakani (unpublished primary source).
16Michael Karisa in an oral interview with the researcher on 21st April 2016 at Mariakani (unpublished primary source).
ancestors.\textsuperscript{17} Equally, Atinga asserts that in the African context, death is both mysterious and certain. Hence, Africans have produced an equally mysterious ritual to deal with it\textsuperscript{18}.

Helmut Thielicke expresses death as that of an old common place that people go to live and that if anything in life is a certainty it is death. Death conditions every moment of this advance towards death that we call life just as our walking is actually a kind of falling. Though with every step we check our fall, so life itself is a matter of dying that is repeatedly held in check.\textsuperscript{19} At the verge of death human nature feels frustrated because of the desire to hold on life by every means possible still exists as there is fear of the unknown world.\textsuperscript{20} Mbiti asserts that “death is a monster before which man is helpless; friends and relatives watch the person die, and they cannot help him escape death.\textsuperscript{21} Death is the ultimate to every creature; it has neither cure nor escape, it is inevitable. Peter Sarpong from Ghana an Archbishop and an anthropologist says:

\begin{quote}
Death provokes thoughts of darkness and light, weakness and strength, evil and good, sorrow and joy, non-existence and life, war and peace, defeat and victory, vice and virtue, ignorance and knowledge, in short confusion. And why not, for what the Ghanaian knows and sees is that a brother, sister, mother, father, or friend is no longer with him.\textsuperscript{22} They call him/her and no reply. Speak to him and no answer.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{17}Michael Karisa in an oral interview with the researcher on 21\textsuperscript{st} April 2016 at Mariakani, (Unpublished primary source).
\textsuperscript{18} S. A. Atinga. \textit{Death and Dying}, A study of Mortuary Rites of the Frafra of Northern Ghana in the Light of the Christian Funeral Liturgy AN Attempt at Inculturation, 2006. (A doctor’s Desertion accessed on 25\textsuperscript{th} January 2016)
\textsuperscript{20} J. S. Mbiti, \textit{African Religion and Philosophy}, London, Heinemann, 1975
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
Death is considered to be cruel, heartless and unjust as it takes away ones mother father, husband, wife, son, daughter, best friend for whom there can be no substitute.\textsuperscript{23} Edmund Ilogu observed that the philosophy behind the people’s concern about life and death is that all the visible world around us and the invisible world beyond, the divine and the human, the past and the present, the living and the dead all form a harmonious entity.\textsuperscript{24} He further said that death is one of the dissonances of life disturbing this entity, but because the dead themselves belong to this harmonious entity all that is necessary is to ensure that the balance of life’s harmony is not upset when one member of the group is transformed through death to another level of existence, namely the souls of the dead who constitute the unseen part of the community.\textsuperscript{25} Ntate, K. argues that death does not alter or end the life or the personality of individual, but but causes a change in its conditions.\textsuperscript{26} Setsiba asserts that the death of a loved one is a ubiquitous human experience. It is a period of transition, following the death of a loved one.

The bereaved individuals therefore need to adjust and go back to normal life.\textsuperscript{27} Thus most cultures have prescribed burial rituals and rites to facilitate the adjustment of the bereaved members. Ngumbane observed that to die in Traditional African community is like ‘going back home where you belong.’\textsuperscript{28} Therefore, proper burial would be elements of showing respect and dignity to the deceased. For Ngumbane, any respectable Zulu

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{24} E. A.Ade \textit{Traditional Religion in West Africa}, Uzima Press Ltd. Nairobi; Kenya, CPH-Kampala, Uganda, 1983.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{27} H. S. T. Setsiba, \textit{Mourning Rituals and Practices in Contemporary South Africa Townships}: A phenomenological study 2012.
\end{itemize}
person was buried at home at the back or sides of their family’s hut irrespective of age.\textsuperscript{29} Hezekiah Murage argues that the observation of death rituals is in the interest of the living to establish harmony and friendship with the spiritual world in order to have peace and prosperity, security and protection from a possible hostility that would arise between the living and the dead.\textsuperscript{30} The Agiriama like any other African community believe in giving their dead a good send off so that their souls may rest in eternal peace as they watch over the living.

Mbiti argues that death to African community is not an event which just occurs, is handled and then is forgotten about.\textsuperscript{31} When one dies, there are a series of events which usually take place. These include feasting and gathering associated with the funeral rites, while in some families, prayers are held.\textsuperscript{32} The unborn, the living, the living-dead and the ancestors are related to each other. Proper rites and ceremonies performed following death reflect this belief; failure to perform the burial rituals would hinder the deceased soul from resting in peace.\textsuperscript{33} Failure to observe the obligatory funeral rites and practices is perceived as a sign of disrespect for ancestors and misfortune could befall anyone who does not adhere to the stipulated practices.\textsuperscript{34} With the coming of Christianity and other religions such as Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism in Africa, there have been differences in funeral rites and practices. This has brought both a positive and a negative impact on

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\end{thebibliography}
the Agiriama community; among the negatively affected beliefs and practices are the burial rituals and practices.

Religious beliefs and expressions are constantly nurtured by the community’s culture in terms of language, symbols, and attitudes towards life. These beliefs and practices exist through people’s experiences with God from time immemorial, passed on from father to son. Similarly Christianity which entails the spiritual and practical expression of faith in Jesus Christ is also rooted in the Jewish culture. Christianity has undergone different Cultural evolution in various regions where it has had some contact. What the missionaries in Africa did was to transmit to their congregation their own understanding of the gospel and the way it had developed in their communities. The missionaries ignored the key issues which included religious ideas and the new culture which they came across. The Agiriama adherents of African traditional religion practices suffered a great deal from the missionary approach to the gospel as their cultural heritage was regarded as dark and full of polytheism. The most affected customs were the ones related to burial and funeral rites. The missionary approach to evangelization was in sharp contrast with the Pauline theology to the Gentile, that there is no difference between a Jew and a Gentile for they are all called by the same Lord. That Jesus Christ had come to seek and save the sinners, a universal savior who is ready
to save even the Agiriama people without any discrimination.\textsuperscript{39} Misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the teachings of Jesus Christ “Follow me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead,”\textsuperscript{40} can be interpreted to mean that the sinners havenoroom for eternal life so they are considered to be dead and those who die in sin will taste the second death so they are considered spiritually dead. In recent times this situation has created conflicts among the Agiriama when a Christian loses a relative. Some fail to attend the funeral services and even the burial while others ignore the traditional burial practices as they consider them heathen. The Agiriama people are faced with this cultural conflict in relation to funeral and burial practices between them and their Christian counterparts.

1.1.2 The Agiriama People

The researcher is mainly concerned with the burial ritual between the Christians and the adherents of African traditional religion; hence it is of great importance to briefly discuss about the Agiriama community since the study is focused on the Agiriama people. The Agiriama people are from the larger community of the Amidzi-Chenda (Mijikenda in Swahili)\textsuperscript{41} community which literally means \textit{midzi-Chenda} (nine homes) and are part of the Bantu speaking community and are found along the Kenyan coast.\textsuperscript{42} In many cases all the nine tribes of the Amidzi-Chenda are referred to as the

\textsuperscript{39} See Good News Bible (Acts 17: 22-31).
\textsuperscript{40} See Good News Bible (Mathew 8:22, Luke 9:60).
\textsuperscript{41} The term \textit{midzi-} refer to homes Chenda refers to nine so the term midzi-Chenda refers to nine homes, while the term Amidzi- Chenda means the people of the nine homes; the Mijikenda community.
Agiriama community and where they live is known as the Giriama Land. Tinga affirms that the Amidzi-Chenda commonly known as the Mijikenda are Agiriama in (Swahili Wagiriama) also known as the Giriama. They are sub-divided into different mbari, (clans) each clan uses different names which help other people to easily identify them.

The Agiriama clans (mbari) include: i) the Amwandundi have names such as Chula, Mwambere, Koi, Thethe; ii) the Amwabaya Mwaro who have names like Yaa, Mwaro, Kithunga, Mweri, Baya, Mangi, Jefwa, Mure, Choga and Ngoka; iii) the Amwabaya Gunga, who have names like Gunga and Thoya among others; iv) the Akiza: Mwahinzano they have names such as Chome, Hinzano, Mumba, Mwagandi, Mwavuo, Ngala, Ngonyo, Kiponda, Nyanje to name but a few; v) Akiza cha Mwaiha (mwaiha clan), who have names such as Dena, Kanzao, Menza, Kirao, Iha, Mwandoro, Kasiku and others vi) Kiza cha Mwafondo, (mwafondo clan) names include Birya, Fondo, Dena and others; vii) Kiza cha Amwawale, (Amwawale Clan) whose names include Kimosho, Wale, Fondo, Kalama among others; viii) the Amwanzaro clan who have names such as Nzaro, Jefwa, Chai, Kalama, Mangi, and Baya; ix) the Aparwa: who are further subdivided to Amwanguma, (Aparwa Amwanguma), Amwafondo, Amwakiwi; they have names such as Nguma, Fondo, Kalama, Gona, Kifalu, Nyamawi, amongst others. Other clans include the Amwakombe, the Amwangari, and the Amwakithi, who have names like Kithi, Thinga, Birya, Mwango, Jefwa, Mwambalu and others.

45 Charles Baya in an oral interview with the researcher at Mariakani on 2nd January 2016. (Unpublished primary source).
46 David Kiponda in an oral interview with the researcher on 12th February 2016, At Mariakani (Unpublished primary source).
47 Michael Karisa in an oral interview with the researcher at Mariakani on 21st April 2016. (Unpublished primary source).
The Amwangoa clan names are Ziro, Mwaringa, Saro, Msinda; the Amwamweni have names like Mweni and others. Spear gives the clans and the areas where they could be found. These places include the place known as Giriama land such as Kaloleni Giriama in Kilifi County in Kenya. The clan names here are such as Kiza clan, sub-clans include Mwafondo, Mwaiha, Mwawale, and Mwahinzano. Another area All these clans adore their traditions and customs so strictly that when one fails to perform certain rituals like the burial ritual and practices, it is believed that the gods of the clan would punish that person and probably the entire clan (giriama, mbari yosi), by sending some calamities such as diseases, drought, famine, sudden deaths, and other calamities.

1.1.3 Agiriama Religious Beliefs on Death

The Agiriama practice African Indigenous Religion (AIR) like many other African communities. The structure of the Amidzi-Chenda religion can be summarized into four main features namely: First; belief in the Supreme Being called Mulungu. Mulungu is believed to be the God above the gods and is invisible. He is worshiped through mediators who ask favors on behalf of the Agiriama people. Second; belief in divinities, ancestors and spirits, this also includes divination and sacrifices, which are important components of the African traditional religion. The Agiriama worship God through the ancestors and have a great respect for them. The ancestors are regarded as the mediators between God and the Agiriama community.

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52 Ibid.
This is because of the fact that the ancestors are people who have lived amongst the community members and they know them better. The ancestors are believed to speak to the Agiriama through dreams which the community elders interpret for action.

The ancestors are the elders of the clan, for one to be regarded as an ancestor upon death he must have lived to a ripe age. He/she must have married and had children and lived a successful life here on earth and be of good conduct. One must have died a natural death before her or his family members. Natural death means that one must have not committed suicide, must not have died from accident and must not have died from dread diseases. Mulungu (God) punishes and blesses according to the deeds of an individual.

Apart from Mulungu (God) the Agiriama community also believes in ancestral deity worship. These are spirits of the dead ancestors and the living dead, the good ancestors become good spirits and the bad ancestors become bad spirits. The k’oma are not deities but the Agiriama strive to appease them so that misfortunes may not befall the relatives who are still living. They offer sacrifice at the ancestral shrine on a weekly basis in the form of palm wine, the traditional mnazi. The Agirima also offer libation which is poured on the grave yard at the head, they also pour at the door posts they believe it is food for the ancestral spirits. They believe that the K’oma are actually the representatives of the living dead, they would therefore name the K’oma with names of all their elders that have gone before them. They make memorial shrines of grave post

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55 Ibid.
known as *k'oma* or *misala ya koma* for the late members of the community and *vigango* (singular *Kigango*), decorated memorial posts for the initiated senior male ancestors.\(^{58}\)

The *Kigango* was a curved piece of wood and the eldest of them that had already gone before them was represented with a bigger wood.\(^{59}\) When trouble befalls a family they would sometimes go to sacrifice by the *Kigango* side, libation and blood would be used.\(^{60}\)

Thirdly, some Agiriama African traditional religion adherents practice witchcraft *utsai* causing harm to another person using black magic or supernatural media like jinnis (pl. *majini*) and it is a common belief among the Midzi-Chenda. They believe that a person can use evil powers to harm others which is known as witchcraft. Witchcraft is usually employed by a witch *mutsai, mwanga* (witch). Lastly, the Agiriama also believe in spirit possession *p’epo* (pl. *map’epo*) which can cause illness to people in the society hence compromising community health.\(^{61}\)

*Mapepo* (demons) are evil spirits which when they possess a person, the person becomes sick until the family members look for a religious specialist to appease the demons it is when the person will get better.

### 1.1.4 Causes of death

For every illness and death the Agiriama like other African communities, such as the Frafra of Northern Ghana,\(^{62}\) believe that there must be a cause as mentioned

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\(^{60}\) Ibid.

\(^{61}\) T. M. Chidongo (2012), and K.Tinga, (1998)…………………

above, such as God which is commonly known as natural death, witchcraft and sorcery which include *utsai Wa vinuni* (incest) oaths such as *habasi* and *kinyenze* which cause so much pain and hatred among the family members and evil spirits *mapepo*. On life and death, the Agiriama like many African communities believe that death is not the end of life. It is seen as a separation and not annihilation. The relatives of the dead person believe that even though the soul of their dead relative has gone to be with the ancestors, it remains near to them and can be appreciated through prayers, libation and offerings. Though death is inevitable; the Agiriama both denies and accepts it in daily life. For this reason they tend to try to protect themselves from death by using charms obtained from religious specialists.

### 1.1.5 Burial Rituals

The burial rituals and rites depend on the way in which the death occurred, the age of the deceased and sex; since they believe that there are some different types of deaths, such as normal death, abnormal and bad deaths. Normal deaths are those of very old people, who have lived, married have many children and have succeeded in seeing their children and their grandchildren; the ancestors. Abnormal deaths are those of the young and those close to or shortly after marriage before they have enjoyed their lives to the fullest. Bad death are those which result from dying alone in the bush or far away from family members, drowning, suicide, struck by lightning, accidents as shall be

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63 T. T. Spear, the *Kaya Complex*, A History of the Mijikenda people of the Kenya Coast to the 1900, KLB Nairobi, 1978.
discussed later.\textsuperscript{67} Before burial they believe that the cause of the death has to be identified so that the necessary measures could be taken to avoid further death of close family members. The Agiriama people perform a series of rituals and many feasts for the dead because of their strong fear and respect for the dead, just like the Luo in South Nyanza.\textsuperscript{68} Much will be discussed in the literature review.

The Agiriama are largely shifting from these beliefs as they are embracing Christianity while others are adopting Islam. However, there those who still hold on to the cultural heritage. The differences between the ritual practices of Christianity and the Indigenous religion (\textit{Chi’kwehu}) have become a major source of conflict within the Agiriama community hence leading us to the statement of problem.

\subsection*{1.2 The Christian Beliefs on death and burial}

The Christians believe that death is not the end of life but a way to go and live at a better place called heaven. According to the gospel of John, those who believe in Jesus Christ will have eternal life which begins when one has accepted the lord Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{69} The Christians believe that death came into the world as a result of men’s disobedience to God.\textsuperscript{70} Airo asserts that death is a place of man’s last destiny because all men who descended from Adam are mortal and immorality is a gift of God, which is achieved through the resurrection of the whole person.\textsuperscript{71} He further argues that death is the consequence of sin and evil. Death is an enemy of God and man which would finally be

\textsuperscript{67}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{69} Good News Bible c/f John 3:16
\textsuperscript{70} Good News Bible c/f Genesis 2:
\textsuperscript{71} R. Airo, Towards the Inculturation of ‘Nyere za Mwezi,’ \textit{An Agiriama Funeral Rite with Reference to St. ThomasCatholic Church}. Unpublished Master’s Dissertation, Pwani University, 2016.
destroyed and abolished in principle at Christ’s resurrection. This contrasts the African traditional religion belief that death has a cause like witchcraft and failure to appease the ancestors.\textsuperscript{72}

1.3 Statement of the Problem

There exists a continued conflict between Christian and African Traditional Religion belief systems with reference to burial rites practices among the Agiriama community. The teachings of Jesus Christ are that there is happiness for those who die knowing Jesus Christ for they will not test the second death.\textsuperscript{73} It is the Christian belief that when one dies while knowing Jesus Christ she/he will have eternal life.\textsuperscript{74} For this reason, the Christians have a duty to make converts from people of different background and culture in order to win souls to Jesus Christ that they may not perish but have eternal life. The eternal life is for those who believe in Jesus Christ and those who have died in the Lord, that is, those who died knowing Jesus Christ. Bishop David Kiponda explained to the researcher that it is those who may have died while believing in Jesus Christ as their personal savior, and who have lived according to the teachings of Jesus Christ whose desire was to do the will of God.\textsuperscript{75} The first one to die in the Lord being Abel whose blood cries from the ground.\textsuperscript{76} This represents the need for resurrection and vindication at the second coming of the Messiah. This belief gives hope to the believers in Christ that even if they die, they will live again, they are therefore given proper burial to wait for the day when Jesus Christ resurrect them into a new life.

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid
\textsuperscript{73} Good News Bible c/f Revelation 14:13.
\textsuperscript{74} Good News Bible c/f John 3:16.
\textsuperscript{75} Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2018 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{76} Good News Bible c/f Genesis 4:10.
Within the African context, some of the dead are regarded as ancestors and they are treated with great respect as they are believed to have a special relationship with the living. Therefore, they are accorded proper burial rites upon death. Any deviation from the above could be perceived as a sign of disrespect for the ancestors and bad luck could befall anyone who does not adhere to the stipulated practices. The Agiriama Christians in many ways differ with the Agiriama African religion adherent practitioners on issues of burial rites, especially when it comes to burying a family member who has been a Christian but the ATR believers among the family members want the deceased to be rested according to African burial rites. This has caused a great impact between the Agiriama Christians and the ATR adherents both positively and negatively due to differences in faith, belief systems and practices. Even though, the Agiriama have accepted Christianity, the religion still remains alien to them because it has not yet fully embraced the culture of the local people especially in terms of burial rituals. The Christian missionaries had little knowledge of the African culture hence they condemned the Agiriama rituals practices as archaic without any attempt to understand their symbolic meaning. Consequently, they considered most of these rituals as non-Christian practices and incompatible with the gospel message. Christians were encouraged to part completely with their native way of worship and celebrations.

The tension between the Agiriama Christians expectation of the cultural demands characterizes the life of many Agiriama Christians in the face of the death of their relatives, spouse, father and mother. The tension almost leads to a feeling of alienation.

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77 Ibid
They feel torn between the demands of their culture and their new faith. Hence they are faced with two opposing pressures. They face pressure from the church to have a Christian celebration and also from their families who may not be Christians to have a traditional funeral. When a Christian loses his/her father or mother who was not a Christian, the funeral is going to be a traditional funeral. The question in this case is what part of traditional funeral can Christian participate in and parts can he/she stay clear off and how will members of his family look at it.

The African Christian finds torn apart within because he or she must decide which of the two traditions to stress. In this case, the Agiriama Christian find him/herself alienated from his/her own culture as he/she embraces the new faith and renounces or dispises his or her own African traditions. There has been much improvement as far as Gospel and culture is concerned. Nevertheless, a lot more needs to be done to reverse the earlier unfavourable attitude to the culture. This can be achieved by reinterpreting the culture. Moreover, this can be done through inter-religious dialogue so that there can be mutual understanding between the two groups.

In this tension, the occurrence of the death of a Christian or the relative of a Christian becomes a source of worry to many African Christians who are serious about their Christian faith. Some find a way out by surreptitiously and clandestinely going through the full traditional rites while others just defy all odds and go through it and then find a solution to ease their conscience by coming to confession afterwards. This problem is not only for the Agiriama community in Kenya but cuts across the whole of the African continent. Among the negatively affected cultural practices were the burial ritual practices, these in most cases left the bereaved family members, dissatisfied and
full of anxiety about their future life. Therefore, this study examines the conflicts or contestations between Christian burials rites and African traditional religion burials among the Agiriama community with a view to establishing the need for dialogue among the two religions.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by a general objective out of which four objectives were derived which guided the chapters of the study.

1.4.1 General Objective

The aim of the study is to examine burial rites and practices; both in Christianity and African Traditional religion that cause conflicts among the Agiriama community.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

(a) To analyze the Agiriama ATR adherents burial rites practices.

(b) To analyze the Agiriama Christian burial rites practices.

(c) To evaluate areas of conflict between the Agiriama Christians and Agiriama adherents of African traditional religion on burial rites practices.

(d) To propose suitable methodology of addressing the existing differences between Christian and ATR adherents burial practices among the Agiriama.

1.5 Research Questions

(a) What are the Christian burial practices and the adherents of African traditional religion burial rituals practices among the Agiriama community?
(b) What are the similarities and differences between Christian burials rites and the adherents of African traditional religion burials rites among the Agiriama community?

(c) What are the areas of conflict between Christian’s burial rites and the adherents of African traditional religion among the Agiriama people?

(d) What are the suitable methodology of addressing the existing differences between Christians and the adherents of African traditional religion among the Agiriama people?

1.6 Rationale of the Study

There seems to be limited literature which focuses on burial rites specifically on the Christians and the African traditional religion adherents among the Agiriama community. Over the past centuries, cultural practices have been viewed with negativity and misinterpreted. This study is significant as it contributes relevant knowledge on the interpretation of culture and brings understanding of African heritage and this rich heritage can be used to enrich Christianity with specific to burial rites. Therefore, the study aims at comparing the Christian and traditional African burial rites and practices among the Agiriama community. The study will offer insights to Agiriama Christians and the African traditional religion adherents on the importance of inter-religious dialogue for peaceful co-existence. The study is equally significant because the findings will benefit students of theology and anthropology in understanding and appreciating the Agiriama cultural heritage.
1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of a study covers what, how, when and where the study was done, what data were taken as inputs, what criteria were used for comparing the data, what was the outcome of the comparison. The scope of this study was the basis for the discussions which made up the chapters of the study. The study title is ‘An analysis of burial conflicts between Agiriama Christians and adherents of African religion in Kilifi County, Kenya.’ The data collected is on burial rituals for both Agiriama Christians and the adherents of African traditional religion. The primary data was gathered through participant observation, Focus Group Discussion and interviews. The data was compared by use of tables which helped to outline the similarities and differences. The areas of conflict were identified through the use of tables.

1.8 Literature Review

This section of the study reviews related literature on the Agiriama worldview on death and burial and Christian concept of death and burial practices. It is presumed that in order to understand the root causes of conflict between Agiriama Christians and the ‘Indigenous’ Agiriama then their worldviews in relation to life and death is significant to the study.

1.8.1 Agiriama Worldview on Death and Funeral rites

The Agiriama or Amidzi-Chenda community understands life in wholeness. Tsawe Munga Chidongo examined the concept of life from a health perspective and argues that the life or the health of an individual is tied to community well-
Similarly, Richard Airo in his study on the Catholic and Agiriama funeral rituals and practices argues that the community welfare was central to the Agiriama people. He further observed that anything that threatened human life such as death was feared. However, when it occurs a chain of rituals were performed to smoothen the journey of the deceased to the spiritual world. To ensure the wellbeing of the community the Agiriama have many elaborate rituals including those performed during burials and funerals. Moreover, the Agiriama community likes many other African societies’ view of death as a transition from the visible world to the invisible world or the spiritual world.

The Agiriama community believes that death is caused by God, magic, witchcraft, sorcery, neglects of filial duties to the ancestors, breaking of the taboos and sanctions of the divinities, trampling on the moral values of the society and thereby attempting to cause disharmony and disintegration among the people. Tinga contends that the major causes of illness among the Agiriama community are demons, p’ep’o (plural map’ep’o), witchcraft (utsai) use of black magic including Jinnis (Swahili, majini). Malaria, small pox, measles, polio, tuberculosis, leprosy are said to be natural problems Makongo ga Mulungu mwenye (illnesses from God Himself). Recently, other diseases like hypertension, diabetes, cancer and the dreadful Aids scourge are increasing in number, though witchcraft still holds the reign among the Agiriama community. To the Agiriama death does not imply an end to life, but it marks the beginning of another

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83 Ibid.
84 Ibid.
phase of being where one exists in the spiritual realm of ancestors. The journey towards the next phase of life is very rigorous among the Agiriama people since one can only attain ancestor-ship through death and it is when someone has died that rituals are performed to facilitate that transition to the invisible world. Mbiti observed that within the African religious beliefs, the dead elders are regarded as ancestors and are treated with great respect because they are believed to have special relationship with the living.

Robert Levine in his study; ‘Gusii funerals meaning of life and Death in an African community’ examined the Gusii cultural heritage related to death and observed that death rituals provide a context for understanding the essence of death among the Africans. Robert wanted to gain insight on the significance of funeral rituals in the cultural management of grief, loss and mourning. Similarly, John Mbiti studied the concept of death among the Ndebele and Abaluyia and argues that:

People view death paradoxically; it is a separation but not annihilation, the dead person is suddenly cut off from human society and yet the corporate group clings to him. This is shown through the elaborate funeral rites, as well as other methods of keeping in contact with the departed.

Airo asserts that, although this conclusion is drowning from the Ndebele and the Abaluyia; it is also applicable to the Agiriama community. The Agiriama community strive to give their dead a good send off as they believe that burying someone without proper ceremony and rituals is like ‘throwing’ away that person, a disrespectful act yet

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the dead person still lives in spirit. The Agiriama eole believe that death is not the end of life, the dead person is separated from the visible world but present in the invisible world of spirits. Hence, failure to give the dead proper burial will make their spirits not rest in eternal peace; hence keep on wondering like ghosts who can harm those still alive. Therefore, the Agiriama conduct elaborate funeral rites for their deceased kinsmen.

Janet McIntosh also did a study on the Agiriama funeral ceremonies but limited her work to the funeral songs such as ‘Kifudu.’ She argues that the Agiriama people had an elaborate system of sending the departed members of their clan to the spiritual world as expressed in their songs.89 McIntosh argues that the Agiriama funeral songs such as Kifudu were marked with ambiguity such that it was not easy to understand their meaning outside the context. Equally, the participants of such songs could only reveal the meanings under the same context and not anywhere. Similarly, Beja Karisa in his study; ‘Giriama Funeral songs: A Functional Aesthetic Study’ analyzed Agiriama rituals and customs related to death, burials and bereavement.90 He argues that the Agiriama community has a life style that is much influenced by their religious belief in ancestral spirits (k’oma). However, Karisa focuses on the role of funeral songs in the community and as part of their cultural heritage and observed that songs such as Kifudu were powerful and influential medium of expression of sorrow.91 The works of McIntosh and Karisa on the Agiriama customs related to death as expressed in the funeral songs lend to the fact that the Agiriama people had a rich cultural heritage.

81 Ibid.
heritage is well treasured and entrenched and there is a possibility that conversion of Christianity does not simply render it irrelevant. However, the Agiriama funeral songs such as Kifudu which use ambiguous language have put the cultural songs at crossroads with Christianity. The conflict witnessed during funeral ceremonies as is the question of burial rituals and practices is at the center of the current study.

David Parkins examines the significance of rituals among the Agiriama community. He observed correctly that rituals were central in the community well-being (Uzima wa lalo) and therefore, the Agiriama lived a ritualistic life-cycle. This was evident from child birth to adult life, and even in death. Their social, economic, political and religious life was marked by a cycle of rituals performed in the sacred kaya and grave yards. Parkins work is important to this study as the differences in rituals observance are likely to be one of the sources of conflict among the Agiriama Christians and Non-Christians. However, Parkins work is short on analysis on the comparative analysis on burial rites between Christians and Africans practices. In addition, he is writing from anthropological perspective while the current work is theological in approach.

The study of Richard Airo is of great significance to the current discourse. He has examined the Agiriama funeral rites in comparison to the Catholic funeral rituals. He further observed that the difference in the observation of rituals specifically ‘Nyere za Mwezi’ is a source of conflict between Roman Catholic Christians and non-Christians. However, Airo is concerned mainly by ‘Nyere za Mwezi’ which is a funeral ritual that

93 Ibid.
marks the end of the mourning period. He correctly observed that ‘Nyere za Mwezi’ is a cardinal post burial funeral ritual that is practiced for individual and community well being. Nevertheless, Airo’s work is built on an inculturation paradigm which is a departure from the current work which is itself based on the interpretation of culture. Equally, the current study examines in details the Agiriama funeral rituals in contrast to Christianity.

Kalume Tinga in his study discusses in detail on the impact of divination, healing, witchcraft and the statutory law. Kalume wrote that the cultural practices of the Midzi-Chenda were in conflict with Kenyan secular state Law. He focuses on healing, divination and sorcery and observed that diviners and healers have been misconceived and condemned wholesale as "witches."\textsuperscript{95} Equally, he emphasized on the Agiriama belief in witchcraft as the major source of illness and the consultation of diviners for healing. In his analysis he asserted that the Amidzi-chenda consult Kaya elders when they are faced with difficult situation that the diviners and witchdoctors cannot solve. Kalume argues that the major source of conflict between the Agiriama and the government is on the attempt by the government to control witchcraft.\textsuperscript{96} This study found Kalume’s work to be relevant as he examined the Agiriama worldview and the role of religious specialists such as diviners in the society. Witchcraft is seen as the major soure of illness and surffering among the Agiriama community. Kenga Chai confirmed that when one is sick, the family members consult soothsayers who use their super natural powers to reveal the cause of the illness. He added that in most cases the

\textsuperscript{96}Ibid.
cause they say is witchcraft.  

However, Kalume has not explained some of the conflicts among the Amidzi-Chenda that come as a result of divination, healing and witchcraft. The current study will examine some of the conflicts between Agiriama Christian burial rites and indigenous Agiriama people.

Chidongo explores the encounter between Christianity and African Indigenous Religion among the Amidzi-Chenda. Chidongo argues that the conflict between Christianity and African Indigenous Religion is due to the former poor understanding of African cultural heritage. This as earlier argued by Idowu, E. B, that the early European theologians used misleading and demeaning terms such as primitive, savage, fetishism, Juju, heathenism, paganism, animism, idolatry and polytheism to describe African beliefs and practices. These greatly contributed to a negative attitude by many Christians towards African beliefs and practices that has persisted to date and are the major source of conflict between the two religions.

This study found Chidongo’s work to be significant to this study as he is concerned with the conflict between Amidzi-Chenda Christians, Agiriama included and their Non-Christian counterparts. Chidongo observes that this conflict is unnecessary if both religions can adopt dialogue. This work was of great importance since it was dealing with the Agiriama and how they encountered with Christianity. This study also deals with two groups of different religious faith; Christianity and the African traditional religion adherents. The burial rituals are performed mostly to ensure community health. Chidongo’s work was centred on community health among the Amidzi-Chenda

97 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4th May 2016 at Kilifi. (2nd interview).
99 Ibid.
community, Agiriama included. Despite such significance Chidongo’s work is a general analysis of the Amidzi-Chenda community compared to this work which is limited to the Agiriama of Mariakani, Kaloleni sub-county. Again the current scholarship deals with specific areas of conflict on burial rites and practices.

Rocha Chimerah confirms that the negativity is due to the colonial masters who were afraid of being rejected by the African communities; ‘to them anything black was negative so they created negative impression among the Amidzi-Chenda.’ According to Chimerah, the Europeans wanted to “civilize” the Africans, including the Agiriama. The Europeans ought to have appreciated the Amidzi-Chenda the way they were. However Chimerah confirmed that no religion has ever appreciated the incoming of another God. So the Amidzi-Chenda would not accept their God to be called Jehovah but Mulungu, thus the Christians would not call their God Allah. He further emphasized that the negativity was extended to schools where the learners were not allowed to speak their own language apart from English.

The arguments advanced by Chimerah are of great importance to this study since they establish the sources of conflict between Christians and the Agiriama on burial rituals and practices. The negativity that characterized African religion and culture mentioned by Chimerah is quite general and does not pay any specific attention to burial rituals. This study therefore, attempts to investigate the conflict between Agiriama burial rites and the Christian Burial rites and practices.

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101 Rocha Chimerah in a focus group discussion attended by the researcher at Pwani University, Board Room 3 on 6th July 2016. (Unpublished primary source).
102 Ibid.
1.8.2 Christian Concept of life after death

According to Atinga, the Christian concept of death is borrowed from the Jewish beliefs and practices about death. Kiponda asserts that, the Jewish people Believe that when one dies, the spirit goes to a place known as hell which the Jews call Hades/shoel if during his/ her life time he/she committed many sins and did not ask God for forgiveness. Shoel/hell is believed to be an underworld of the dead, and is a place where the devil lives and the wicked people are sent there to be punished when they die. Hell is usually imagined as being under the ground and full of flames. Thus, the Jewish people believe that death is not the end of life and there is resurrection of the body. Crockett argues that it is not actually known what kind of punishment will be met out there in hell by the wicked.

According to Ellen G. White, the concept of life and death among the Christians is rooted in Christ’s experience of death and resurrection. Ellen asserted that, at an early stage Christians began to feel that their life was centered on the person of Christ. This identified and marked them out as a people sharing the same faith in the risen Lord. This made them begin to reflect on their lives in relation to Christ, that since Christ died and rose from the dead, they too will rise from the dead and be with Jesus Christ forever. Equally, Maria Rosa Mystica asserts that Jesus was in the tomb and

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104 Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.
110 Ibid.
dwelt with the souls of the departed in the darkness of shoel/hades for three days over and so he protects the believers from their spiritual and material adversaries.\textsuperscript{111} The Jews, the indigenous Agiriama Community as well as the Christians believe in life after death, however, the indigenous Agiriama do not believe in the resurrection of the body when one dies. To the indigenous life continues in the world of spirits but there is no resurrection.

Christianity is a young religion which was born in cultures that existed many years before it, so the faith was in many ways influenced in the rituals actions. The Christians burial rituals have been rooted in pre-Christians cultures this is confirmed by Atinga Samuel.\textsuperscript{112} The early burial traditions among the Jewish community revolved around the belief that when they die, they will go to heaven to be with God. The next world they call ‘\textit{Olam Haemet}’ or ‘the world of truth’. To the Jews death is seen as a part of life and a part of God’s plan.\textsuperscript{113} This is confirmed by John Upton. Death of Sarah the wife of Abraham, Abraham bought a piece of land and buried her there when Abraham died he was buried at the same place.

This shows the importance of having a burial ground.\textsuperscript{114} It was believed that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried at that place and they are the patriarchs. The Jewish patriarchs were believed to have been buried at the cave of Machpelah near Mamre at Hebron. When Joseph died, the Israelites mourned for several days more than a month. The Israelites buried him in Egypt but promised to carry his bones with them to

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\textsuperscript{111} M. R. Mystica, \textit{Reflection to save souls}, www.rosamystica13.com/reflections.htm\textcolor{red}{(accessed on 8th August 2018)}.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{114} Good News Bible cf Genesis 23:19.
\end{flushright}
the same place where his forefathers had been buried,\textsuperscript{115} to be with the people he loved. Jacob makes a wish as he was dying and his sons fulfilled it. Jacob was given big funeral rituals since his son Joseph was a ruler in Egypt. Upton asserts that Christian burial customs and practices can be traced back into the Greco-Roman and Jewish traditions.\textsuperscript{116} To the Jewish community burial has long been regarded as both an obligation and work of mercy and the scattered references to their burial rites reflect both realism and simplicity\textsuperscript{117}.

Rowel G. confirms that among the Greeks and the Romans both cremation and burial was practiced, however, the Jews buried their dead.\textsuperscript{118} As depicted in the account of Abraham, the burial of Sarah, Abraham’s wife, and all the patriarchs. God himself is depicted in the Torah, as performing burial; God buried Moses in the depression in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor, where the Israelite mourned him for thirty days.\textsuperscript{119} This shows that the Israelites mourned for their dead for several days. When one was near to dying, may be due to long illness or due to old age he or she would call the close family members such as sons, daughters, wife or grand children as depicted by Mbiti,\textsuperscript{120} also Isaac when he was very old and knew that he was about to die, he called Esau to prepare the best meal for him so that he could eat and bless him before his death,\textsuperscript{121} Jacob also blessed his sons before he died.\textsuperscript{122} The family members gathered around the

\textsuperscript{115} Good News Bible cf Joshua 24.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{119} Good News Bible cf Deuteronomy 34:6
\textsuperscript{121} Good News Bible cf Genesis 27:29.
\textsuperscript{122} Good News Bible cf Genesis 49:-20.
dying person to receive his/her final words which were treasured so much as they acted as a will and a blessing to the family.

During my field study I witnessed this happening to the sick elders who called their relatives to come and give them their last words which included their wishes on how they would like to be buried. Jesus Christ on the cross, his mother was around him to hear his final words ‘it is finished’ which showed that he had accomplished his mission of saving the humankind from their sins on earth.

Samuel Atinga argues that Christians were inspired by scripture; they began to see that their death was a death in Christ and, therefore, like Christ they would rise.\(^{123}\) For this reason,\(^{124}\) even though they lived among their pagan counterparts, and buried their dead in the same cemeteries, there was a marked difference in the way they celebrated their funerals. Atinga’s work is significant to the current study since it explains how Christians conduct their burial and the ritual practices that are involved. Despite such relevance to the current study his work is written from a Catholic perspective and with reference to the Frafra community of Northern Ghana. This work is a comparative study of Agiriama Christian burials and African traditional burial practices.

John Upton traced back Christian burial customs and practices to the Greco-Roman and Jewish traditions. He observes that in the Jewish community “burial has long been regarded as both an obligation and a work of mercy and the scattered reference to their burial rites reflect both realism and simplicity.\(^{125}\) From what is

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\(^{124}\) This is the greatest hope for the Christians that since Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead they too will rise from the dead.

gathered from the scriptures about the death of Jesus, we know that he was buried according to the Jewish custom. Despite the fact that the nearness of the Sabbath and the fear of the Roman authorities “prevented his friends from anointing the body in the usual way, both the synoptic and the Johannine gospels, while differing in specific details, record that the body was wrapped in linen, with myrrh and aloes and laid him to rest in the tomb.”126 The current study is building on Upton’s work that Christian burial rites and practices are a reflection of the Pre-Christian cultures127 and that these practices have evolved from one tradition to another with the spread of Christianity. It is from such a perspective that this study carries a comparative analysis on Christian burial rites and practices and Africans traditional burial rites among the Agiriama community.

Rowell in his work; ‘The Liturgy of Christian Burial’ avers that since Christianity has its roots in Judaism, the latter played a great role in influencing their practice and particularly their care for the dying and the dead.128 He further observed that the simplicity of the Jewish practice “points to a basic practice pattern of strongly biblical prayer, accompanying the few necessary actions of burial, which may be summed, with the necessary Christological additions, to reflect what is most likely to have been the earliest Christian practice.129” Rowell’s work is important to this study as it shows how Christianity enculturated Jewish burial practices and with little Christological addition. The current study will attempt to analyze the similarities and differences between the two burial rites and practices among the Agiriama. This shall be

126 Ibid.
127 Refer to the Greco-Roman and Jewish culture under which Christianity developed as a young religion.
129 Ibid.
done with the aim of identifying areas of conflicts and possible solutions whether ‘enculturation or inculturation.’

Rutherford gives another dimension to Christian burials that is worth mentioning thus the so-called funeral meals. There are records of Christians holding funeral meals but these may have had their origins in the Roman customs of graveside feasts. He argues that the Christian feasts which were later connected with the “annual commemoration of the martyr’s death had the character of merely being a more solemn form of the private feasts, or ‘refreshments’…” These graveside feasts were probably connected with the Roman “belief that the dead required nourishment or … that the “tedium” of their existence in the tomb could be relieved by the participation in a feast held by their relatives and friends at their place of burial. This is similar to the Agiriama feast of Nyere za mwezi which is characterized by feasting and dancing on the grave as shall be discussed further in the study.

With the spread of Christianity to Europe, it found out that funerary practice in the West was not a uniform phenomenon but differed from region to region, place to place and possibly person to person. Perez in her study of ‘Ritualizing Death’ established that different Christian burial rituals and practices were also further influenced by the local customs and situations in Europe. Nevertheless, these different rites “amalgamated to form the model that would be characteristic of the Christian

131 Ibid.
132 Ibid.
funeral in the West today. Therefore, from the earlier literatures it mirrors the faith that found expression in an ever-developing Christian liturgy surrounding death and burial. The current work shall argue that the Christian burial rites and practices are a reflection of different cultures over the centuries of the development of Christianity and that the study of the Agiriama burial rites and practices adds value to that process of enculturation of funeral rites and liturgy and the need for intra-religious dialogue for peaceful existence among the Agiriama community.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study employs Geertz Clifford theory of ‘Interpretation of Culture’ which was developed in 1973. According to Geertz ‘what a person is may be so entangled with where he is, who he is, and what he believes that it is inseparable from them.’ In his analysis, he observed that culture has a set of control mechanisms- plans, recipes, rules, and institutions, (what computer engineers call “programs”) for the governing of behavior.

The concept of culture as interpreted by Geertz has its importance on the concept of man. When seen as a set of symbolic devices for controlling behavior extra-somatic sources of information, culture provides the link between, what men are intrinsically capable of becoming and what they actually are. Becoming human is becoming individual, and we become individual under the guidance of cultural patterns, historically created systems of meaning in terms of which we give form, order, point, and direction to our lives. The burial rites and practices have particular meanings

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134 Ibid.
136 Ibid.
137 Ibid.
attached to them by the Agiriama people. They are a source of valuable support to the society and the bereaved in particular. This as qualified by Taylor that rituals represent a symbolic expression of certain feelings or thoughts of groups and individuals. The burial rites performed by the Christians and the African traditional religion adherents have particular meanings attached to them. The ritual performers express their thoughts and feelings of the individual people or group of people.

Geertz’s theoretical contributions start with his definition and descriptions of culture. For Geertz, culture is historically transmitted patterns of meaning embodied in symbolism, a system of inherited conceptions, expressed in symbolic forms by means of which a man communicates, perpetuates, and develops his knowledge about his attitudes towards life. According to Geertz culture is so intrinsic to the community such that even when one becomes a Christian it’s not easy to abandon their cultural practices. In this study, the Agiriama community is so linked to their cultural heritage and this is expressed in their worldview. The Agiriama’s concern for culture is not an isolated case as the Jewish community was also concerned about their cultural roots as inherited from their forefathers; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For instance; before the death and burial of Jacob, he instructed his sons to bury him in his father’s cave in the field of Mamre. This was the land of Canaan, where Abraham and his wife Sarah had been buried, and where they had buried Isaac and his wife Rebecca. Similarly, among the Amidzi-Chenda, Agiriama included, ancestors are revered and for one to attain this status in the community, he/she must receive a proper burial towards the spiritual world. Therefore,

140 Ibid.
141 Good News Bible Today’s English Version. Bible Societies Collins (Genesis 49: 29-33, Genesis 50: 1-26.)
the rituals performed when one dies have great significance to the lives of the Agiriama people. Some are performed to facilitate psychological healing of the bereaved family members and to protect the clan from evil spirits.

The studies also used inter-faith dialogue theory and Native/non-Native relations by Jonathan Napier. Napier underlines the importance of considering religion as a major contemporary cultural source of inter-group conflict around the world.¹⁴² The Agiriama Christians and the indigenous have some differences concerning burial rituals and practices. Interfaith dialogue allows an understanding of power relationships, a means of perceiving the other, and a method of acquiring new knowledge about the other group. Through inter-faith dialogue the importance of burial rituals will be brought to surface hence reduce the conflict. This will help the two religious groups to understand each other. This understanding will help improve the relationships among the Christians and the indigenous Agiriama people.

Napier explains that it’s not religious parse- assumed to be intrinsically good, given its devotional dimension that provokes or amplifies inter-group prejudice and violence.¹⁴³ In this study, the conflict is a product of the differences in belief systems which can be minimized by understanding each other’s culture and beliefs. The understanding can only be achieved through the engagement and dialogue between Christianity and the indigenous believers. According to Gathogo Julius, Christianity and traditional African religion have continued to interact in one way or the other.¹⁴⁴ He further argues that during the interactions of Christianity and African traditional religion

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¹⁴³ Ibid.

there were always clashes in the areas of beliefs and practices. In this study the clashes are mainly on the area of burial rites. The clashes can only be eliminated through dialogue and the interpretation of the culture.

1.10 Research methodology

This section of the study examined the methodology that was used to conduct the research. It has explored the research design, study location, the target population, sampling procedure, and technique; and methods of data collection were discussed. Moreover, the challenges encountered during the course of the study were highlighted. In gathering the information on the Agiriama burial rites and practices the researcher used both primary and secondary sources, guided by the interpretation of culture theory by Clifford Geertz.\textsuperscript{145} The researcher made sure that every ritual practice performed was well interpreted to get the meaning behind its performance.

In primary sources the researcher used participant observation whereby she attended five burials which occurred during the time of the study and was able to make a keen observation and recorded all the details for further analysis. Moreover, the researcher conducted four focus group discussions with some bereaved family members both male and female adults and youth a total of 30 family members both male and female participated, for she believed that any adult is capable of giving the necessary information concerning what they had experienced during burials. Moreover, this number of respondents used was large enough to make a generalization and draw conclusion\textsuperscript{146} the youth were allowed to participate so as to identify whether the

\textsuperscript{145} C. Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, Selected Essays, SBN, New York, 1973.
\textsuperscript{146} Krejeic & Morgan, Survey research, 1970
traditional burial rites and practices have any meaning to them. The researcher used snowballing, purposive sampling to identify some of the respondents.

At first she started with some few respondents whom she interviewed and as time went by the number increased and the researcher had to organize for the focus group discussions. In these study ten kaya elders, five out of them female, were interviewed through focus group discussion, they gave the necessary information on the indigenous Agiriama burial rites and practices, ten clan elders both male and female were interviewed to give the detailed information on the burials they had attended.

1.10.1 Research Design

This study design is primarily qualitative in nature which involves a descriptive approach. This is a method which involves collecting of information by interviewing sampled individuals. This design is suitable for collecting information in the form of words. Equally, a descriptive survey design seek to obtain the information that describes the existing phenomenon by asking individuals to explain in their own terms how they perceive them. Creswell conceptualized qualitative research as a study process that investigates a problem where the researcher conducts the study in a natural setting and builds a complex analysis through rich description, and explanation, as well as a careful examination of data. The description is important for clear understanding of the Agiriama cultural heritage which underpins the current discourse.

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This allowed the researcher to draw relevant conclusions that could be generalized to a much larger population.

1.10.2 Study Area and Population

The study was carried out at Mariakani in Kaloleni Sub-county in Kilifi County Kenya. The study population was the Agiriama people both Christians and African religious adherents at Mariakani. Therefore, individual respondents were sampled for oral interviews and focus group discussions to solicit for relevant information on the experiences and meaning attached to the burial rituals and practices and the areas of conflict during burials.

1.10.3 Sampling Procedure and Sampling Technique

Punch argues that all research, whether qualitative or quantitative involves sampling since it is tedious to study everyone or everything everywhere. Therefore, the researcher gathered information from ten funeral services conducted within the period of two years at Mariakani in Kaloleni Sub-county, Kilifi County. The study area was carefully selected as it could be accessed easily by the researcher. The target group consisted of the Agiriama Christians in Pentecostal Churches and the indigenous Agiriama people since they make the larger part of the population in Mariakani; Kaya elders are have witnessed the burial conflicts so they were believed to have the necessary information. Mariakani has approximately twenty Pentecostal churches with only 17 registered with the government. Using purposive sampling technique,

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150 See Appendix 6 for Mariakani area in Kaloleni sub –county Kenya.
Pentecostal Evangelical Fellowship of Africa (PEFA) was selected for the study. This was informed by its large membership that cut across urban and rural areas. From the Church, three branches from the rural areas and two from the urban set-up were randomly selected for the study. The two churches which were selected from the urban area included Mariakani and Guruguru PEFA church while from the rural area involved Munyenzeni, Gotani and Ikanga PEFA churches. This helped the researcher to bring a comparison as the believers from the urban area might have been affected by modernization and could not give all the necessary information concerning indigenous burial rituals and practices.

The researcher in her visits to the churches she came to understand that each church had at least two pastors and two elders. Using purposive sampling technique, five (5) church pastors, and five (5) church elders were selected for interviews based on the length of period in the Churches. They were the ones who conduct the Christian burial services. Moreover, they had the knowledge of the fundamental Church doctrines so they were capable of giving the necessary information. This was because it was not easy to interview all pastors and church elders in the region. The smaller number of participants was easy to handle since a large population was hard to access at the given time frame.

The researcher also identified (20) Christian family members of some bereaved families and relatives were selected through purposive snow-ballling technique based on gender and age. The selected Christian family members were further divided into ten older Christian family members and ten Christian youth family members both male and
female using snow-ball sampling. The youth were interviewed to identify whether indigenous or Christian burial rituals and practices had any meaning to them.

The sampled pastors, church elders, and family members of the bereaved who were Christians gave the relevant information on burials that they had witnessed and some of the observation they made. In particular, the pastors were able to give their experiences from burial services that they had conducted in the area and some of the challenges they had faced. On a similar note, ten (10) Kaya elders were randomly selected for interviews, in order to shed light on the Agiriama burial rites and practices. Kaya elders were considered in this study, because they were well informed on the cultural heritage of the Agiriama community. Therefore, they gave information on the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents’ burial rites and practices. In addition, using non-probability purposive sampling method, thirty (30) African traditional religion adherents Agiriama family members were selected for interviews to gather relevant information to the study. These were further divided into two, fifteen (15) older family members and fifteen (15) youth. The older family members were well informed on the Agiriama burial culture; moreover, they had experienced a lot on the burial rituals and practices and had the necessary information for the study.

Of the youth who were interviewed gender was considered to identify whether the indigenous burial rituals and practices had any meaning to them since they had been born and lived in the world at a time when there is cultural, political, economic and technological evolution. This method depended on the availability and willingness of the respondents to participate and on those cases that were typical to the population in terms
of characteristics being studied.\textsuperscript{152} The table 1.1 below shows the categories of the respondents that were sampled for the study.

Table 1: Categories of the Sampled Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sampled Number of Respondents per Category (n)</th>
<th>Percentage of Sampled Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Church pastors/clergy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Church elders</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Kaya and clan elders</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Indigenous Agiriama family members</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Christian Agiriama Family members</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.10.4 Secondary Sources

The study extensively reviewed secondary literatures which had information on the Agiriama cultural heritage with reference to death, burial rites and practices. The researcher also carried out a textual/document analysis of Christian burial rites and practices with the aim of doing a comparative analysis to map the similarities and

differences. It is from that analysis that areas of conflict between Christians and non-
Christians burial rites and practices was identified and discussed.

The works of Richard Airo and Kalume Tinga were of great help in understanding the cultural heritage of the Agiriama. Of particular interest was the research conducted by Airo on the ‘Inculturation of Nyere za Mwezi Agiriama funeral rite’. In his work, he analyzed the Agiriama mortuary rituals and mapped ‘Nyere za Mwezi’ as a cardinal ritual and a source of conflict between Agiriama Christians and the indigenous. On the other hand Kalume Tinga writes on the Agiriama cultural heritage as an anthropologist. Kalume argues that the Agiriama culture is at cross road due to Christianity, colonialism and secularization.

During document analysis, the two works were very important as the writers explicitly engaged with the Agiriama people to capture their worldview. In addition, their work helped to foster a rich dialogue between Christianity and African Indigenous Religion (AIR). It also gave the researcher a good opportunity to analyze the works of other African theologian who have written on related areas and concepts. All in all, the study utilized both published and unpublished works such as online thesis, newspapers, journal articles and books. In addition, the researcher visited various libraries and church archives to collect relevant data to the study. The churches selected were visited with an introductory letter from the university.

1.10.5 PrimarySources

In primary sources the relevant information was gathered from the respondents through the following research instruments: observation schedules, focus group
discussion (FGDs), interviews and interview schedules as discussed below. The researcher used unpublished works such us online thesis and articles.

1.10.6 Participant Observation

Participant observation has a long tradition in social science research for example it has been extensively employed by psychologists in their studies. Adler reviewed five observation paradigms/methods used and gave several examples of each. For instance; he observed that observation includes classification, listening and having face to face interaction to observe both verbal and visual behavior. The classification of phenomenon is used here to show the variety of observational approaches. Kombo and Tromp assert that in participant observation the researcher becomes an active functioning member of the culture under study. The researcher became an active participant in the performance of the burial rituals in order to gather the relevant information for the study.

The researcher used participants’ observation in this study and her role changed from detached observer of the situation to both participant in the ritual ceremonies and observer of the situation. Adler and Adler described three membership roles for the observer as an active participant, passive participant and mere onlooker/observer. Wolcott distinguished between the researcher opportunities to be an active participant, a privilege observer and/or a limited observer. In this study, the role of the researcher changed from passive to active participants depending on context and cooperation of the

155 Ibid.
hosts during burials. The researcher attended at least five burial services within the period of the study, during holidays since during that period schools were closed and the researcher was on a long holiday. The researcher made observations on how the burial services were being conducted and recorded the proceedings for further analysis as elaborated in chapters two and three.

The researcher was keenly in the observations whereby she was mainly concerned with how the burial rituals were conducted from the time the person died until burial and some time after the burial. The researcher was able to mix freely with mothers from the bereaved families since the Agiriama culture allows women to sit separately from men. Moreover, it is the duties of the women to guard the body by staying near the body. Then it was easy for the researcher to ask questions from the mothers concerning the area of study.

The researcher was able to observe and confirm things like the primary burial rituals such as: washing the body, shaving the hair, holding of the ear, prayers, and dressing the body. The researcher was also able to listen to what the mourners were talking about in relation to the dead which in some cases could reveal the cause of the death for the case of the indigenous Agiriama people. Thus the researcher was able to confirm and supplement the information gathered through other methods such as interview and focus group discussions. However, in participant observation, the attitude of the researcher is paramount, and there are several opinions on this matter. According to Glaser qualitative data ought to be at arm’s length from the researcher, yet

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Charmaz contends that ‘no analysis is neutral’ despite the researcher’s claim.157 Henceforth, the researcher during the burials changed roles; during the conflicts over burial site and rituals, the researcher only documented the happenings and asked questions where necessary during the proceedings for the burial, the researcher actively participated in activities such as in singing the Christian mourning songs, cooking, and prayers. The researcher joined the family members for both Christians and African traditional adherents in activities such as fetching some water and firewood.

Plate 1: The researcher participated in activities such as cooking
(Assisting Christian family members to chop some meat)

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In one of the burials the researcher attended she was asked to pray during the sharing of the deceased’s belongings and she did so. In other burials, the researcher was asked by the Christians to lead some choruses during the burial service. The researcher also participated in preparing and serving food for the bereaved family members. In waiting for the actual burial, the Christian mourners sang and danced in slow motion around the coffin, in this case the researcher participated in the singing and dancing. The researcher was keen to identify the areas where there was cultural conflict during the three stages of burial rituals which are pre-burial rituals, during burial rituals and post-burial rituals. The conflict is cultural so it may not be visible but still it was there. Observation was convenient for the study because the researcher was able to verify the information which was gathered from the respondents.

1.10.7 Focus Group Discussion

According to Kelly, focus group discussion in a qualitative research involves listening to people and learning from them. This was quite significant since the participants of the group may help one another to recall, verify and rectify items of data related to the study. The researcher used focus group discussion method to gather more information on the burial rituals and practices among the Agiriama Christians and the indigenous Agiriama people. The researcher conducted focus group discussions which included the bereaved family members both Christians and the indigenous at Mariakani and Munyenzeni which composed of adults and youth, and kaya elders.

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The researcher conducted four focus group discussions and in one instance, she came across a group which composed of both sides of the protagonists. Each group was free to elaborate the reasons behind their positions during the conflict, however, they quickly pointed out that they were reconciled by the Kaya elders after paying a traditional fine called *Khadzama*. The researcher considered that all adults were eligible to take part in the Focus Group Discussions regardless of their age.

However each group was limited to about eight to ten people since it was easy to handle the smaller number of participants. The focus group participants were identified through purposive snow-balling technique. The discussions started with smaller numbers but as time went by the number increased since the group members informed others. The discussions were gender based which allowed the respondents to open up on their experiences during burials. The researcher used a checklist in the discussions to ensure all the necessary areas were covered as per the study objectives. Some of the questions that the researcher also used during the focus group discussion were as follows:

a) What are the Agiriama Christian burial ritual practices?

b) What are the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents’ burial rituals practices?

c) Are there any consequences of not observing the proper burial rituals and practices?

d) What are the differences between the Agiriama Christians burial ritual practices and the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents’ burial practices?

e) What is the cause of conflict?

f) How do we solve the conflict during burials?
1.10.8 Interviews and Interview Schedules

The researcher used semi-structured interview schedules to solicit for relevant information from the respondents. The researcher prepared a set of questions which she used for the purpose of this study. This helped the researcher to interact with the participants to get the necessary information needed for the study. Using purposive snowball sampling technique the researcher interviewed 30 participants. These included; 15 church members/Christians, (5 pastors, 5 church elders, 5 church members) and 15 non-Christians/Indigenous Agiriama people who included 5 kaya elders, 5 clan elders and 5 indigenous bereaved family members of the Agiriama people.

The researcher employed face to face in-depth interviews, and conducted two telephonic interviews with two respondents who were very far away and busy and it became quite difficult to access them yet they had very necessary information. In the interviews conducted with the Christians/church members, the researcher sought to understand the Christian burial practices and their understanding of African funeral rites and burial practices. Equally, they were asked to identify sources of conflicts between them and the non-Christians during burials. Their responses were digitally recorded and notes written down by the researcher for further analysis. On the other hand, the researcher also engaged the African religious adherents Agiriama people in interviews in order to understand their worldview in relation to funeral rites and burial practices. During the interviews, they narrated how Christianity, Islam and modernization have watered down their cultures.

The kaya elders were useful in making the researcher understand the significance of the Agiriama culture. Most of the Kaya elders have internalized the Agiriama cultural practices; they have lived the Agiriama customs and are serious practitioners of the Agiriama Indigenous religion as confirmed by Richard Airo. During the researcher’s oral interviews with the Kaya elders and the clan elders, the researcher came to learn that there were some practices which are similar and some ritual practices which were different to the Christian burial rituals as will be seen in chapter four. These different rituals are the cause of the conflict which emanate during burials. The researcher was keen in identifying what the rituals were, where they were performed and the meaning attached to each ritual. This method was suitable because it provided an in-depth information on the burial rituals for the Christians and the African traditional religion adherents Agiriama community.

1.10.9 Data Presentation and Analysis

The raw data collected from the field was coded and transcribed for further analysis. After the analysis data was presented through various ways including charts and pictures and graphs. The researcher used pictures of small group discussion for data presentation since the pictures were easy to follow and understand. Equally, charts were used to show the main causes of conflict between Christian and Agiriama burial practices. In addition, graphs like bar graphs were used to show the differences and similarities in Christian and indigenous burial practices. In qualitative analysis, the

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researcher employed a qualitative method of data analysis where data is organized inform of themes with supporting facts/evidence.

In qualitative analysis, the researcher obtained detailed information about the phenomenon being studied; established patterns, trends and relationships from the information gathered.\textsuperscript{163} It is important to note that the information gathered was critically analyzed according to the objectives of the study, which formed the chapters of the study. The data was examined and brought into comparison where Christian burial practices were contrasted against the Agiriama. The chapters were organized in themes depending on the data gathered.

\textbf{1.10.10 Research Reliability and Validity}

The reliability of a research instrument concerns the extent to which the instrument yields the same results to repeated trials while validity refers to confidence in the measuring instruments.\textsuperscript{164} Thus, it determines the extent to which the measuring instruments measured what they purport to measure. As qualitative research, study objectives and methodology gives the credibility of the study. Lincoln and Guba suggest that to achieve a higher validity the following criteria should be maintained: credibility, transferability and objectivity. In order to achieve this, the researcher prepared a questionnaire that addressed the objectives of the study. Equally, the researcher employed methodological triangulation which refers to the use of multiple methods to study a single problem, looking for convergent evidence from different

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sources such as interviewing, discussions, observation, and review of documentary sources in all stages of data collection. The researcher used multiple methods to answer the research questions for instance interviews and focus group discussions were conducted on the same phenomenon.

1.10.11 Ethical Issues

Research ethics deals primarily with the interaction between researchers and the subjects of study. The essential purpose of research ethics is to protect the welfare of the research participants. Ethical review is increasingly becoming mandatory, for social science research globally. In Kenya, most leading universities require that all social science research involving human participants be reviewed by independent research ethics committee. Therefore this study had to go through ethical review for permission. The research participants were informed of their right to participate in the study and to withdraw from the study whenever they wished to. Equally, the researcher sought for the respondent’s informed consent before engaging them for interviews or focus group discussions (FGDs). The respondents were informed on the purpose of the study and main objectives prior to the field work. In addition, the researcher booked for appointments with the respondents early enough in order to give them time for preparation for the interviews. The researcher also ensured confidentiality of information given and the rights of the respondents in general. The respondents who did not want their names to be mentioned were respected. It is only those who were willing their names to appear in this study were included with their fully authority. The researcher had to use pseudonyms in cases where the information was necessary and sensitive to protect the privacy of the respondents. Some of the respondents said that they had no problem
with their names being included in the study so long as their views were going to be useful to many people.

1.10.12 Research Challenges

A challenge is something new and difficult which requires great effort and determination. In this study the challenges are the limitations, which are any aspects that hinder a study and its findings. In the process of conducting this study, the researcher faced a number of challenges in terms of data collection and literature review. For instance; in most African communities, Agiriama included, conflicts are solved secretly and without much publicity. The researcher attended five burials and in those homes with an exception of two (2 out of 5), the conflicts were resolved amicably without the quest for attention. Death is feared, so some of the participants feared to discuss matters concerning death openly and freely even after the researcher had explained the purpose of the study. This made some participants fear to disclose some important information to the researcher. In this case the researcher had to look for people who were willing to participate in the study.

The African traditional religion adherents’ women are not allowed to look inside the grave during burial with an exception of burials of young babies. This made it difficult for the researcher to observe the laying of the body in the graves of the AgiriamaAfrican traditional religion adherents. For this case the researcher had to rely on the information given by the elders and the male family members on the rituals performed at or inside the tomb for the African traditional religion adherents. However, the researcher in some time could get some few moments of peeping after consulting the elders of the bereaved family.
It was difficulty to access current literature to identify gaps for the intended study because most of the libraries had old cited literature. This was a challenge to the researcher since literature review should be within the scope of at least ten years. The researcher therefore, had to search for the current literature from the internet. Lack of referencing materials, most of the Agiriama culture is passed orally from generation to generation. This made it difficult to get some of the meaning of the ritual practice because they may just say it is the tradition or that is what our elders did without giving the proper interpretation. In such cases the researcher had to consult more elders for the clarification of the meanings of some of the ritual practices. Some participants feared to mention death, so during group discussions one would for example give a lame excuse to avoid answering the question or even leave the group quietly without telling anyone. For example one respondent once said, “We hope to live up to a hundred years, am only forty years old why talk about death? Don’t you believe that God will give you many years to live?” “Usinigoshe” (Do not scare me)” the respondent did not want the researcher to talk about things concerning death. In such cases the researcher had to give more explanation and more time for the respondents to be ready to answer the research questions.

Another challenge was that some of the Agiriama people mistook the researcher for a bad person. Some were wondering why the researcher was able to talk about death and burial rituals without fear and thought that the researcher possessed some super natural power like being a witch. The researcher assured the participants that there was no hidden agenda for this study and that it is for educational purpose. Death concerns the loss of loved ones which is such a painful experience. So some respondents got
overcome with emotions when they narrated how burials of their loved ones were conducted. Sometimes they would shed some tears as they remembered those sad moments. Some of the African traditional religion adherents would narrate their sad stories of how their loved ones were given Christianized burial by the Christian family members out of their will and these surviving ATR adherents’ family members would express their sorrow hoping to get a solution from the researcher. The researcher would console them that it would be alright with them. The purpose of the research is to educate people so that such misunderstanding could be avoided in future. The researcher would comfort them that they have gone before them but their souls were resting in peace and that there was nothing bad happening to the departed relatives. Sometimes it was difficult to hold a pen and a paper, or take photos while people were crying and lamenting, it was a painful experience. In other cases the researcher was overcome by emotions and cried with the mourners during burials. However, the researcher was careful not lose the focus of the study and was able to gather the main points needed for the study.

One big challenge was that the burial rituals and practices among the Agiriama are passed on from one generation to another orally. So some take the rituals and practices the way they are without knowing the meaning attached to them, they only say it’s our tradition. The PEFA church burial rituals are not written either, thus the researcher had to rely on the information given by the respondents. The researcher had also to rely on observation. In some cases the way the burial was conducted would differ due to lack of reference materials. Some would throw soil into the grave three times and say “dust to dust” while others would not.
1.11 Conclusion

This chapter covered the background information of the study which included the African concept of death and the Agiriama worldview on death and funeral rites. The Agiriama religious beliefs on life and death were considered. The Agiriama believe in an after life in the spiritual world of ancestors. The chapter briefly looked at the causes of death according to the Agiriama people and the main causes include witchcraft, nature and negligence to the ancestors. Moreover, this chapter covered the statement of the problem which surrounds the difference in beliefs and faith among the Christians and the indigenous adherents among the Agiriama community which has resulted to the conflicts during burials. The research questions were highlighted which were used to gather the data for the study.

This chapter also covered the literature review which helped to verify and confirm the data from the primary sources. The interpretation of culture theory by Geetz was used to guide the study, combined with the inter-religious theory by Johnathern Napier. The major research challenges included the Agiriama fear of death and the lack of written materials for the Agiriama culture which is passed from generation to generation orally. This research on the conflicts between Christian and African burials with reference to the Agiriama community has adopted a qualitative design. As a qualitative study, it combines both a theological and an anthropological or cultural review of the burial practices from Agiriama Christian and Agiriama Indigenous people. By theology, it means Christianity engaging in a dialogue with Agiriama culture within the wider framework of contextualization.
The primary means of data collection involved in-depth interviews with 25 respondents. The bulk of the data also came from participant observations, Focus Group Discussions with participants randomly selected from the study area using the snowball technique and unpublished sources. Equally important was secondary sources of information such as journal articles and books. The literatures were important in tracing the culture of the Agiriama community and building the argument for the study. The next chapter discusses the Christian funeral rites and Agiriama mortuary practices.
CHAPTER TWO
THE AGIRIAMA BURIAL RITES AND PRACTICES

2.1. Introduction

Chapter one covered the background of the study, statement of the problem; objectives of the study, theoretical frame work, literature review and research methodology. The aim of this chapter is to analyze the data and discuss the findings on the Agiriama burial rituals and practices.

2.2 Agiriama Burial Rites and Practices

The Agiriama people have very many and elaborate burial rituals and practices, which have to be performed for the deceased to go in peace and the family to receive blessings from God. According to Mwaiha Mwambire, when the dead are at peace, the family members receive peace and prosperity. David Parkins stressed the importance of the Agiriama burial rituals that they were paramount for the community’s well being. Equally Chidongo confirmed that whatever ritual the Agiriama performed was to the well being of the community. However these rituals and practices depend on the type of death, age of the deceased, sex, position of birth, type of disease which caused the death, social status of the deceased. In addition, if the deceased’s mother has lost a child for the first time, the deceased is not given full funeral rites. This is because the Agiriama believe that death does not alter or end the life or the personality of an individual, but only causes a change in the condition expressed in the concept of

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165 Mwaiha Mwambire at an oral interview with the author on 10/4/2016 at Matano Mane.
ancestors. This view is confirmed by Kaya elders, the clan elders and Ade,\textsuperscript{168} Mbiti,\textsuperscript{169} Tinga.\textsuperscript{170} The Kaya elders confirmed that the Agiriama people like any other African community fear death thus prefer a slow death rather than sudden death. Sudden death such as accidents, suicide and death from short illness are considered as bad death.

This was confirmed by Mbiti who asserted that when one is sick and has been tread but still no improvement, will call for the relatives to be near him before death claims his or her soul.\textsuperscript{171} This means that when a person falls sick, the family members will do all possible ways and means to treat the person, which include consulting herbalist, diviner to identify the causes of the illness and its cure. Kenga Chai, in an oral interview with the researcher said “nobody likes death,” he explained that though death is inevitable, people would try all means possible to avoid it. If the illness continues to worsen the sick person if an adult, will send for her/his close family members such as sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, grandsons and granddaughters to give them his/her last words which are very important as they serve as a will and blessings to the family members.

The most elaborate rituals are performed when an adult has died, just like the case of Honorable Ole Ntimama, the Maasai elder, his burial was conducted in a more elaborate manner as compared to other deaths because he was an elder of the Maasai people and a national figure. Moreover a certain number of rituals are omitted depending on the age, sex, marital status, type of death and the disease which caused the

\textsuperscript{169} J. S. Mbiti, \textit{African Religions and Philosophy}. London Heinemann, 1969.
\textsuperscript{171} J. S. Mbiti, \textit{African Religions and Philosophy}. London Heinemann, 1969.
deathkulingana na mafereri\textsuperscript{(d depending on the cause of the death) as supported by Kaya elders.\textsuperscript{173} The ways in which some of the rituals are performed reflect the way a particular death occurred. The rituals are categorized as being in two broad categories which are primary and secondary burial rites and practices. In my primary sources, the kaya elders confirmed that if the after death rituals are not performed the dead person may become a wondering ghost, thus unable to ‘live’ properly after death and therefore, a danger to those who remain alive; this was confirmed by Atinga in his study\textsuperscript{174} Performance of burial rituals and practices also serve as a guarantee of protection for the living other than to secure a safe passage for the deceased. Furthermore, it is believed that the dead have power over the living; this was contributed by most of the indigenous respondents, also confirmed by Atinga, in his work,\textsuperscript{175} Mbiti,\textsuperscript{176} Ade.

\textbf{2.3 Primary Burial Rituals Practices}

These are rituals which are performed as soon as death has been confirmed until burial has been conducted. According to Richard Airo; these burial rites can also be referred to as pre- burial rites\textsuperscript{177} as they are performed in preparation for the actual burial. Upon death, the following rituals have to be done:

\textbf{2.3.1 Closing the eyes and the mouth}

\textsuperscript{173}Kaya Elders on focus group discussion on 16th February 2016.
\textsuperscript{175}Ibid.
The eyes of the deceased have to be closed once a person is confirmed to be dead. The eyes are said to be powerful even if one is dead. If the eyes keep on staring at the mourners they scare people, the elders say the deceased eyes when left open claim for another soul. The eyes are also openings which when left open flies will touch these eyes and spread maggots which makes the body decompose fast which is a shame to the family members that they did not close the eyes at first before the body became hard. In all the burials which the researcher attended, it was observed that the deceased’s eyes and mouth were closed. It is believed that when a dead person opens the eyes or mouth upon the arrival of someone, then that person is identified as having had a hand in that person’s death. This was narrated by the elders such as Kenga Chai, Charles Baya and some of the family members who participated in this study. Sidi Wanje who had just lost a mother said that they had to close the eyes and the mouth quickly and lay her body straight. She said that the mouth is also closed and may be supported with a piece of cloth tied around the head. Kenga Chai explained that if the mouth remains open it is said that the deceased is calling for another life which is scaring to the mourners. The mouth is an opening which when left open, just like the eyes, flies will enter the mouth and grow into maggots before burial which is not good to those who love their dear ones. An interviewee who did not want his name mentioned narrated as follows:

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178 Kenga Chai interviewed on 4th May 2017 at Kilifi (2nd Interview).
179 Opening of the eye is said that is doing so to see the one who caused his/her death, opening the mouth a sign of surprise upon seeing the one who has caused the sudden death.
180 Sidi Charo at an oral interview with the author on 12/4/2016 at Mariakani.
“If it is someone who did bad things to the deceased, be it his/her father, mother, brother, sister or grandparents, the deceased will open the eyes or mouth, to see that particular person. If he looks at that person and opens the mouth kumlola na kumaka (looks at the person and wonder) it is bad it’s like a curse, and it is believed that bad things will happen to that person”.

After closing the eyes and the mouth, the body is straightened and laid facing upwards Vingarigari (lying with the back) covered with a sheet once that has been done then the close family member may start crying loudly. Kache Charo Menza said that crying can be done only if the family members are sure that the body has been kept well such as after washing and dressing has been done181.

2.3.2 Breaking the news of a death

Among the Agiriama people death news is announced by women, sometimes it’s done after consulting some elders to find if there are any things to be done before people start the loud cry. If the deceased person had some instructions, such as the person might have instructed the close relatives that if he/she dies nobody should cry then people will inform each other that they should not cry loudly. Changawa Karisa one of the elders asserted that for those very old people, mostly diviners upon death it’s until another diviner is consulted to come and give guidelines whether the mourners should cry loudly or not. The diviner or an elder or elders guide the family on what to do as far as handling of the deceased is concerned and on the performance of the burial rituals and practices.182

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181 Kache Charo Menza in a FGD with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
182 Changawa Karisa in a focus group discussion with the author on 19th June 2016 at Mariakani.
Equally Myawara Garero said that failure to observe the prohibitions could anger the ancestors who would in turn punish the whole family. Sidi Maya said that if the deceased died of diseases like mahana (leprosy) or kiraho (aoth) people are not allowed to cry. Kenga Chai confirmed that if people cry for such death the disease that killed the diseased will infect other family members and cause some more death to the family members. Mwaiha Mwambere said that the elders of the family would contact a diviner to perform some rituals. Kache Charo Menza explained to the researcher that for a person who dies of leprosy nobody is allowed to cry or shade tears. The elderly men cut somechaad (cactus) and drop its milk around the deceased and say these are the ‘tears’ for the deceased which will also be placed at the grave after burial just like flowers on the grave. If a polygamous man dies, only the first wife is allowed to break the cry (kumula kiriro).

Kenga Chai said that the first wife is respected as second in authority from the husband and the junior wives cannot do anything without her permission. This was confirmed by Richard Airo who asserted that if the man died in the second wife’s house, the body has to be brought back to the eldest wife and that only the eldest wife has the mandate to break the death announcement. If the deceased person has no restriction kanamizizo (no restrictions) people can cry as they wish Wakuririrwa (they can cry) women will break into a long loud cry, Oowi vidzaricha, Oowi baba, mulumangu.

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183 Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
184 Sidi Mayin an oral interview with the author on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
185 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 15th April 2016 at Kilifi.
186 Mwaiha Mwambere in a focus group discussion with the author on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
187 Kache Charo Menza in a FGD with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
188 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 15th April 2016 at Kilifi.
mama, mwanangu ni bai, (Ooh he has left us, he is gone). Every one calling names according to how they are related to the deceased. If it is a death of a kaya elder, no cry is allowed until other kaya elders come to authorize the cries, since the kaya elders have some restrictions. When neighbors hear the noise, they come to accompany the family.

From this time onwards, people stay in the deceased’s compound day and night. For Kenya elder, the colleagues are the ones to authorize the crying and tell the family members on what is needed for the burial of their friend; they have to conduct some rituals before crying failure to these bad things will happen to the family. If a baby dies, there are no restrictions to be observed. Hence, the death of babies is announced immediately, and the body buried by women achere waache (it is still women’s affair). The Kaya elders confirmed that the baby is still with the mother and had not yet been assimilated to the whole clan.\footnote{Daniel Mwawara Garero, Asha Nyamvula Juma, Mariam Mohammed Salim in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.} Chula Kalume explained that the baby is still with the women since it has not started teething badokudzikombola (has not been assimilated into the community). He explained that once the child starts teething, at least the two lower incisors then the baby can be buried at the family cemetery. In an interview with the youth most of them seemed to be unaware of who should start the crying. Dume Chengo, Daniel Chengo said “we usually see people crying but we are not aware who should start the cry.”\footnote{Dume Chengo, Daniel Chengo in a focus group discussion with the author 26th March 2016 at Mariakani.} This shows that most of the youth find it hard to get the meaning of the cultural practices since they are orally passed from generation to generation.
2.3.3 Holding the ear/ Kugwirwa sikiro

According to my observations among the five funerals I attended, I discovered that in some occasions the deceased ear is ritualistically held. A close relative of the deceased holds the ear and utters some words. Kenga Chai\textsuperscript{192} Daniel Garero and Chula Kalume too confirmed that the ear is held immediately upon death as a form of prayer.\textsuperscript{193} A way of giving farewell to the deceased telling the deceased that though the he/she has gone before them it is not their wish that he/she has died before all of those other relatives. It is away of telling the deceased to go in peace knowing that death awaits every creature. Chula Kalume added that it is a way of assuring the deceased that we are all going to follow the same fate so being at peace this is God’s will.\textsuperscript{194} Chula Kalume asserted that holding the ear upon death is a form of confirming to the deceased that the family is very sorry for the loss of the beloved one. Chula Kalume confirmed that by asserting;

\begin{quote}
“Now that you are gone to ways of every human being, to the great home, you have gone before us, we tried all our best to cure you but we could not. This is the will of God so please may you go well kala radhi (please pray for us) so that we may have good health. Give us good health, good harvest, peace and prosperity.”
\end{quote}

Chula Kalume said these words while holding his deceased mother’s ear. In some cases the ear of the deceased is held if the deceased had disagreement \textit{makosana} with another close relative. Kenga Chai argued that this can be in the case when the deceased had quarreled with the living member and said that none of them should attend

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{192}Kenga Chai 2\textsuperscript{nd} oral interview with the author on 4/5/2016 at Kilifi.
\item \textsuperscript{193}Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February at Bengo in Rabai.
\item \textsuperscript{194}Chula Kalume oral interview with the author on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
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the other’s burial, *hatha nikifasenzi unizike* (even if you hear am dead, do not come for my burial). On humanitarian grounds, if the surviving relative hears the news of a death of the other and come to the burial, the deceased’s ear has to be held and they perform the ritual. If the person with whom they had disagreement arrives at deceased’s home, the deceased may open the eyes or mouth. If this happens it is a curse *laana* to the person who is still surviving. Bad things such as sudden death may occur to the person who has caused the deceased eyes to be open. The victims or a go-between will take a jug of water *Kaha ya madzi* (water container) hold the deceased’s ear and say a prayer of reconciliation such as this prayer said by Mwaiha Mwambire at a burial of his cousin sister

“Yes, Sidi’s Mother, you had a serious disagreement with your sister in-law. This was because of your children who had fought each other. Now because of this you swore to each other that you shall not talk to each other and that even if you die she should not come to your burial and if she dies you shall not attend her burial either. Now my sister you have gone before her and you know she can not fail to attend your burial. She feels very sorry—we beseech you to please forgive her. She wants you to go peacefully. Allow her to bury you, *(Vruu...)*.”

Drinks the water and spits at the deceased’s head three times (see also prayer for the African traditional religion adherents among the Agiriama community Appendix 11)

Mwaiha Mwambire holds that if this ritual is not performed, the surviving relative will not be at peace, something bad might happen. This can lead to sudden death. Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu explained to the researcher that his auntie had a serious disagreement with his brother, and vowed not to step at her brother’s home till death,

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195Mwaiha Mwambire in a focus group discussion with the author on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
196Mwaiha Mwambire at an oral interview with the outer on 10/4/2016 at Matano Manne.
one day when she heard that her brother’s son had passed on, out of humanity and love for her brother since blood is thicker than water, she came. She was a Christian and did not perform the above ritual. After burial, on the third day, while she was washing the deceased’s clothes, she suddenly fell down and died on the spot. He further narrated that when investigation was done there was nothing wrong discovered, upon discussions njama (consultations) the family members remembered that the deceased had vowed not to step at her brother’s home hence the cause of her death. The body was taken to her matrimonial home for burial.

The Kaya elders in a focus group asserted that their fellow Kaya elders upon death, one is not allowed to be taken to the mortuary. Hence, to prevent their deceased body from going bad, the deceased ear has to be ritualistically held by a fellow Kaya elder. Moreover, holding of the ear is done, also when transporting the body from one place to another. Daniel Mwawara Garera, one of the Kaya elders asserts that the deceased might have left some instructions on how or where to be buried, if this is not done for example, if the deceased while alive instructed the relatives not to be taken to the mortuary when he/she dies. The deceased might have left a word concerning where he/she would like to be buried. Then these wishes have to be obeyed, if the family change, when carrying the body, this ritual has to be performed, is not or else, accidents may occur.

Sidi Charo, one of the respondents narrates that her father died at her step mother’s house. According to the Agiriama tradition, the husband is buried at the first wife’s

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197 Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu in an oral interview with the author on 6th June 2016 at Mariakani.
198 Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16/2/2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
compound, but since they were not on good terms, he had said that when he died, he should be buried at the young wife’s compound. The elder sons did not want their father to be buried at their step mother’s place. So they organized to carry the body to the first wife’s compound. The body was laid on a mat, and placed on a *Mwakishu* (simple bed). The bed became so heavy that it could not be lifted by those who wanted to carry it. When they tried with force, a swarm of bees came and stung the mourners who got dispersed and everyone was helter-skelter. She added that, a diviner was consulted, and they realized that the deceased did not want to be taken to where those sons were going to bury him. Traditionally, the body was to be buried at the first wife’s compound so the ritual of holding the ear was performed and thereafter everything went on well. Kenga Chai added that this rite is also performed before burial when the body is in the grave.\(^\text{200}\) When the cause of death is a mystery and they suspect that there is someone’s hand in it. A close male relative usually an old man will stand close to the grave; open a hole on the burial clothes *Sanza* (shroud) if possible kneel down to hold the deceased ear and say.\(^\text{201}\)

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Funashikithika kukala Udzahuricha mwenehu be kala Ni mulungu mwenye Ni sawa ela kala vina mkono wa mtu be sino kahumanya ele uwe, naye Mulungu mnamanya, be ye arekuhenda vivi usimpe raha nahenza mwezi usigome naye akathuwe.

(We are very sad that you have left us so suddenly, if its God’s will it is okey, but if somebody has a hand on it, do not give peace to the one who destroyed you – we want before the end of one month the killer to follow you in the grave).\(^\text{202}\)
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After the prayer, burial continues with the hope that justice will be done by the gods in due time. One of the respondents explained to the researcher that holding of the ear is sometimes done as a form of prayer at the grave to say bye to the deceased. This ritual practice is very important and failure to its observance may lead to immediate consequences which include sudden death of some close relatives as seen above. The African traditional religion adherents Agiriama youth confirmed to the researcher that when they go for burial what matters to them is to see the actual burial taking place not those many rituals performed.203

2.3.4 Shaving the hair of the deceased

If the deceased is a man, shaving of the hair is done by men and if the deceased is a woman, shaving is done by women,204 marika (age mates). Sidi Charo Mangi added that this has to be done when the body is still warm.205 This ritual was also observed by Richard Airo where he asserted that if the deceased is a male shaving is done by his brother or cousins or uncles, if female by her mother, grandmother or sister. The shaving is done using a razorblade as found among the Luo of South Nyanza.206 Thus, this ritual is done by other communities such as the Luo of South Nyanza. The Kaya elders confirmed that it used to be done with a very sharp knife which men used to carry with them whenever they went mwaboleni (a sharppointed Knife) or another kind of very sharp knife which is used by wine tapers luhamba. For the case of those who die of

203 Esther Zawadi Ngala, Naomi Mbotze Ngala, Garama Kithi, Mahenzo Kithi ina focus group discussion with the author on 26th April 2016 at Mariakani.
205 Sidi Charo Mangi in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 216 at Mariaani.
dreaded diseases like leprosy shaving was not done. Airo observes that it is due to the contagious nature of the disease.  

In an oral interview with Sidi Wanje, 208 and Robert Kasiwa, they explained to the researcher that the hair of the deceased is tied very tightly in a piece of cloth and kept under tight security. This is done to prevent the hair from being stolen by atsai (witches) who are believed that they hunt for such hair to use it for evil purpose. Robert Kasiwa 209 said that the hair then is kept well till during burial when it is buried with the deceased. Theyouth, Karembo Baya and Charo Katana confirmed that they usually witness the shaving of corpse but they could not give any meaning attached to these rituals. Moreover, they admitted that in most cases the rituals are performed by adults who may not explain the meaning to them.

Charles Baya, one of the respondent confirmed that the youth are considered young and in most cases they are not told the important matters concerning the clan until when they get married and have children. 211 Kenga Chai one of the respondent asserted that most of the youth live in town with their working parents. While others go to school most of the time which makes it difficult for them to learn the cultural practices and their meaning. The Kaya elders confirmed that Shaving ritual signifies the beginning of new life. Chula Kalume noted thus:" 212 He/she came with hair (Nyere za ndani), it was shaved (zanyolwa) when you began new life on earth, and those you got from outside (Nyere zanze) are shaved to begin new life in the spiritual world of ancestors”.

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208 Sidi Wanje in an oral interview with the author on 19th June 2016 at Mariakai.
209 Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu in an oral interview with the researcher on 6th June 2016 at Mariakan.
210 Karembo Baya and Charo Katana in a focus group discussion on 12th April 2016 at Mariakan.
211 Charles Baya oral interview on 2/1/2016 at Matanomanne.
212 Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
Airo observed that it is done to mark a transition to the spiritual world to make the deceased appear clean before the ancestors.\textsuperscript{213} This is supported by Mbiti who asserted that the African see death as a rite of passage and there is close link between the living and the living dead,\textsuperscript{214} however Mbiti’s work is on the wider African traditional religion and it is about many Africans while this work is about the Agiriama community. The bereaved family members in oral group discussion and some in oral interview confirmed to the researcher that there is another shaving for the close family members. The family members such as wife/husband, children more so the first born daughters and first born sons; have to be ritually shaved. Shaving for the family members is done on the last day of mourning. According to the interpretation of culture theory, every ritual has symbolic meaning attached to it. The Agiriama bereaved family members are shaved to mark the end of the mourning period. It is also done to mark the beginning of new life for the family members; a life to be lived without the deceased, since life has to continue.

\textbf{2.3.5 Washing the deceased}

Washing is done immediately after death and another washing is done before burial. Upon death and after the necessary steps have been taken as explained above, the body is immediately bathed. As per my observation and as expressed by Kaya elders,\textsuperscript{215} and bereaved family members, washing for the deceased is done by persons of the same sex. Daniel Mwawara said that adult women who are close family members wash the body of their women counter parts, while the body of a man is washed by

\textsuperscript{213} A. Richard, \textit{Towards the Inculturation of Nyere za Mwezi: An Agiriama Funeral Riten with reference to St, Thomas Catholic Church. Unpublished MA Dessertation, Pwani University, 2016.}
\textsuperscript{215} Kaya Elders on focus group discussion on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
fellow men. Richard Airo confirmed that if the deceased is a male, washing will be done by his brother or cousins or uncles in the case of a female she would be washed by her mother, sister or grandmother.\textsuperscript{216} The washing is done with warm water and soap. Sidi Charo, one of the respondent explained that the soap and water is used to remove dirt just like any other washing.\textsuperscript{217} Another respondent elaborated that warm water is used not only to remove dirt but to make the body warm and remain soft not to become hard in readiness for dressing. This shows that it is not only the Agiriama who wash their dead but other African communities do wash their corpse.

The Agiriama like other African communities, see death as a rite of passage, that the dead has been born in the spiritual world so the body is treated well like that of a newborn baby, this is confirmed by Atinga Samuel in his study \textit{Death and Dying} a study of the Frafra people of Northern Ghana.\textsuperscript{218} The indigenous youth whom the researcher interviewed in form of focus group discussion agreed that the deceased body is washed well, however they did not give any importance to the washing. Charo Katana said washing is done to make the deceased clean just like the way those people who are still alive wash their bodies.\textsuperscript{219} The deceased is then dressed in the normal nice clothing as if the deceased is alive and is going for a journey, this corresponds to the Agiriama view on death which is seen like a journey to return home, the deceased has returned home and now these are the preparations to the final home. Washing is done with care not to

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216 A. Richard, \textit{Towards the Inculturation of Nyere za Mwezi: An Agiriama Funeral Riten with reference to St, Thomas Catholic Church. Unpublished MA Dersertation, Pwani University, 2016.}
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217 Sidi Charo in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
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219 Charo Katana interviewed on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
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leave anything from the deceased incase witches take certain things from the deceased’s body to us to harm those still alive.

2.3.6 Agiriama mortuary rites

After the body has been washed and dressed it is not placed in the usual bedroom but in a room, at a convenient place where mourners could see the body easily, a person ready for a journey does not wait in a room but will wait at the stage ready to take off. The title of the dead person changes from the usual name to the deceased *mfu, mufadzi, lufu* (corpse) women are the only immediate companions of the deceased, and they sit around the body, fanning off any flies that may be hovering around. Some crying loudly, when a new arrival comes they are welcomed with loud cries by fellow women, the men cry quietly and join their fellow mourners respectively.

Kenga Chai, one of the kaya elders explained to the researcher that it is the Agiriama tradition not to talk ill of the deceased even if you know he/she was a bad person. He further explained that the dead have become spirits and if you do something bad to annoy them, they may hurt the person responsible for provoking their anger.220 The Kaya elders, who are the custodians of the Agiriama culture,221 explained to the researcher that, their dead colleagues are not taken to the mortuary as they wait for their burial. Instead they are kept at home in the deceased’s compound. However, Kenga Chai said that certain things have to be done to ensure the body does not go bad before burial takes place.222 He further explained to the researcher that the deceased ear has to be held as said above, this time in the form of prayer beseeching the deceased to wait for his/her

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220 Chula Kalume in a focus group discussion with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia.
221 Kaya elder’s focus group Discussion on 16/2/2017 at Bengo in Rabai.
222 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4th May 2017 at Kilifi (2nd interview).
distant relatives to come and see him/her for the last time, to give the family time to prepare for a good send off. Others lay the body on wet sand to act as a cooler to slow down decomposition till burial.

In the course of the study, the researcher observed an occasion where the body was beginning to show signs of decaying. The body had not been taken to the mortuary as the family was not in good financial position to take the body to the mortuary. When the deceased’s stomach began to swell, some coconut oil was smeared on the stomach together with some sugar. A coin was placed on the navel to the researcher’s surprise; the swelling went down slowly and remained in good position until the following day when burial was to be conducted. The bereaved family members explained to the researcher that the oil, the sugar and the coin help to make the stomach cold. If the stomach continues to swell then the body will be in danger of bursting open which is like a curse to the family and disrespect to the deceased.

In an oral interview, Kache Charo Menza family asserted that the elders, Kaya elders and diviners are not taken to the mortuary. Hence, for such people their corpse is kept at open places to avoid too much heat which make body swell and render it to decompose easily.

Mwaiha Mwambire added that after the body has been prepared upon death, the body is covered with clothes only half way up to around bellow the appendix so that the body could have enough ventilation to avoid decomposition. Kenga Chai, Charles

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223 Mwaiha Mwambire at a focus group discussion on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
224 Kenga chai interviewed on 4th May 2017 at Kilifi.
Baya, Sidi Charo, Sidi Katana and other bereaved family members confirmed that things are changing as far as mortuary rites are concerned. These days most people take their dead family members to modern mortuaries to preserve the body as they prepare for a good send off for their relatives. However, the Kaya elders affirmed that their dead colleagues have to be preserved at home and buried within three days. Thanks to modern medical facilities, home preservations can be made for those who are not in position to take their dead to mortuary. A doctor can be consulted to inject the deceased body for preservation as the family prepares for good send off for their deceased. With all these improvements, the Kaya elders still hold onto their tradition and would not allow their colleagues to be taken to mortuary upon death neither allows any modern medication to be used on their colleague’s dead bodies.

Chula Kalume asserted that with the coming of modern medical facilities, the Agiriama people are slowly shifting from traditional methods to modern ways of taking their dead relatives to mortuary. These allow people who stay far away from the family to be able to attend the burials of their dead relatives.

2.3.7 Guarding the body

Soon after death, whether young or adult, the body is not left alone it is surrounded by women until the burial time when men take the body for burial. For babies who die at birth, they are buried immediately by women as noted earlier. However, the dead body of a young child is given the same respect though there are few ritual performances unlike in the case of adults. Guarding of the body is done by women.

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225 Charles Baya interviewed on 2nd January 2016 at Matano Mane.
226 Sidi Charo in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
227 Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016, at Mtondia, Kilifi.
because men are the ones who dig the grave. Further, this is guaranteed so as to avoid any damage by animals like dogs and some insets like flies.

The Kaya elders and some clan elders whom the researcher interviewed asserted that the body of the deceased has to be guarded to prevent witches and witchdoctors from obtaining some particulars *vidhangaono* (particulars to be used for bad motives) from the dead body and use these particulars like hair, nails and even the deceased’s dirt to harm the family members. Sidi Charo\textsuperscript{228} explained to the researcher that in the case of young babies, the witches may take the hair, the nails, the baby’s dirt and the umbilical cord. These might be used to bewitch the mother; this could destroy her productivity rendering her sterile, thus unable to give birth to any other baby.

2.3.8 Preparations for burial

Death for married adults calls for more preparations as the burial rituals are very many and elaborate.\textsuperscript{229} The Kaya elders said that burial for witchdoctors require the fellow witch doctors to perform rituals according to their tradition. Mariam Mohammed Salim said that a specialist has to be contacted to guide the family on what to do as far as burial arrangements are concerned.\textsuperscript{230} To my observation, there are some ritual herbs gathered by the specialist to sprinkle around the home and the deceased house when taking the body to the grave. Charles Baya explained that if the herbalist’s bag *mkoba* is left unattended as the owner is dead it could cause harm to the family members in the

\textsuperscript{228}Sidi Charo in an oral interview with the researcher on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{230} Mariam Mohammed Salim in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
near future\textsuperscript{231}. For the Kaya elders and old people who die at the age of seventy and above the elders said that special oil \textit{majuha ga mbono} (castor oil) have to be prepared.

Kache Charo Menza said that, on the following day after death has occurred the elders gather \textit{mbono} (castor seeds), dry them and select special women to pound them to produce castor oil.\textsuperscript{232} She further said that the castor oil is applied on the deceased body on the third day and dressed for burial. This kind of ritual is very important as explained by some of the respondents in that it is a sign of respect to the deceased elder who is an ancestor to the clan. Kenga Chai said that such elders who are given this ritual of castor oil are sometimes after burial given another big memorial ceremony \textit{sadaka} (sacrificial ceremony) where the living elders put a memorial post \textit{Kigango} for such elders who are highly respected even after death.\textsuperscript{233} Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu explained to the researcher that the place where the memorial post is kept is considered holy and it becomes the family shrine where they conduct their prayers in future.\textsuperscript{234} Mwaiha Mwambire added that the place where the memorial post is erected becomes a landmark for the family; in future they can identify that as a place where they once lived.\textsuperscript{235} This proves their belief that death is not the end of life but the spirit of the deceased continues to live in the world of ancestors and in this case the elder is the ancestor as confirmed by Mbiti.\textsuperscript{236}

Preparations for a person who died with a dreaded disease like leprosy include building a small hut outside the compound. Sidi Katana explained that when her father

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{231} Charles Baya interviewed on 2\textsuperscript{nd} January 2016 at Matano Mane.
\bibitem{232} Kache Charo Menza in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani.
\bibitem{233} Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Kilifi.
\bibitem{234} Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu in an oral interview on 6\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.
\end{thebibliography}
in-law died of leprosy, a small hut was constructed where the body was kept till burial. In this case the body is taken out of the house through a hole. Immediately after burial the hut is set on fire, at the new grave some branches of cactus plants are spread to drop its white liquid ‘tears’ *matsoziges* (his/her tears) as nobody is allowed to cry. Richard Airo asserts that those who die with leprosy their corpse are not touched due to the contagious nature of the disease.\(^{237}\) The home is later ritually cleansed by a diviner who will sprinkle the whole home with medicinal herbs. Failure to do observe these rituals, it is believed that the leprosy will spread to other family members.

### 2.3.9 Dressing the deceased

The Agiriama community dresses their dead in a white shroud *sanza*. A piece of the shroud about one metre is cut and given to the wife/husband to wear it every day until it is torn, *jimbiri* (shroud), to show that he/she lost he/his lover, to make the wife be known that she lost her husband *Gungu* (widow or widower) or that the man lost his wife. However, the Kaya elders and diviners may differ, as explained by the elders in focus group discussion. Daniel Mwawara\(^ {238}\) hods that if the kaya elder lives in the Kaya and dies there it is a great honor and will be buried inside the kaya forest by his/her colleagues. This one they say he/she has acquired ancestorship. Kenga Chai adds that if the Kaya elder dies outside the Kaya, then he/she will be buried at his/her home.

The Kaya elders are dressed in clothes like those which they used to wear while one was still alive. These clothes include *kikoi* which has black, white and red stripes tied around the waist. A black colored cloth *kaniki* (black in colour) is put around the

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\(^{238}\)Daniel Mwawara in a focus group discussion on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
belly and white cloth \textit{bafutha} put (white colour) is put around the shoulders. Hadija Mdzomba\textsuperscript{239} explained that the kaya elders upon death are dressed just like the way they dressed on the day when one was initiated into the elders’ rank position he/she is holding in the society. This was confirmed by Parkin who asserted that the Kaya elders upon death are dressed in their clothes which they wore on the day when they were being initiated to the eldership\textsuperscript{240}. The symbolic meaning the Kaya elders gave is that though the elder is dead, the leadership continues in the next realm of life. The diviners on the other hand are decorated as if one is still alive and is performing divination.

In the researcher’s observation, the researcher witnessed the burial of a diviner. He died at the hospital after a long illness which caused his body to paralyse at the age of about sixty years. The burial rituals were very much elaborated. The man was dressed in red \textit{ngundu}, black \textit{kaniki} blue \textit{musimbiji} and white \textit{bafutha} clothing tied around the waist, around the belly and \textit{kishutu} was put under the head just like a pillow. The diviner decorated the deceased’s face with red soil \textit{mbuu} and black color from charcoal. The diviner guided the family members in every part of the rituals. When the body was being taken out for burial, a goat was slaughtered and the blood was poured at the door so that those carrying the body could step on the blood. The family members explained to the researcher that when this happens they believe that the deceased has stepped on the ritualistic blood.

\textsuperscript{239} Hadija Mdzomba in a focus group discussion on 16\textsuperscript{th} 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
Chula Kalume explained to the researcher that the deceased had become a spirit and blood *milatso* is the food for the spirits *koma*.\(^{241}\) When the body was taken out for viewing and later for burial the wife who was a Christian, upon seeing her husband decorated like that she said her husband was alive. She was overcome by emotions; she collapsed and was rushed to hospital which made her not witness the burial of her husband. The songs which he used to sing when performing his work were also sang to give the deceased a good send off to remember his work and to sooth the mourners.

### 2.3.10 viewing the Body/ *kuona mwiri*

The day when death occurs until burial all the people who come keep themselves busy helping either by cleaning the compound, building shades or preparing the coffin. Whenever a visitor comes he is shown where the deceased is laid, or goes straight to the place where the body is, after viewing the body may start crying *Kurira*. The family members who know that person will help the person to calm down, after that he or she joins the other mourners in the preparations. In most cases viewing of the body starts the soonest one dies and continues till the last day. When the body is being prepared for burial viewing is not allowed.

Chula Kalume\(^ {242}\) said that the deceased body for diviners and kaya elders is not allowed for viewing when it has been prepared ready for burial except the close family members may be allowed to view the body. This is because the Kaya elders bury them and the diviners too bury their fellow diviners. The mourners are allowed to view the body just before it is taken to the grave so as to pay their last respect to their loved one.

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\(^{241}\) Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mtondia (first Interview).

\(^{242}\) Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the researcher on 14\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mtondia.
One of the respondents said that viewing of the body gives an opportunity to the family members to make sure that the person put in the grave is real the one they know and not any other person. Kache Charo Menza\textsuperscript{243} explained to the researcher that seeing the body for the last time ensures that the person is laid down to rest and has been seen off by friends and relatives. She further explained to the researcher that the family comes into the reality of the separation from their beloved one as they see him/her for the last time.

2.3.11 Agiriama Postmortems

The Agiriama people do not bury a woman with a baby in her womb. Kenga Chai and the Kaya elders asserted that burying a woman with a baby inside her womb is burying two people while the other one is not known. They affirmed that this is bad according to the Agiriama tradition which could bring calamities to the family members which results to more death in the family. Hence, when a pregnant woman dies, during burial, the body is lowered in the grave and placed in position for burial.

Kenga Chai narrats that the family will have called for a specialist, who is brought through combined efforts of both the deceased woman’s father side and mother side. This specialist will go inside the grave with a sharp knife, together with three other men who will meet him at the bottom of the grave to assist him. The operator will do his job with the full authority of the deceased family; father, mother and husband who will have paid him. The other men outside the grave surround it so that the mourners do not see what is happening inside the grave. This is to avoid the mourners from being overcome by emotions. Chula Kalume, Kazungu Kenga, Kenga Chai explained that if the family

\textsuperscript{243} Kache Charo Menza In an oral interview with the author at Mariakani on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani.
did not get any specialist, the deceased father will take a knife, go down to the grave and pierce the deceased’s belly under the navel until blood comes out then he will leave everything inside the grave. For work done by the specialist, the baby is taken out of the mother’s womb and laid beside its mother. The mourners are told the sex of the baby so that they are able to tell that they buried a mother and her son or daughter.

Geertz contends that every ritual action has meaning;\(^{244}\) the mother and the baby are already dead yet the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents take the trouble of operating the deceased. This ritual is done in order to prevent death from claiming other life in the same family. It is the Agiriama tradition not to bury a woman with a baby inside her womb. The operator after the ritual is given some mavuo (leaves mixed with water) to ritual wash to assist to remove the smell of blood and remove the curse of death of a pregnant woman.

Sidi Charo,\(^{245}\) Chula Kalume and other elders also confirmed to the researcher that postmortem is not only done to pregnant women but also to those people for whom the cause of death is not known especially when death is sudden \textit{wakutumuka} (sudden death).\(^{246}\) If the body shows some signs that indicate the person was killed, postmortem is done to try to identify the cause of the death. The traditional postmortem is performed by a specialist just like that of the pregnant woman, with full authority from father side and mother side \textit{kuche na kulume} (mother and father side). The kaya elder confirmed to the researcher that this is done to establish the cause of death. However, Chula Kalume asserts that postmortem done traditionally may not give the correct result because they

\(^{245}\) Sidi Charo in an oral interview with the author on 12\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mariakani.
\(^{246}\) Chula Kalume in a focus group discussion with the author 16\(^{th}\) June 2016 at Bale (2\(^{nd}\) interview).
lack the modern facilities; hence the cause may not be found. A small piece of flesh is cut and mixed with herbs to curse the one who caused the death. When this ritual is done, it is believed that the one who caused death will start suffering even before a month ends after burial.

### 2.3.12 Consultations (Njama)

Kenga Chai asserted that consultation is done among the family members to plan for the burial. Kache Charo Menza explained to the researcher that consultation ensures that everyone’s views and the ideas of every member count to ensure a proper send off of the deceased. Consultations are done in order to plan on where to bury the body and how the burial will be conducted. Moreover, consultations are done to give the family time to arrange where to get the burial clothes, and whether to bury with a coffin and where to get the coffin. Airo confirms this by saying that the family members gather in small groups to arrange for the burial,\(^\text{247}\) so this practice is done by the Agiriama community. Charles Baya said that for married women whose dowry has not been paid, agreement has to be made through consultations on whether to be buried at the husband’s place or at the father’s home.\(^\text{248}\) Kenga Chai said that burial at husband’s place demands that dowry should be paid, if burial is to be at her father’s home, her children in this case have to part with their father to go and live with their uncles and their grandfather, father to their deceased mother.

Kenga chai asserts that the discussion is in two phases; one to plan how burial is to be conducted and yet another time consultation is done after burial, to give the

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\(^{248}\) Charles Baya oral interview on 2/1/2017 at Matanomanne.
proceedings of the after burial rites.\textsuperscript{249} Once the consultations for the arrangements have been made, the members select a representative to announce to the mourners whether there will be \textit{behanga} (funeral) and tell the mourners the day for slaughtering, if there will be no funeral the representative will tell mourners the reasons to why.

Consultations are also made to suggest people who will go to a specialist to determine the cause of that death. One of the respondents told the researcher that those who go to the specialist to look for the cause of death must be from the father’s side and mother’s side. The two sides will go to different diviners and report their findings. Kenga Chai as said earlier noted that if the findings are similar then they will be considered right. If no similarities the family members will be sent to different specialists again. If they get similar findings it will be considered true if no similarities then it could be considered that it is a natural death. More consultations are made on what is to be done once the cause of the death has been diagnosed. Even before burial takes place, if during the time of illness of the deceased there was identified a suspect, during burial such a person may be threatened to leave the group or else he/she faces the wrath of the mourners. Janet McIntosh asserts that during such times, when the one who is being suspected as being responsible for the death has been identified during the gathering for funeral, such a person may be beaten to death by the angry mourners. This could lead to another burial and funeral.\textsuperscript{250}

\textsuperscript{249}Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Kilifi (2\textsuperscript{nd} interview).
2.3.13 Vigil/ Kuchesa

During this time, close relatives of the deceased such as the spouse(s), Parents, step-mothers, brothers and sister including distant relatives come together. The close relatives have to stay within the deceased’s compound until the day for burial. This was explained by the kaya elders, in focus group discussion, personal interview and as observed by the researcher. It is also confirmed by Shiino Wakina in *Death and Rituals among the Luo in South Nyanza*, so it is not only the Agiriama people who gather during death but other tribes too. However, Shiino’s work was on the Luo of South Nyanza while this work is on the Agiriama People of the Kenyan coast and is a comparative analysis of the burial rites between Christians and the Indigenous Agiriama people.

Death concerns every community member as asserted by Airo that death is a communal affair among the Agiriama community. The words of John Mbiti “I am because we are, since we are therefore I am” were clearly demonstrated when the community was engulfed by the pangs of death. Every member has to be present to offer the bereaved family emotional, physical, spiritual and moral support during the mourning period. Those who die from accidents, suicide, are not brought home. The body is kept outside the compound *chanze* and the mourners will stay there day and night till burial takes place. Mwaiha Mwambire explained to the researcher that bringing

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home such a deceased’s body is like bringing death at home.\textsuperscript{254} Sidi Wanje\textsuperscript{255} one of the bereaved family members explained to the researcher that the people gathered in the deceased’s home are there to accompany the deceased family members during the difficult time. Kache Kithi\textsuperscript{256} insisted that during this Sorrowful moment is not good to leave a bereaved member alone. She said the family members have to be helped in every way to offer support. Any person, either neighbor or relative who does not show concern during this time, if such a thing happens at their home, they will also be left alone or they pay some fine to be punished for the antisocial habit.

Kenga Chai said that if you do not cooperate with your neighbors during such time, (if it happens to you, you will be left alone) \textit{usihothuwa anziyo nawe undarichwa}. Kache Charo Menza\textsuperscript{257} said failure to attend a burial in the neighboring village also could lead to being suspected as having a hand in the death. Inside the deceased house, the researcher observed that a lamp is lit, to give light at night. This was further explained by the kaya elders that the mourners stay awake to watch over the deceased to ensure that nothing bad happens to the deceased’s body. Chula Kalume said that the deceased’s body has to be guarded to avoid bad people like witches from taking parts from the deceased body \textit{virangaono} (to be used for evil purpose) which they may use for evil purposes hence harming the family members. This was also confirmed by Shiino, W.\textsuperscript{258} so this practice is not only done by the Agiriama community but also by other

\textsuperscript{\textcopyright 254}Mwaiha Mwambire at a focus group discussion on 10\textsuperscript{th} April 2016.
\textsuperscript{\textcopyright 255}Sidi Wanje at a focus discussion with the author on 19\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{\textcopyright 256}Kache Charo Kithi in a focus group discussion with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{\textcopyright 257}Kache Charo Menza in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani.
African communities like the Luo and the Frafra of Ghana who also guard the deceased’s body as confirmed by Atinga, S.\textsuperscript{259}

As the people keep on increasing in number, they form groups of men and women separately. Inside the deceased’s house *Nyumba ya Mfa or nyumba ya hanga* (the house of funeral) the mourners spread mats and sit on or sleep on them. The men outside sit in chairs, stools and others sit on coconut leaves while the close relatives sleep on mats. The women sit on mats just like the deceased is laid on mats to signify the mourning period. If the deceased is a married man the wife(s) sit close to the body. The Kaya elders, clan elders and other personal interviews confirmed that the wife sits at the head at a position where the forehead can touch the four heads of the deceased; to symbolize their love*anakeresi kitswani* (sits at the deceased’s head). The youth strongly agreed that they saw women sitting day and night around the deceased’s body; however, they confirmed that they did not know why these mothers sit around the deceased’s body; they only said it is the Agiriama tradition. This means they just find the Agiriama people performing the rituals but they could not tell the meaning attached to them.

2.3.14 Instructions for closer relatives

The Kaya elders, Daniel Mwawara Garero,\textsuperscript{260} Mwaiha Mwambire, Kenga Chai, who are the Agiriama elders, narrated that; the bereaved have to observe some prohibitions throughout the mourning period. They further explained to the researcher


\textsuperscript{260}Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
that the bereaved are not allowed to wash, have sex, and when greeting people not to shake hands. Parkin asserted that the bereaved family members are allowed to leave the mats only when going to releave themselves.\(^{261}\) Kenga Chai one of the respondents, narrated that the most serious prohibition is the one which concerns sexual relations. He said that this can cause immediate illness *vitio* (illness) and death to infants and adults in the homestead. The very close relative, like mothers, or wife, husband, first born to the deceased, are not allowed to speak loudly, when one speaks to them he/she has to kneel down and whisper. Chula Kalume said that this symbolizes sorrow and respect for the dead.\(^{262}\) If the bereaved wife/husband does not observe these rituals *Kahurira* they say that later he/she will become crazy *andahayuka* because she/he did not show any respect and sorrow to the late husband or wife a disrespectful act to the living dead and ancestors.

The African religious adherents’ family members in focus group discussion said that, throughout the mourning period these close relatives who sit on the mats are not allowed to have a bath. Kache Charo Menza holds that the women are only allowed to wash their private parts, which is done very early in the morning; they traditionally call it washing the legs, *kuogamagulu* (washing the legs).\(^{263}\) The family members and the elders said that the close family members are not allowed to have sex during the mourning period. To do so is to disrespect the dead *kukira hanga* which is a serious offence which could lead to sudden death of the close family members. If such happens, the one who committed the offence must say the truth to the elders. Kenga Chai said that


\(^{262}\) Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 15\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mtondia.

\(^{263}\) Kache Charo Menza in an oral interview with the author 12\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mariakani.
if the truth is known *kuvororwa* (cleansing) has to be done by a specialist to stop death from claiming other lives.²⁶⁴ On the last day of mourning, the close family members are shaved their hair, it is when they are permitted to wash their whole bodies. This is the day when the wife/husband, father/ mother, eldest son/ daughter are expected to conduct the ritual of ‘throwing the death’ after washing the whole body at the river. It is done so that the water from the river could carry the bad dirty *nongo mbii* (bad luck) to the sea and leave the bereaved family members in peace and in good health. It is done to protect the family from experiencing more death.

### 2.3.15 Singing/ *maira ga hanga*

Men and women form separate singing groups such as *Kifudu* dancers, *mwanzele* and *uganja*. Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu one of the family members said that the songs may depend with the age of the deceased and also the favorite songs which the deceased used to play.²⁶⁵ Sidi Charo said that her husband used to like *Mabumbumbu* songs and dance and they played this traditional song during his burial *Mabumbumbuni Wirawe* (it was the deceased’s favorite song). In another occasion, I saw the mourners play Kigogo as observed during Beja Karisa and Yaa Baya, as it was the deceased’s hobby.

Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu asserted that any kind of song which the deceased used to sing with his/her age mates is sung as a sign of respect and farewell to the deceased.²⁶⁶ These funeral songs assists the mourners in breaking the monotony of the wails and cries, they comfort the mourners. The songs also have some messages to educate the community. Outside the deceased’s house, men and women light *makome*.

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²⁶⁴ Kenga Chai in an oral interview on 15th April 2016 at Kilifi (1st interview).
²⁶⁵ Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu in an oral interview with the author on 10th September 2016 at Mariakani.
²⁶⁶ Ibid.
(big fire) at night to keep themselves warm and also give light. Those who take Mnazi also sit in groups of their choices and drink. When they get drunk, they sleep or dance. Some start abusing each other (kuhukanana) and may pick some fight. Chula Kalume said that there is no funeral without fights Kakuna hanga risiro Kondo (it is common for people to fight during funerals). He added that the drunkards may pretend that they know the one who has killed the deceased. This was confirmed by McIntosh who asserted that they may pick up a fight which may lead to the killing of another member. Atinga asserts that these songssignify the separation whereby the deceased has been separated physically from the family. They are songs of praise to the death and the ancestors of the clan, are short repeated statements, full of imagery and meaning, which should only be sang within the context of a funeral. This is confirmed by McIntosh who contends that they contain abusive words mentioning private parts openly which nobody would like to hear, that is why Christians do not like these songs, see appendix 6.

To the Agiriama ATR adherents; this signifies that the deceased once part of the family has now began a journey to another life in the spiritual world and that life has to continue. The funeral songs done by McIntosh and Beja were of great value, however they did not do these works on comparative analysis and the funeral songs are one of the great sources of conflict during burials. Agiriama funeral songs with lots of vulgar words are such as that song found in

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267 During funerals fighting is very common because of the many people who drink mnazi which make them forget their sorrows and lose control to fight.


269 Ibid

Agiriama ATR adherents Funeral song

In Agiriama Language

*Dzuzi na kwala chende,*

*Ya nigwaga were ni bomu sana,*

*Yo chende here gogo.*

Translation in English

Yesterday I stamped on a testicle

It made me fall down

Because it was as big as a log

2.3.16 Digging the Tomb / *Kitsimba mbira*

As confirmed by the Agiriama elders, it is the Agiriama tradition to bury people when they die. This is done to show respect for human life. The Kaya elders said that, close relatives such as father, brother or uncle identify the site for grave and starts the digging *onaloha hohatu kisha abate yo mbira* (he selects the place and starts the digging) this show that he has given the full authority for the site and allowed digging to continue. Charles Baya one of the elders explained to the researcher that the place for burial depends on the causes of death, age and sex. He further said that if someone’s death is due to accident the grave will be dug by the road side *kanda ya ngira.* Michael

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272 Charles Baya in an oral interview with the author on 2nd January 2017 at Matanomanne.
Karisa asserted that for those whose death is due to drowning, the grave is dug by the river side.\textsuperscript{273} If someone dies from a gunshot wound, grave digging is done away from the normal burial ground and outside the compound \emph{nze ya mudzi} (outside the homestead) the grave has to be near the source of death. Mwaiha Mwambire asserted that it is believed that this will prevent such kind of death from claiming other lives from the same family.\textsuperscript{274}

Kenga Chai points out that these kinds of deaths are considered abnormal or bad deaths. The elders further added that burying such people at home like the case of normal death is a bad omen; which is like calling for more abnormal death in the family. For normal death, the grave may be located anywhere in the deceased’s compound. However, Changawa Karisa, one of the Kaya elders asserted that if the deceased left some wishes concerning the place for burial then the wishes have to be honored. He further added that unmarried women, thieves or one who committed suicide could be buried outside the homestead.

This was confirmed by Richard Airo who said that this is done in order to chase the evil spirit away from the home of the deceased and to protect the living from being harmed by such malicious spirits.\textsuperscript{275} To the researcher’s observation and as confirmed by the elders, digging is normally done by the male mourners preferably the neighbors who come to condole with the family, since the family members are bereaved and need to be assisted. The grave is dug in the morning to avoid the hot sun; this was observed

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{273}Michael Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 21\textsuperscript{st} April 2016 at Mariakani.
\item \textsuperscript{274}Mwaiha Mwambire in a focus group discussion on 10\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Matanomanne.
\item \textsuperscript{275}R. Airo, \textit{Towards the Inculturation of ‘Nyere za Mwezi,’} An Agiriama Funeral Rite with Reference to St. Thomas Catholic Church Unpublished Master’s Dissertation, Pwani University, 2016.
\end{itemize}
by Richard Airo\textsuperscript{276} so it is a practice done by other Agiriama community not only those in Mariakani. Those who dig the grave are given \textit{mnazi} (the traditional liquor) to drink as a token for their hard work. Sometimes it takes one day or two depending on the ground and urgency of the burial.

Men with pregnant wives are not allowed to dig the grave. If they do so, it is believed that their wives will give birth prematurely. If the digging is not completed within the same day the hole has to be covered with palm leaves and a pestle is put inside. An interviewee stated: it has to be covered because that is our tradition; if it remains open it claims for another death \textit{ikirichwa wazi inadai mungine} (this is as if another death has been kept there waiting). The kaya elders, clan elders and family members argued that the grave is usually dug with two parts. These two parts are two rectangles; the big rectangle is the outer chamber, while the smaller rectangle is the inner chamber. The outer chamber and the inner chamber \textit{mudzi} (home) is the sleeping area, which usually separate the deceased from the soil that is used to fill the grave. Before filling the grave some sticks of \textit{mkone} tree are placed across to make a room which separates the body with the soil to be filled. Chula Kalume asserted that a sleeping mat is placed on the sticks to prevent the soil from reaching the body.\textsuperscript{277} However, the graves for babies, first born and women who have not given birth have no inner chamber. The plateblow shows a cross section of the tomb.

\textsuperscript{276} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{277} Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mtondia.
The blue area is to be filled with soil while the inner chamber is the place where the body is to be laid to rest in peace.

The elders hold that it is the Agiriama traditional religion adherents’ tradition to place the first borns and babies in one chamber grave since they are not buried with clothes. These babies are covered with castor oil plant leaves *mbono* (castor oil plant) instead of the normal clothing for burial. The researcher observed that a grave for a
woman without children has no inner chamber. Daniel Mwawara confirms to the researcher that it is because she had no children who are supposed to be the in the home or she should have left behind. In other words she had left no home, nobody of her seed to carry on her name. While some are busy digging the grave, some women and few men keep busy with the singing to keep the home alive and in mourning mood.

2.3.17 Burial/Kuzika

Aisha Jumwa and Hadija Kombo who are among the Kaya elders state that young babies are buried immediately upon death by women as said earlier. Sidi Maya, one of the village elders asserts that for the deceased adults, the burial normally takes place in the afternoon at around 3:00pm to 4:00pm. Shiino whose study is on the Luo of South Nyanza adds that burial takes place at around 2:00 pm. The Agiriama people, due to the hot sun it is somehow late though the rituals start as early as possible. Richard Airo observed that for deceased adults the burial ritual was normally conducted in the afternoon past 2 o’clock. Therefore, it is not only the Agiriama community who bury their dead in the afternoon but other African communities too.

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278 Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion on 19th June 2016 at Mariakani.
279 W. Shiino, Death and Rituals among the Luos of South Nyanza. Monographs 18(3,4) 213-228. Tokyo Metropolitan University.
Close family member; including father, mother, brothers and sisters to the deceased stay very close to the grave to witness everything taking place for the burial of their beloved one. One of the Kaya elders stated that male elders conduct the rituals depending on the age and status of the deceased. Chula Kalume confirmed that the deceased’s cause of death is not known, so inside the grave a close relative had to hold the deceased’s ear to curse the suspected killer if there was any, before the grave was covered. Close family member to the deceased stay very close to the grave to witness everything taking place for the burial of their beloved one. However, women have to keep distance to give room for men to conduct the burial. Plate 3 below shows putting the body of Kahunda Ngala in the tomb one of the African traditional religion adherent’s burial that the researcher witnessed.

Plate 4: Putting the body of Kahunda Ngala in the tomb

One of the Kaya elders said that male elders conduct the rituals depending on the age and social status of the deceased. Chula Kalume noted:
In our tradition women are not allowed to be very close to the grave, the women are not allowed to see what happens inside the grave. For this reason men crowd around the grave to make sure that the women do not see inside the grave. However in many occasions one or two women may be overcome with grief and may be found pushing towards the grave and may even want to be buried with the deceased. If this happen those close to her will get hold of her.  

The Agiriama people fear death and are very superstitious on matters concerning life and death. Karisa Iha Charo, one of the bereaved family members said that if a pregnant woman looks inside the grave she will give birth to a dead child. He further said that the women are very emotional so they are not allowed to see what happens in the grave because one may be overcome by grief and do something bad to her.

The program may include; some speeches, which are mainly about memories of the deceased; brothers, sisters, children, friends, some Midzichendaare (contributions) given to cover the expenses for food, oil lamp buying Mnazi for the dancers, these days contributions may be done by a group of people known as Tsoletsole. Some politicians and other government official also may give speeches.

2.3.18 putting the body in the grave

The researcher observed that the body whether in a coffin or carried in a mat by men, is laid in the inner part of the grave. Women are not allowed to look inside a grave; the elders say that if they do so they may become sterile. However, to the researcher’s observation the women are very emotional during burials. In two of the burials the researcher attended, one of the bereaved wives could not bear it seeing her husband put

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281 Chula Kalume oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia.
282 Karisa Iha Charo in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at MariaKani
in the grave, she collapsed and lost consciousness and had to be rushed to the hospital for treatment. In another burial which the researcher witnessed, the wife became possessed by demons and wanted to be buried with her husband. One of the elders stated that women are not allowed to see the inside of a grave because the grief might lead to their death. For these reasons, men surround the grave tightly giving no room for the women to see.

Three or more people who are not close relative Agiriama (not closely related to the deceased) will go down to the grave to receive the body as it is lowered down slowly, if the deceased is a kaya elder, only the kaya elders do this work as said earlier on, that the kaya elders and diviners are buried by their colleagues. Burial is conducted by men who are not close relatives to the family Agiriama (none relatives). Because the bereaved family members are mourning and have to be assisted. Chula Kalume explained to the researcher that the body is laid when the head faces sunset in the left hand side for a man, for a woman it is laid on the right hand side. Michael Karisa confirmed that the wife/husband when he dies have to be buried facing each other. The symbolic meaning is that the sunset is the direction of Shungwaya, the original homeland of the Agiriama people, thus they believe that he/she has returned home.

This was also observed by Richard Airo who asserted that the body is laid facing Shungwaya, for a male laid on the right side and for a female on the left side. Kenga Chai, one of the Kaya elders said that it is due to the jealous nature of man that the wife

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283 Agiriama for this case are none family members, just like strangers who may have come to offer their condolences to the bereaved family members.

284 Karisa Michael in an oral interview with the researcher on 21st April 2016 at Mariakani.

is expected to sleep near the wall of the house. He added that the husband sleeps in the front side of the bed so that whenever the wife wants to go out will have to inform the husband even if the husband is asleep when the woman is crossing to go out the husband will know. Thus when the two face each other, the male will be on the left hand side and the female on the right hand side as explained above. The elders added that facing each other means that the love for husband and wife continues even after death; their love and life never end. After the body has been placed in the grave; the first chamer, on top some sticks are placed tsaga (sticks) across the grave on the inner chamber to separate the inner chamber, the home from the outer chamber. Some of the deceased’s clothes and other necessary belongs may be put inside the grave. The belongings which are put inside the grave as explained by the family members are believed that the deceased may use them in the new home.

A mat is spread on top which must be cut at the centre and the seam. This again shows that the deceased has been separated from the family members physically, has now started new life. Sticks usually of Mkone tree are used; they Agiriama traditional religion adherents believe that Mkone tree is a good tree Muhiwa Peho (it can give a nice shade). This tree can also grow at a grave yard to provide shade to the departed. Such trees are regarded as holy tree Muzimuni (shrine) whereby when they grow big Agiriama can use that place for worship as a shrine. The ritual mat is put in the deceased new home for sleeping, the seam is cut and a hole pierced at the centre to allow for air to avoid the deceased from chocking inside the grave.

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286 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4th May 2016 at Kilifi.
2.3.19 Closing the tomb/kusirira mbira

In all the burials which the researcher attended, it was observed that the close relatives such as father, brother, uncle, grandfather, take soil and throw into the grave three times and say it is finished (Vidzaricha) that the deceased has finished his/her physical life on earth. Daniel Baya Yaa, one of the family members said that throwing of the soil was done as a way of casting away evil spirits and misfortune and to show that the family members have actually done their part as far as burial of their loved one is concerned.\(^{287}\) This marks the beginning of filling the grave or as a way of authorizing people to fill the grave with soil. When the family members who are standing at a close distance hear the sound of soil being put in the grave they break into loud cry knowing that death has done it all, it is the last time to see their loved one physically.

The elders who guide the family on the ceremony take a spade and throw soil into the grave and give the spade to others who are around to continue filling the grave with soil. The filling of soil is done in a hurry, by men of middle age. Those taking part in the filling of the grave do not talk to each other. They only use patting each other on the back to hand over the spade to another person in turns to fill the grave. Benzima Mangi Yaa who had lost a grandmother, after the burial said that if one talks when filling the grave with soil, it is said that this person will take the death with him to his home *kifo andauka nacho* (carries the death home).\(^{288}\) Equally, Daniel Baya Yaa said that no soil from the grave is left scattered, this is because such soil is respected since it belongs to the deceased.\(^{289}\) Immediately after the grave has been filled the family members who are very sad and are still crying will be escorted to the deceased’s house

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\(^{287}\) Daniel Baya Yaa in a focus group discussion with the researcher on 19\(^{th}\) June 2016 at Munyenzoni.

\(^{288}\) Benzima Mangi Yaa in an oral interview with the author on 19\(^{th}\) June 2016 at Mnyenzeni in Mariakani.

\(^{289}\) Daniel Baya Yaa in an oral interview with the author on 19\(^{th}\) June 2016 at mnyenzeni in Mariakani.
nyumba ya hanga where they continue mourning. They are led to sit on the mats where they were previously, before burial, where sitting for funeral continues.

2.4 Post Burial Rites

These rituals are also referred to as secondary burial rituals since they are performed after the actual burial has taken place, in other words they are performed after the body has been buried in the grave. The following are of great importance and must be performed whenever death occurs. These are as follows; washing the tools such as jembes, throwing the death, cleansing the home, shaving the hair, slaughtering, dividing the deceased’s belongings.

2.4.1 Washing Jembes and the Burial attendants

The kaya elders said that, soon after burial the Jembes are washed and taken to a house to be kept. Chula Kalume and Kazungu Kenga explained that these days, the Jembes are not kept after burial. Instead the elders of the deceased’s family take the jembes or spades and cut the ground at the grave three times. So that they can be used before the mourning period is over.290 Without doing so they say these jembes cause bad luck to the users. Those who bury the body and fill the grave have to wash their hands and legs. The soil, dust from the grave is said to be bad, it brings bad omen carrying it to ones house, it is like carrying the death to your house (unahirika kifo nyumbani kwako) this is as narrated by the elders and other respondents like Kenga Chai, Kazungu Kenga291

290 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4th May 2016 at Kilifi (2nd interview).
291 Kenga Chai, Kazungu Kenga, Kaya Elders
2.4.2. Agiriama Mourning Days

Kache Charo Menza asserted that there are days when the Agiriama are expected to sit as they mourn for their beloved one. However, she said that the mourning period depends on the age, the type of disease which caused the death, the position of birth of the deceased and whether the deceased is the first one to die from the mother. This was confirmed by the Kaya elders, the indigenous adult family members and the indigenous youth. Charo Katana, one of the indigenous youth noted: “we know that our people do sit for mourning for some days but I am not sure for how long they sit. This reveals that the youth attend burials and funerals though they do not understand some of the traditions.

Table 2: Mourning Days After burial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mitsanga mitsi (Day one the Burial day/wet soil/ day of raw soil)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kusindira majembe (Hoes day, day of resting the hoes. This is day two after burial, the family rest after hard work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Madzimosi (Day of first water; day three after burial which marks the biginning of the funeral. Day three after burial.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Madzihiri (The day of second water, second day of funeral. Day four after burial.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Madzi hahu (Third water day, third day of funeral this is also the day for slaughtering and feasting. Day four after burial.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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292 Kache Charo Menza In a focus group discussion with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
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<tr>
<td>6)</td>
<td>Madzi nne</td>
<td>The fourth water. This is the last day for a woman. Day five after burial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7)</td>
<td>Madzitsano</td>
<td>The fifth water. Day six after burial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8)</td>
<td>Kitseka</td>
<td>The day for mats, the traditional mats are folded. Day seven after burial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9)</td>
<td>Kushera ng’ong’ pack and go</td>
<td>Day eight after burial.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Day one which is the burial day is also known as the Wet Soil *siku ya mitsangamitsi* (the day for wet soil) or the day of raw soil, freshly dug soil as confirmed by Parkin. Soon after burial the close family members such as elder son, elder daughter, and wife/husband are placed on a mat by presiding elders of the clan. Mwaiha Mwambire asserted that they are asked to sit silently. The bereaved family members seated choose two or more representatives both male and female to receive money for condolence commonly known as *midzi-chenda* (nine homes) which is given by the people as condolences to the family. David Parkin asserted that the number of those designated as bereaved elders may be as few as one man or as many as fifteen men and women. He further said that, elderly or mature relatives of the deceased such as siblings, parents and children who are themselves quite senior are eligible to sit for the funeral.

During the mourning period, the bereaved family members must observe the four prohibitions. Chula Kalume explained that, they must not wash, have sex, shake hand

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294 Ibid.
with anyone, do not leave the mat except to relieve themselves. Kenga Chai, Mwaiha Mwambire explained that the most serious prohibition is that on sexual relations. This was also observed by Parkin who asserted that, failure to observe this prohibition would bring a rapid sickness Known as vithio (incest) and result in the death of children and adults in the homestead. The observance of the many prohibitions is mainly to ensure the Uzima wa lalo (community health) as confirmed by Chidongo that community health is of great importance to the Agiriama people

During this period, there is usually mourning very early in the morning and late in the evening. Charles Baya asserted that this is done to remind people that they are still mourning their beloved deceased. He further said that morning wailing and evening wailing is done to appease the ancestral spirits (kulaza k’oma) (appeasing the ancestral spirits). In most cases a goat is slaughtered at the grave to appease thek’homa (spirits) whom they believe are feasting for having received a new member and that the blood from the slaughtered goat is their food.

The second day is regarded as the day for resting after the hard work done on the burial day. On this day the family begins to prepare for the third day’s activities. This day according to the Agiriama is known as the day for resting the hoes (siku yakusindira majembe). It is the day for the family to rest and give the freshly turned soil at the grave mound the opportunity to dry out. Chula Kalume explained that the dancers from Kifudu, mwanzele or other singing group dance on top of the grave which brings down

295 Kenga chai in an oral interview with tathor on 15th April 2016 at Kilifi.
296 Mwaiha Mwambire in a focus group discussion with the author on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
299 Charles Baya I an oral interview with the author on 2nd January at Matano Mane.
the level of the soil mound hence the name (*kusindira majembe*). He further explained that if the dancers do not dance at such a freshly soil mound, and level it, when it rains the grave sinks which is again a bad sign to the family in that when this happens the elders say the grave is calling for another soul. On this day, Parkin asserted that the head of the family and the close family kin arrange for the livestock and palm wine to be brought to the mourning ceremony. One of the family members, Karisa Iha Charo asserted that, the close kin such as sons-in-laws, uncles to the deceased may contribute a goat each to be used on the day for slaughtering.

Day three is known as ‘the first water’ (*siku ya kuanza Madzi*/*siku ya madzi mosi*). Mwaiha Mwambire one of the kaya elders said that this is the day when the actual mourning ceremony begins. Parkin said that it is also called the first day of the water which is usually followed by the second, third, fourth, and in the case of a man, fifth days of “water.” On this day, Mwaiha Mwambire said that everyone who has been sleeping overnight at the deceased homestead must wash themselves ritually in medically prepared water (*vuo*) which is prepared by a religious specialist. He further said that men wash first followed by women who weep and wail for a short time at about four o’clock in the morning. However,

Kenga Chai said that the bereaved family members do not wash which is confirmed by Parkin. Kache Charo Menza said that on this day the men and women

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300 Chula Kalume oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia.
301 Ibid
302 Karisa Iha Charo in a focus group discussion with the author at ariakani.
304 Mwaiha Mwambire in a focus Goup Discussion with the author on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
who are closely related to the deceased (afererwa) have to shave their heads for the cleansing and expulsion of death. Parkin confirmed that the shaving has to begin with the widow or widower and the head of the family, then brothers, sons and parents. Daniel Baya Yaa added that after shaving, these family members are not allowed to shave again until the time for conducting the Nyere za mwezi (the hairs of the moon) which may take a period of one to four or more months depending on the financial position of the bereaved family. The gungu (widow) is not allowed to have sex or shake hands for greetings until the time when the Nyere za mwezi(hairs of the moon) ceremony will be conducted and she be inherited, failure to which she may suffer from vitio (incest sickness) which may render her mad and lead to death of close family members.

**Day three and four** second and third water; the second water, the major activities are entertainments; There is much singing and dancing at the grave site. From day one until the last day there is singing and dancing of various kinds in the deceased’s home. **Day five, the third water**, is the day for offering sacrifices. On this day there is much feasting, the people who have donated the animals for sacrifice have to decide to whom to allocate their meat. Michael Karisa one of the Kaya elders asserted that the sacrificial meat has to be shared. “Funeral meat should not be denied people” (nyama za hangani kahenderwa choyo), he said this is to emphasize the brotherhood (udugul

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306 Ibid.
307 Daniel Baya yaa in a Focus group discussion with the author on 19th June 2016 at Munyenzeni in Mariakani.
308 Michael karisa in an oral interview with the author on 21st April 2016 at Mariakani.
umwanga) found among the Agiriama community. Daniel Mwawara Garero explained that the sacrifice has to start with a single male goat from the head of the family.\textsuperscript{309}

Kasiwa Mwambegu said that the goat to be slaughtered is led to the grave, at the side of the head of the deceased; the goat is made to lie down. Then a religious specialist holds the right ear of the goat and speaks to it kuhasa (to pray). Kasiwa Mwambegu who had lost two brothers through accidents said that during the time for slaughtering the goat’s right ear was held and spoken to:

“Yes you are gone before us, sorry it is not our wish but this is the will of God (Mulungu). May it be well with you enda salama (good bye). We are also going to follow youhatha siswi fundafwa (we shall also die) for that is what happens to all human beings. We request you to humbly accept our sacrifice funakuvoya ukubali (we beseech you to accept) and we request you to pray for us ufuvoyere Mulungu (be our intercessor) so that God can protect us and give us good health and prosperity”.\textsuperscript{310}

This is due to the fact that the Agiriama people, like other African communities, pray to God through the ancestors.\textsuperscript{311} So it is believed that the deceased has joined the ancestral spirits so they pray at the grave to beseech Mulungu to give them good health and prosperity and they hope that by sacrificing to the ancestors their prayers will be heard. To show that the head of the family has taken full responsibility of the ceremony afererwaye nde mwenye hanga, (the head of the bereaved family provides for the

\textsuperscript{309}Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.

\textsuperscript{310}Kasiwa Mwambegu arol interview with the researcher on 6\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.

mourners), so the other donors follow one by one to present their animals for slaughtering.

Parkin asserts that this is a time of reckoning for men to show their prestige through conspicuous generosity, to indicate to their followers who in accepting the meat accept publicly some notion of the sponsors seniority or leadership. Within the homestead, men form separate groups where they engage in drinking palm wine (*uchi*) some make big fire to roast meat. The women get busy with cooking ugali (*warĩ*) and the meat from the slaughtered goats and bull(s). When food is ready the men share the meat give to the women who distribute to their husbands and other family members. Sidi Maya said that food is served first to the house of the bereaved family members (nyumba ya afererwa/ nyumba ya hanga). This is done so because they sit there and do not work; they have to be cared for throughout the mourning period.

**Day six and seven/ the fifth and sixth waters** (*siku ya madzi nne na madzi tsano*). The bereaved family has now got used to the loss of their beloved one. The many songs and dances have played a great part in cheering the bereaved family members, Kache Charo Menza, said that at this time the bereaved family members who were sitting on their mats they can be seen talking to people now. Chula Kalume said that if the deceased is a woman, this becomes the last day and it is known as “the day of mats” *siku ya kitseka*. He further asserted that on this day the mourners leave for their home at their own leisure. Parkin asserted that, this day is the mourners’ departure; the

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312 Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
314 Sidi Maya at an oral interview with the author on 15th May at Matano Mane.
315 Kache Charo Menza in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
mats on which they have been sleeping on, are now removed and shaken.\textsuperscript{316} Kache Charo Menza said that on this day the mats are removed shaken and rolled, the mourners can sit and sleep at their place where they used to sleep.

Sidi Maya explained that earlier on, the widow’s bed used to be turned upside down until the second funeral Nyere za mwezi when the widow get inherited then the bed is turned the right way. She further said that this showed that the owner was not there mwenye mudzi kaho.\textsuperscript{317} Sidi Charo said on the last night of the mourning day it is when the widow/widower is expected to perform the ritual of “throwing the death” kutsuha Kifo which shall be elaborated later.

\textbf{2.4.3 Shaving the hair / kunyola nyere}

According to Kabibi Mangi, Kitsao Kahindi and Ngumbao Chome,\textsuperscript{318} hair is shaved on the fourth day and the fifth day; the third and fourth waters. Kabibi asserted that, if the deceased was a man shaving is done on the fourth day. For a female deceased, shaving is done on the third day, a razor blade or knife is usually used. The first one to shave marks the end of the mourning period and beginning of new life, a life to live without the physical presence of the deceased. If the deceased was given a full funeral like that for kaya elders and for adults who are married and they have children, the elders said shaving is done on the last day of the mourning period. At around 5:00 o’clock in every evening, the family breaks into cry, they cry as if the death has just occurred to remind them that they are still mourning their loved one. Second shaving is

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{317}Sidi Maya in an oral interview with the author on 15th May 2016 at Matano Mane.
\textsuperscript{318}Ngumbao Chome at a FGD with the author 15th May 2016 at Matano Mane in Kilifi.
\end{flushright}
done during memorial ceremonies such as nyere za mwezi which was given in detail by Airo Richard and during sacrificial meals Sadaka (offering). Equally, the Kaya elders said sadaka is done when putting up the memorial posts well known as vigango. Sidi Maya holds that a big ceremony, sadaka (sacrificial meals) is given to someone who died, buried and was not accorded full funeral maybe due to some financial problems of the family, or may be due to the kind of death and the disease that caused that death of the person.

2.4.4 Slaughtering animals

This is sometimes done before burial but mostly it is done after the burial. In my study this was confirmed by focus group discussions with kaya elders, Agiriama family members both male and female. Slaughtering depends on the family’s financial status and the social status of the deceased. Sometimes, slaughtering is done just before the body is taken out of the house for burial. When this is done, those carrying the body step on the fresh poured blood on behalf of the decease. The Agiriama adherents of African traditional religion believe that the deceased has stepped on the blood and will join the world of the ancestor peaceful. Sidi Maya asserted that this ritual is performed in order to make the deceased’s spirit go in peace. Mama Sidi Charo explained that the deceased has become a spirit and the blood is the food for the spirit; blood is food for the spirit and it is for the deceased to eat and go peacefully.

320 Daniel Mwawara Garero, Hadija Mdzomba Kombo, Baya Nzaka, and Mariam mahammed in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo.
321 Sidi Maya in an oral interview with the author
According to Geertz, every ritual action has some meaning attached to it. This ritual is done to show respect to the deceased to give him/her a proper send off and to commit him or her to the spiritual world of ancestors. Chula Kalume, one of the Agiriama elder explained that another slaughtering is done on the fifth day which is the third water for a woman and on the forth water for a man as the funeral days for men are more than those for women depending on the type of death and whether the deceased is the first one to die from the mother. That is if the mother gave birth and all her children were alive and that the deceased is the first one to die. Slaughtering is done to give relish to the many guests at the deceased’s home.

2.4.5 Cleansing the home and the mourners/ Kuzizinya mudzi

This can be done just before burial in case it is a bad death such as a woman dying with a child during child birth as observed during one of the burials. A woman who had died during child birth, the whole home was cleansed by a religious specialist. Plate 6 below shows a religious specialist cleansing the home before burial of an abnormal death where a woman had died during delivery where the baby also died.
Plate 5: A religious specialist cleansing the home before burial

The six children whom she had left behind had to be purified. This was done in order for the children to be detached from their mother so that they do not suffer so much from longing for their mother. The loneliness and longing for their mother was believed that it could have caused frequent sickness to the children as explained by the bereaved family members. The whole compound and mourners were purified so that such a kind of death, of a mother and a child does not happen in the family again. Hadija Mdzomba, Baya Nzaka said that on the last day of mourning, a religious specialist is contacted, to purify the home so that people who have been gathering may disperse and
return to their homes in peace and in good health.\textsuperscript{322} Chula Kalume explained that during the mourning period no one is to have sexual intercourse in the family.\textsuperscript{323} Failure to do that there was going to be another death in the family; therefore sex is prohibited during this period.\textsuperscript{324}

However, since people gather from different homes, and things like mats and utensils are mixed from different homesteads, they are considered unclean and can cause harm to the community, unless ritual cleansing is done. On this very last day the homestead is swept \textit{kushera ng’ongo} (sweeping the compound) by men and women who are not the bereaved family\textsuperscript{325} and are usually given some traditional liquor \textit{mnazi} (palm wine)\textit{kadzama} (seven litres of mnazi) which they take after completing the task. The rubbish is swept, put in heaps which are usually burnt not collected and thrown as it contains the ‘dirt’ from the mourners.

Chula Kalume, one of the respondents explained that the rubbish has to be burnt so that it does not remain to contaminate the bereaved family members, it is bad and it can cause another death in the family.\textsuperscript{326} Another cleansing is performed before the belongings of the deceased such as clothing and utensils are divided so that those going to use those belongings do not have bad dreams and do not get punishment from the deceased. It is done on the last day of gathering, \textit{Siku ya kushera ng’ong’o}. A specialist will be called early in the morning to come and mix herbs and purify every corner of the home and the deceased’s house and belongings.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Hadija Mdzomba Komba and Baya Nzaka in a focus group discussion with the author o 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Bengo
\item Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mtondia.
\item Ibid
\item Agiriam for this case are the people who are not closely related to the bereaved family members. They could be neighbors who have come to comfort and keep the bereaved family accompany.
\item Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
2.4.6 Throwing of the death/Kutsuha Kifo

The deceased’s wife/husband is given another man or woman who is a total stranger to go and have ritual sexual intercourse in the bush. By doing so, it was believed that death had been sent away to the unknown place, to the unknown land. Thus they believe that death has been thrown away from the family. Some of the elders narrates that long time ago this ritual used to be performed at a place where there were cross roads. The Agiriama African religion adherents believed that at the cross roads there were many people from different places passing through there. These people were believed that they would carry the death far away from the family. It was also believed that death would be confused on its way and not to find that family for a long time. After they had performed the ritual, each would go home in a different direction never to meet again. Sidi Charo and the kaya elders explained this ritual in detail.\textsuperscript{327} Daniel Mwawara said if it is a child who has died, the father and mother would throw the death.\textsuperscript{328} Asha Nyavula said that when it was the death of a baby the case of still birth or one who had not seen outside the house, there was no throwing of the death. This was because the mother was still bleeding and could not have sex during that period.\textsuperscript{329}

Kache Charo Menza said that if one of the wives of a polygamous man died, then the man would throw the death ritually with one of his wives, mostly the elder wife or if the elder wife was the one who passed on then the one who followed her would throw the death.\textsuperscript{330} Sidi Charo said that if the husband/wife, son or daughter refuses to ritually throw the death then an alternative form of ritual was performed to set free the family

\textsuperscript{327}Sidi Charo Mangi in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{328}Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo.
\textsuperscript{329}Asha Nyavula Juma in an oral interview with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo.
\textsuperscript{330}Kache Charo Menza in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani.
members Kubururushwa,³³¹(to set free). This ritual was performed by a specialist person. Upon the performance of the ritual, the widow/ widower would go back home and the elders of the family would be informed that it had been successful.

Kache Charo Menza, one of the respondents further explained to the researcher that upon hearing the news of the successfulness of the ritual, that the rest of the family would be set free. The adults in the family she added that they would take turns with their wives in their houses.³³² Chula Kalume, one of the elders argued that the turns usually started with the order of seniority. When the oldest couple was through, they would whistle. The whistle was a sign that they were already through and another couple would go in.

Mwaiha Mwambire guided the family of Mangi wa Wara who had lost their mother and their father was already dead a long time ago. The older sons and daughters were Christians and could not throw the death. The widow was old and could not perform the ritual, so there was no one to throw the death. In this case Mwaiha took two pieces of herbs vinyundo viri zha muhaso (two pieces of medicinal herbs) and buried them at the fresh sealed grave.³³³ He then slaughtered a black hen and sprinkled the blood at the place he had buried the two pieces of the herbal roots. The blood was also sprinkled at the grave of the deceased husband; to symbolize the two had been united in the spiritual world of ancestors. Thus Mwaiha said that the two souls will meet in the spiritual world and throw the death for them. He further said that the family was free

³³¹ Sidi Charo Mangi an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
³³² Kache Charo Menza in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
³³³ Mwaiha Mwambire in a focus group discussion with the author on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
from this death ritual; they could meet and make love as they wished, since there were no more restrictions.

In the cases where death had to be ritually thrown, then as explained by Kache Charo Menza, an unknown man *mgiriama* (a stranger) is selected by the elders to go and have sex with the widow.\(^{334}\) Without this ritual the husband or wife is not allowed to have sex any more, if he or she does so it is disrespectful to the dead and it can lead to madness to the widow or elder son and elder daughter. A religious specialist *mganga* (witch doctor) will prepare medicine *muhaso* (medicinal herbs) in a *ludhua* (gourd) made of water and leaves of trees such as *muyu* (baobab) or mukone tree. Mwaiha said these trees are known as “cold” trees and are curative trees *mihi ya peho* (cold trees) and are suitable for the function as confirmed by Parkin who said that the medicine is made up of water and leaves of a cold tree.\(^{335}\) Chula Kalume,\(^{336}\) Sidi Charo, Kache Charo Menza said that in a family where the head is alive then he will be in charge of the ritual.

The widow/widower or head of the family will go to one of the ‘cold’ trees or to a river or road junction, where he is joined by his wife or the woman meets a man there. They do not speak but have sexual intercourse, then after they wash their genitals in the medicine, then they break the gourd, the man will put his foot on the medicinal herb, followed by the woman. The two will exert pressure on the guard, when it breaks and spills the herbs on the ground they leave and go back home each following their own way. Parkin confirms this where he said they trample the gourd into the ground, he with his left foot and she with her right. Chula Kalume said after that they return to the

\(^{334}\) Sidi Charo Mangi an oral interview with the author on 12\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mariakani.


\(^{336}\) Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
homestead without looking back or speaking, when they look back then the ritual becomes useless. Sidi Charo said that the two who have performed the ritual are not allowed to have sex again till the following day, if they do so the ritual becomes invalid. Kache Charo Menza, Kenga Chai said that for the case where death is ritually thrown with unknown man, the two are not allowed to meet again and have sex in their life time, if they do so they die.

One of the respondents added that, the two people who ritually throw the death, when they return to the family they say we have done it. When the family members learns that the ritual has been performed, in the evening the other family members are free to have sex with their partners in order of seniority. Failure to follow these procedural the ritual becomes invalid. This could lead to another death in the same family. This ritual is performed for the wellbeing of the family and community at large Uzima wa lalo (community health) as expressed by Chidongo that whatever the Agiriama did, community health was of paramount.

Sidi Charo Mangi asserted that these days’ things are changing, due to the HIV and AIDS pandemic most people would prefer to be set free ritually. This is due to the fact that the dread disease is spread through sexual intercourse. Kenga Chai added that going to bed with a total stranger has become a risk behaviour since one could easily contact the disease.

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337 Sidi Charo Mangi an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
338 Kache Charo Menza in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
339 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 15th April 2016 at Kilifi (1st interview).
341 Sidi Charo Mangi an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
342 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 15th April 2016 at Kilifi (1st interview).
2.4.7 Remembrance /Ukumbusho

After the burial and after the normal funeral service is over, the family arrange for a memorial service well known as Nyere za mwezi (the hairs of the moon). Chula Kalume, Mwaiha Mwambire asserted that this ceremony marks the end of the mourning period among the Agiriama people. The hair that grows after shaving well known as bad hair Nyere mbii (bad hair) the heads of the bereaved family members in the first funeral is not cut until the second funeral. Sidi Wanje confirmed that the Nyere za mwezi is done after a period of at least three months; however she further said stated that this depends on the financial status of the family.\(^{343}\)

Robert Kasiw,\(^{344}\) Benzima Mangi Yaa\(^{345}\) added that the Nyere za Mwezi ceremony is usually held when the new moon has been seen, just like the Muslims who start their fast or end their fast when they spot the new moon. Airo asserts that Nyere za mwezi refers to the shaving of the hair upon the sighting of the moon.\(^{346}\) It is done for the purpose of remembering the deceased. Kenga Chai added that it is done in order to share the deceased’s belongings like land, if any and other belongs such as the wife or wives and for a man, he is set free to marry again as he wishes, though he contends that most Agiriama men are polygamous and may already have another wife. At the end of the ceremony, the widow will be given some suggested names preferably a person who shares the same clan name with the deceased’s husband will be asked to take over the family responsibility and take the widow as a wife. In this, the Agiriama African

\(^{343}\) Sidi Wanje In an oral interview with the author on 19\(^{th}\) June 2016 at Mariakani.
\(^{344}\)Robert Kasiwa in an oral interview with the author on 10\(^{th}\) September 2016 at Mariakani.
\(^{345}\)Benzima mangi Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 19\(^{th}\) June 2016 at mnyenzeni in Mariain.
religion adherents, the wife belongs to the clan, she has no choice either she likes or not she has to get married. Just like the case of Yaa Mangi, the father to Sidi Maya who explained that since the deceased was the only son from the parents, the head of the clan, Yaa Baya had to choose another man from the close relatives. They were able to get Mwaro wa Mikabombo to inherit the wife and the family, he was chosen as the new head of the family. This was done to ensure that the family had a new head that would look after the widow and her children.

Some rituals which were carried out included ritualistic washing of the widow by a specialist and after the mourners had departed, the newly chosen husband would arranged for some time to start taking over the responsibilities of the family. Charles Baya noted that those who die a bad death or an abnormal death are not given a full funeral as some of the rituals are omitted. The bad deaths were considered as misfortunes; hence some rituals for cleansing had to be performed to prevent the family from such deaths. He further pointed out that they are not buried at the normal burial ground of the family; they are buried outside the compound. This is because bad deaths are conceded as misfortunes and cleansing would be performed. Mwawara Garero said that to bury them at the family burial ground is like bringing home such kind of death. To bring them home, Chula Kalume. Daniel Mwawara Garero noted that a memorial ceremony known as sadaka (sacrifice) is held like that for Nyere za mwezi. During this period, the bereaved family members offer sacrifices to appease the ancestors Koma (spirits) and rituals to bring the deceased home. During my study,

347 Sidi Maya in an oral interview with the author on 15th May 2016 at Matano Mane in Kilifi.
348 Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo.
349 Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
350 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4th May 2016 at Kilifi (2nd Interview).
there was a family of Hinzano Mumba who had lost several people in the past. These people were seven in number and had died at different periods of time. The family organized for the graves to be built with cement. After the cementing of the seven graves was completed they organized for a feast where seven goats were slaughtered, each deceased person was given one goat. The blood of the slaughtered goats was taped in bowels and the older lady of the family went round each and every grave pouring the blood at the head of the grave while singing and dancing Kifudu dance.

Kenga Chai holds that if a person dies and is buried without proper burial ritual performance, due to the family’s financial position, later the deceased spirit may appear in dreams to the close relatives such as the sons.\textsuperscript{351} He further explained that in such circumstances the deceased may demand for proper burial once the family is in good financial position. Mwaiha Mwambire said that the deceased may appear in dreams and claim that he/she is feeling cold, hungry or the hot sun is burning him/her. Like the case of Yaa Mangi, Sidi Charo said that her late husband used to come to her in dreams asking for tobacco (kumbaku) which he used to take while alive.\textsuperscript{352} She further added that he also used to come to ask for mabumbumbu his favorite song. Sidi Charo explained that since the sons were Christians she had to stop the deceased husband’s spirit from visiting her by burying green peas at the head of the grave\textsuperscript{353}.

\textsuperscript{351} Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Kilifi (2\textsuperscript{nd} Interview).

\textsuperscript{352} Sidi Charo Mangi an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani.

\textsuperscript{353} Ibid.
After the grave was cemented a big feast for remembrance was held. Seven goats were slaughtered and the blood was poured at every grave as seen above.

Blood was poured at the bottom to serve as food for the deceased.

Plate 6: Feast for remembrance of the dead

Plate 7: Mabumbumbu dance
The favorite dance which was to be performed at the burial of Yaa Mangi but the dancers was not allowed to perform.

2.4.8 The significance of Death and Funeral rituals

According to Geertz’s theory; the interpretation of culture, the burial rituals have meaning to the people’s life.354 To the Agirama people, death and funeral rituals have social and religious aspects as seen in all the above rituals and the meanings attached to them. This is also confirmed by Atinga in his work *Death and Dying*.355 However, Atinga’s work was an attempt at inculturation of the traditional burial rituals and it was on the Frafra people of Ghana while this work is aiming at interpreting culture as outlined by Clifford Geertz,356 and inter-religious dialogue to bring peace and harmony between the Christian and the indigenous Agirama people. The social aspect is that death brings people together both close and distant relatives. The rituals performed are a form of prayers to God through ancestors. Slaughtering of animals are sacrifices offered to the ancestors to smoothen the journey of the deceased soul. At the funeral, the family members call for religious specialists to communicate to the Koma (ancestors). The living dead also gather at the funeral house to join in the process either burying the deceased or ushering them into the ancestral home as explained by the elders and confirmed by Atinga.

At the funeral, food is prepared and kept for the deceased and the ancestors to come and “eat.” In the real sence, the food offered to the ancestors is eaten by animals

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like dogs. However, the family members believe that when the food has been eaten then the ancestors also have eaten. The burial rituals and funerals play a combined role of symbolically bringing the deceased into the ancestral world safely and at the same time reconnecting the living to the dead. The bereaved family members, like other communities, funeral rituals serve as rites of passage and they have meaning. Michael Karisa states that the burial rituals are as important as the process of growth and development of a person. This is due to the fact that the burial rituals are believed that help the deceased’s spirit to arrive safely at the ancestral world. This was clearly highlighted by Atinga Samuel however his study was on the Frafra people of Ghana and he based his work on the light of inculturation while this study is on the Agiriama community of coastal Kenya and is an attempt at interpretation of culture.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter gives an analysis of the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents’ burial ritual practices. This brought out the understanding of the meticulous rituals practices in this chapter. The Agiriama African religious adherents perform elaborate burial rites to show love and respect to the dead. The Agiriama and many other African communities strongly believe that death is not the end of life but it is a gate way to a much fuller life in the world of spirits. This has a vital influence in the way they handle their dead. The Agiriama ATR adherents’ believe that the dead continue to live

359 Michael Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 21st April 2016 at Mariakani.
in the spiritual world of ancestors. They also believe that some of the dead become ancestors who are given an important place in the Agiriama life. This makes the Agiriama ATR adherents have great respect for their dead. The belief that for one to rest in peace, proper burial rituals and practices have to be conducted is a clear fact, that the burial rituals and practices are very important to the Agiriama community. Respect for the dead, the place of ancestors and the fear of death are reasons for the elaborate ritual performance among the Agiriama people. Moreover, the Agiriama value community health and they live as a community not as an individual.

The Agiriama view funeral rituals as rites of passage which have to be performed in order for one to attain peace in the spiritual world. It is clear that for the Agiriama and many African communities burial alone is not enough, the elaborate rituals and practices have to be performed. These rituals and practices help those left behind to come into terms with the loss of their loved ones. Hence the burial rituals and practices are as important as the burial itself to the Agiriama people, hence doing away with these rituals to the Agiriama is disrespecting the dead who are also part of the family.

The burial rituals are in two broad categories; these are the primary burial rituals which are performed before burial and secondary burial rituals which are performed after the burial has been done. Primary burial rituals include the following; closing the eyes and the mouth of the deceased, breaking the news of a death, holding the deceased ear, shaving the deceased ear, washing the deceased, guarding the body, preparing the body for burial, dressing the body, traditional postmortems, consultations and vigil in the deceased’s home, the instructions for closer relatives. Others include singing
Agiriama traditional funeral songs, digging the tomb, putting the body in the tomb and cosing the tomb.

The Agiriama traditional African religion adherents post burial rituals include the following; washing of the jembes and the burial attendants, the Agiriama mourning days, shaving of the hair, slaughtering of animals for sacrifice, cleansing of the home and the mourners. The ritual of throwing the death marks the end of funeral days when the mourners who will have gathered in the deceased compound may leave to their respective homes. The last of all which marks the end of the mourning period is the Nyere za mwezi ceremony. The family come together for rememberance of their departed loved one to share the deceased’s belongings and to ensure the family is well taken care of. Some of the conflicting burial rituals include; holding the deceased’s ear, shaving the hair, instructions for close relatives, the Agiriama funeral songs and mourning days, throwing the death, animal sacrifice to the dead, cleansing of the home and the carrying out of the Nyere za mwezi ceremony are against Christian faith. The next chapter discusses the Christian burial rituals which have to be performed upon the death of a Christian. This will help to bring out a comparison between the two rituals.
3.1 Introduction

Chapter two covered the Agiriama Indigenous burial rituals and practices, whereby the Agiriama believe that death is not an end to life but the person continues to live in the spiritual world of the ancestors. The aim of this chapter is to analyze the Christian burial rituals and practices, as evident in the PEFA church. The information was gathered through primary and secondary sources. In the primary sources the researcher gathered the necessary information through participant observation, where the researcher was able to attend five burial services conducted between 2015 and 2016 in the study area.

The researcher conducted four focus group discussions with some bereaved family members. The researcher started with a small number of respondents; however, as time went on the number increased as they went and told their colleagues whom they knew they had the required information. Hence the researcher was able to conduct focus group discussions of up to eight respondents. These respondents gave the relevant information on burials that they had witnessed and some observations they made. The pastors gave their experiences from burial services they had conducted in the area and some of the challenges they had faced. Ethical issues were observed, since the researcher introduced herself in prior visits and explained the purpose of her visits and the topic was explained to the respondents. Those who were willing were allowed to participate and they were also allowed to drop out when they felt like it. The method used also depended on the
availability and willingness of the respondents to participate and those cases that were
typical to the population in terms of characteristics being studied were recorded. A
Christian burial is the burial of a deceased person with specifically ecclesiastical rites,
typically in consecrated ground. According to Rowel G, Christianity at its infant stages,
the burial rituals and practices originated from the culture of the people from where the
Christianity originated.\textsuperscript{361} Equally Samuel Atinga observed that the Christian burial
rituals have always been changing from region to region wherever Christianity has had
contact hence the necessity of tracing the origin from the Jewish people.\textsuperscript{362}

3.2. The Christian Burial Rituals

According to Bishop Kiponda, one of the respondents and a senior pastor, the
ritual is not rigid it is dynamic. It changes at every stage of development depending on the
pastor and organizers conducting the ceremony.\textsuperscript{363} However, Pastor Gideon Karisa said
that in preparation of the liturgy for a funeral, it is of great importance that the pastor,
family and community take into consideration the situation, the culture and circumstance
of the deceased\textsuperscript{364}. The Church ministry should choose the text and rites best suited to
the situation, those which will meet the needs of the mourners, the circumstance of death
and the customs of the Local Christian community in consultation with the family.

\textsuperscript{361} G. Rowell, \textit{the Liturgy of Christian Burial. An Introductory Survey of the Historical Development of
\textsuperscript{362} S. A. Atinga, \textit{Death and Dying}, A study of the Mortuary Rites of the Frafra of Northern Ghana, In the
PhD in Theology).
\textsuperscript{363} Bishop David Kiponda at an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{364} Pastor Gideon Karisa at an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.
3.2.1 Liturgy for Christian funerals

The Pentecostal burial customs are similar to other Christian burial customs; however there are slight differences among some church denominations. The Catholic burial services differ from those of Pentecostal Churches. As observed by the researcher and confirmed by Atinga, the Catholics conduct burial with mass which is conducted by a priest, the body is taken to the church for prayers and a service is conducted and from church to the burial ground.\(^{365}\) According to Atinga, the funeral with mercy is conducted at the church. The funeral liturgy without mercy is conducted at home, no church service is conducted service is conducted at the deceased’s home.\(^{366}\) The funeral liturgy with mass, they pray for the deceased soul for God to forgive the deceased sins and receive the soul in his hands. The Catholics also conduct funeral liturgy without mass.

Bishop David Kiponda asserted that the Catholics light candles and sprinkle holy water on the coffin unlike the Pentecostals;\(^{367}\) this is confirmed by Atinga Samuel where he gives a clear analysis of the Catholic burial practices.\(^{368}\) This work was useful to this study; however, Atinga did his work from a Catholic perspective while this work is built on Pentecostal perspective. Moreover Atinga did his work by analyzing indigenous burial practices among the Frafra of Ghana, while this work analyses indigenous burial practices among the Agiriama community of Kenya. The Catholic liturgy with mass has Eucharist and the liturgy without mass does not have Eucharist.


\(^{366}\) Ibid

\(^{367}\) Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\(^{th}\) February 2016 at Mariakani.

The Pentecostal church holds the liturgy without mass as explained by the pastors and church elders that the researcher interviewed. The catholic liturgy without mass is composed of the liturgy of the word including the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer, final commendation and the rite of committed. It is without mass due to the absence of a priest.

### 3.2.2. At the death bed

Through observation, focus group discussions, interviews and information gathered from secondary sources, it is clear that when one falls sick they will either go to hospital or call a pastor who will pray for the sick for healing. Joyce Shidha asserted that Jesus is the healer and whoever calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus shall be saved. \(^{369}\) She added that some believers prefer one way healing, depending on God and will not go to the hospital for any assistance. \(^{370}\) Pastor Gideon Karisa said that those who have strong faith in Jesus when they fall sick they would call for a pastor to confess their sins and the pastor would pray for them and by God’s grace and their faith in God they would receive healing. \(^{371}\) Joseph Kazungu Kenga explained that when prayers have been made but the illness persists, the pastor and church members will continue to pray for the will of God to be done and encourage the sick person whether at home or in hospital. \(^{372}\)

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\(^{369}\) Pastor Joyce Shidha, in an oral interview with the author on 23\(^{rd}\) April 2016 at Mariakani.

\(^{370}\) Good News Bible cf Exodus 15:26, Isaiah 53:5-6, James 5:16-17.

\(^{371}\) Pastor Gideon Karisa at an oral interview with the author on 18\(^{th}\) May 2016 at Mariakani.

\(^{372}\) Joseph Kazungu Kenga in a focus group discussion with the author on 10\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Matanomanne.
The Jews believe that death is the will of God as well as the Christians will keep on praying for the sick and ask God to help the sick person according to his will. This was confirmed by all the pastors, Church elders and Christian bereaved family members. Pastor Alfred Musya asserted that this world is not our home; we are strangers travelling to heaven to be with our heavenly father. This explains that death is inevitable whether through sickness or other causes no one shall escape death.

Bishop Kiponda said that the greatest hope is that, death to the believers is the beginning for hope in the everlasting life with Jesus. Charles Baya, one of the church elders said: “at the final stage of life, the patient has to accept the situation as given”. Atinga asserted that, at this stage the patient begins to remember the scriptures and hopes to rise with Christ. This shows that it is the same for other Christians who are not from the PEFA Church. Bishop Kiponda asserted that if there is Physical body then there is also spiritual body, he said this by referring to Apostle Paul in the Bible, for this case therefore, the Christians also believe in an afterlife.

Jesus clearly explained to his disciples that he would die but rise on the third day as well indicated in the gospels. Most important is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Pastor Joseph Charo said that it constitutes in itself the resurrection of the believer since Christ rose from the dead us too shall rise. Pastor Alfred Musya said that Some death like those caused by accidents occur without any expectations hence the urge for people

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373 Pastor Alfred Musya at an oral interview with the author on 24th June 2016 at Mariakani.
374 Bishop David Kiponda at an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.
375 Charles Baya oral interview with the author on 2nd January 2016 at Matonomane.
377 Good news Bible c/f 1st Corinthians 15:42-44.
379 Good news Bible c/f 1st Corinthians 15:12-23.
to remain alert to keep on watching and praying, confessing and forsaking their sins for the second coming of Jesus our Lord and savior.\textsuperscript{380}

3.3 Rituals performed upon death

The ritual practices performed upon death are mainly known as the primary burial rituals. The Christians have elaborate primary burial rituals; however they do not have elaborate post burial rituals. According to Atinga, S. many Christian burials lack post burial rituals, this has been one of the main causes of conflict between the Christians and the indigenous Agiriama community.

3.3.1 Closing the Eyes, the mouth and trimming hair

Grace Kadzo Charo said that once death has been confirmed, the close family members near the deceased will inform the others that it is finished (vidzagoma), he/she has left us \textit{adzahuricha} (he/she has left us) and break into crying and wailing.\textsuperscript{381} Christine Kadzo Ngala asserted that, the close family members at the same time have to close the eyes, mouth (\textit{mamutengeze}) and lay the body straight facing upwards.\textsuperscript{382} The mouth is closed to avoid flies and air from entering the body and cause swelling of the body especially the abdomen part. Rachael Shani Yaa added; “if the deceased has long hair it may be trimmed as a sign of beginning of new life.”\textsuperscript{383} Grace Kadzo said that the deceased has to be washed clean with warm water because some people take a bath with

\textsuperscript{380}Pastor Alfred Musya in an oral interview with the author on 24\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{381}Grace Kadzo Charo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{382}Christine Kadzo Ngala focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{383} Rachael Shani Yaa at a group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.
warm water when still alive. She explained that this shows love for the deceased who cannot do it at that time; however, she said that some could use cold water.\footnote{Rachael Shani Yaa in an oral interview with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.}

Rachael Shani Yaa asserted that warm water is used to wash the body so that the body remains clean for it is shame and irresponsible if the body is not washed and many people come to see the body. Washing is also a sign of respect to the deceased. Joyce Shidha said that in such time a church elder or a family member leads a prayer to God to give the family strength during the difficult moment, and to thank God for the life lived by the deceased.\footnote{Joyce Shidha at an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.} One of the respondents who did not want his name mentioned said that her father died when she was the only one around him. She said: “when I discovered that he had left me, I had to remain calm. I closed his eyes, mouth, made him lie straight \textit{(namtengeza kwanza)} and then I covered him with the clothes well, then I prayed before I started crying”. She did all this to ensure that when people come to see the deceased they find him well made.

Unlike the Jewish customs where being near the dead body makes a person unclean, the Christians do not have this custom.\footnote{S. Atinga, \textit{Death and Dying.} A study of the Mortuary Rites of the Frafra of Northern Ghana in the Light of An attempt to inculturation, Catholic University. 2006. (Unpublished PhD Dissertation).} The body is washed thoroughly by people of the same sex. In the case of babies washing is done by women. According to Jackson, the Jewish people do not like touching the dead because the dead are considered unclean. However, they select people to do the washing and preparations for the body.\footnote{W. Jackson, \textit{Funeral customs Past and Present.} Christian Courier.om, 2917. (Accessed on May 21, 2017).} After the preparations, the body is laid on a mat to rest. News of the death is sent to all relatives, friends, pastor and other church members. Rachael Shani Yaa
asserted that depending on the deceased’s wishes and the financial status of the family members, the body may be taken to the mortuary or they may decide to bury it without taking the body to the mortuary.\footnote{Rachael Shani Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.}

The Christians allow crying as it brings healing to the soul and helps the bereaved come to terms with the loss. However, the Christians are advised to mourn with limit so as not to blaspheme God. Pastor Joseph Charo stated that; to live is the will of God\footnote{Pastor Joseph Charo at an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.} and to die is the will of God.\footnote{Good News Bible cf Philippians 1:21, Romans 14:3 that means to die is the will of God and we should not grieve so much and forget the purpose of our existence. Or we should be reminded that it is Gods will and no man can correct the works of God.} Pastor Joseph Charo explained to the researcher that we should be encouraged by Job who after hearing the news about the death of his seven sons, he said “naked I came from my mother, and naked I will return. The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away.”\footnote{Good News Bible cf Job 1:20-22. The Lord God is the one who gives Life and is the one who can take it away. Therefore we are encourage to remain calm since we brought nothing to the world and we go back empty handed, life is a gift from God and it belongs to him only. Instead we should give glory and honor to God for our lives and for those of our friends.} Whenever one is overcome by grief, a close friend may comfort her/him and may tell them not to be like the pagans who have no hope for everlasting life in Jesus. Since Jesus Christ died and was raised from the dead those who believe in him even if they die they shall live.\footnote{Good News Bible cf John3:16.} This was confirmed by Atinga Samuel\footnote{S. Atinga, Death and Dying. A study of the Mortuary Rites of the Frafra of Northern Ghana in the Light of An attempt to inculturation. Catholic University, 2006. (Unpublished Doctor’s Dissertation).} and Rowell.\footnote{G. Rowell, the Liturgy of Christian Burial. An Introductory Survey of the Historical Development of Christian Burial Rites (Alcuin Club Collections, 59) London, 1977.} People would be coming to join the mourners. When a new member comes, he/she would cry, view the body and join the rest and they would be sitting in groups of their own choices.
3.3.2 Death Announcement

From the researcher’s observation, oral interviews, Focus Group discussion, it was observed that, death in the village is usually known by hearing the women making long, quivering wails after a close relative of the deceased has confirmed that death has actually sneaked into the home. Grace Kadzo said that the news of a death could be delivered through the noise of people crying for those who stay within the neighborhood. She added that a long time ago people used to use things like smoke, drumming, use of horns or send somebody to send such important news, but these days it is faster since people can use telephones, radio or television to send messages to the people who live far from home.\footnote{Grace Kadzo Charo in an oral interview with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.}

Just like the indigenous Agiriama, the Christians also cry though with a caution that they should not mourn so much on those who are asleep, for they shall meet again in Paradise. Pastor Joyce Shidha said that too much grief is bad because it can make someone to blaspheme God. She added that it is good to accept the will of God the one who gives and takes life according to his will.\footnote{Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 2016 at Mariakani.} It is evident that the Christians take comfort in the word of God. Pastor Gideon Karisa explained that death was redefined by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.\footnote{Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.} For this reason, the Paschal mystery of Christ becomes the centre stage in Christian theology of death. For the believers, God is the beginning and the end of human kind. Bishop Kiponda confirmed this by referring to Paul’s letter to the Romans which confirms this by saying “we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die we die to
the lord, so then whether we live or whether we die we are the Lord’s.” 398 Life for the believer is in the Lord’s and death means death in the Lord even if we die we shall live again.

In God’s mercy and love the believers find hope in death, the only gate way to eternal life with God. This is confirmed by Atinga Samuel in his work though his work is built on a Catholic perspective whereas this work is built on a Pentecostal Perspective. 399 In God’s love and mercy, He is ready to welcome back repentant sinners. 400 This gives great hope to the believers that one day they will meet again in heaven when they will be given new immortal bodies. Some of the senior Pastors who were my respondents asserted that, the believers have hope of New Jerusalem, of being at the bosom of Abraham, of being with the Lord at the mansion which he prepared for the faithful. 401 Bishop Kiponda confirmed that God is God of the living and not God of the dead, which Since Jesus Chist lives, the believers live even if they die. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ makes the Christians believe in new life with Jesus Christ. Job asserted “for I know my redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth.” 402

Pastor Joseph Charo holds that, life here on earth is like a Journey towards a new home, where we shall have a permanent union with God. Hence, to the believers death is seen as a passage to go to live with God. 403 However, having all this still death is full of ambiguities and it is only when we are ready to face it and accept these ambiguities that

403 Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
we can fully understand who God is and come face to face with who we are. Atinga asserts that the incarnation, the sacrifice of the cross, the glorification of Jesus on the Easter Sunday, and the descent of the Holy Spirit at the Pentecost are together one event that defines Christian theology and Christian living.

### 3.3.3 The Christian death is death with Christ

Death always causes sorrow and heartbreak to the family. Death is seen as an enemy of human kind as seen in this study. However, with Christ’s death and resurrection death becomes a passage to the father and the total victory over death itself. Bishop Kiponda confirmed that Jesus died so that the believers may live after being forgiven their sins by Jesus Christ.\(^4\) This is further explained by Atinga that because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the human race is delivered from sin.\(^5\) Pastor Joseph Charo asserted that the death of a Christian can be seen as identical to the death of Christ whose deliverance through his victory over sin and death brings the faithful to true home promised by the Lord Jesus. Julia Upton confirms that the rites of liturgy bring hope and consolation to the living by immersing the faithful again and again in the wonder of the Paschal mystery.\(^6\)

Pastor Gideon Karisa in one of the sermons he delivered said that we hope that through baptism we died and rose with Jesus Christ who died and rose from death. He further said that Paul emphasized Baptism into Christ is baptism into his death. So the

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\(^4\) Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\(^{th}\) February 2016 at Mariaani.


believers were buried with Jesus, so they shall resurrect with Him.\textsuperscript{407} Atinga confirmed that baptism to Paul offers the beginning of new life.\textsuperscript{408} Pastor Joyce Shidha explained that, Christ anticipated his death as a Baptismal bath that he must go through to embrace his glorious resurrection; in this, Christian death finds its meaning. In baptism one dies to his/her old self and goes into a new self after baptism. Death to the believers is the beginning of hope in the everlasting life with Jesus, at the final stage of life, where one leaves the world behind and focuses on heaven.

3.3.4. Prayers

After death has been confirmed, prayers are held either by a church elder, pastor or any family member. This is to offer comfort and strength to the family members during the difficult moment. Some pray for the deceased’s soul for God to give a good resting place in heaven. Pastor Joyce Shidha, who had lost her husband, during my study, kept on praying. The day before the day to bring the body from the mortuary, she fasted and prayed. She said that prayer is a powerful weapon for a Christian life. In every stage of the mourning period, prayers have to be made.\textsuperscript{409} Bishop David Kiponda said that the Prayers give strength to the bereaved family members and protect the family from any dangers. He added that Jesus taught his disciples how to pray and told them to be prayerful.\textsuperscript{410}

\textsuperscript{407} Good News Bible c/f Romans 6:3-4.
\textsuperscript{409} Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 2016 at Mariakani
\textsuperscript{410} Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani
3.3.5 Trimming of the Hair

The deceased hair is trimmed in preparation for burial however this is done soon after death when the body is still warm. If the deceased is a woman trimming of the hair is done by women counter parts, and if the deceased is a man fellow men will do it so long as they are close family members such as a brother, son or sister, cousin or namesake. Joyce Shidha said that if the deceased has short hair it can be left like that. She said that the short hair will make the deceased look smart and presentable when dressed in the burial clothes on the burial day. It is also done to make the deceased look neat on this special occasion when many guests come to see him/her. Grace Kadzo said that it is the duty of the family members to make the deceased look smart because it is a way of showing love to the deceased who is expecting many visitors and cannot prepare for himself/herself.\footnote{Grace Kadzo in an oral interview with the author on 10th April 2016 at Mariakani.}

3.3.6 Washing the body of the deceased

Washing the corpse is a practice which was performed by the early Christians a common practice as said earlier which was found amongst the Egyptians, Romans, Greeks and the Jews.\footnote{G. Rowell, \textit{the Liturgy of Christian Burial. An Introductory Survey of the Historical Development of Christian Burial Rites} (Alcuin Club Collections, 59) London. 1977.} Unlike the Jews, the Christians do not fear being near the corpse. Jesus said that whatever comes out of the mouth is the one that makes a person unclean. So even being near a dead person does not make one unclean. The body is washed to be clean since many people will be seeing the body. It is also done as a sign of respect for the deceased since he/she cannot do it by him/herself. Joyce Shidha added that washing is done to prepare the deceased on a final journey to be with the Lord Jesus.
Christ. She further added that washing is done by males if the deceased is a male and if the deceased is a female it is done by fellow females. Washing is done by people of the same sex because the nakedness is good to be seen by a person of the same sex, it is a shame to see the nakedness of opposite sex. Therefore, in both cases washing is done by close family members of the same sex to the deceased, with warm water and bar soap. Warm water is used to ensure the body remains soft.

3.3.7 Clothing the Deceased

After the washing has been done, the body is dressed in nice clothes, the normal clothes which the deceased used to wear especially when going for a journey or when expecting visitors. This is because death calls for many people in the home so the deceased has to look nice and presentable. Then the body may be taken to the mortuary for preservation till a day before burial that is when the body is taken from the mortuary to rest at home overnight, to see the home for the last time. This depends on the economic status of the family; they may not take the body to mortuary but leave the body at home for about two to three days. In case the body is not taken to the mortuary, a doctor may be called or any other specialist to treat the body so that it remains in good condition till burial.

Traditional preservation methods may be used such as laying the body on wet sand to provide coldness. On the burial day or from the mortuary, the body is prepared for burial by washing again and dressing. The body is dressed in white garments; if the deceased is a female, a bride dress like on a wedding day; this is the final wedding, final

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\(^{413}\)Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\(^{rd}\) April 2016 at Mariakani.

\(^{414}\)Ibid.
journey on earth to go and be with Jesus the bride groom. For a male, he is dressed in a new suit like a bride groom, the final wedding to be with Jesus Christ as the new bride in paradise. In case the family members are not in a position to buy the white garment, the wedding garment in this case, or a new suit for a male, new clothes for the deceased or the ones the deceased used to wear may be used, so long as they were dressed nicely as if they were ready for a journey. The Christians adapted the use of the white garments for burial with the interpretation that the soul of the dead was wrapped in a garment of immortality. Atinga confirms that the use of white linen garments was supported by church fathers. Joseph Kazungu Kenga confirmed that white garments are a sign of purity and cleanliness. He explained that it symbolizes that the deceased has gone to a place which is pure and clean like the white garments.

3.3.8 Mourners Clothing

In some of the five burials the researcher attended, three out of the five burials; the mourners wore uniform of black T-shirts written R.I.P rest in peace which was common for men and women. Some of the females wore dhera a kind of dress commonly worn by women during functions. Plate 10 below shows family members who had lost a grandmother, they wore T-shirts written ‘R.I.P. GRANDMA’

415 Good News Bible c/f Revelation 3: 5; 2 Corinthians 5: 2.
417 Joseph Kazungu Kenga in an oral interview with the author on 10th April 2016 at Mariakani.
The bereaved family members who had lost a grandmother wore T-shirts written ‘R.I.P. GRANDMA’ at the back to symbolize the love towards their bereaved grandmother.

The wife or husband and children wore either white mixed with black colored; nice clothes made for the function. The Christians wear nice black clothing to symbolize sadness and grief over the loss of a loved one. This practice was discouraged by the early church Fathers because people would spend so much on clothing and decorations which made the poor unable to meet the expenses. The black clothes symbolized sadness and are discouraged because the Christians nowadays view burial ceremonies as celebrations of life well lived by the deceased. Bishop Kiponda asserted that it is the
deceased’s second wedding,\textsuperscript{418} hence the bereaved family members are allowed to wear nice colors of their choice. This helps to make the burial ceremony look like wedding ceremony. However, the Christians still practice it as confirmed by my findings and supported by Atinga Samuel.\textsuperscript{419} The family members whom the researcher interviewed asserted that during the burial of their loved ones they wore white clothing. “We wear white clothes because we are celebrating a life well lived,” one of the respondent asserted. Meaning that the deceased lived a good Christian life and even if he/she is dead, she/ he is dead in Christ and since Christ lives the deceased too has eternal life.

3.3.9 Vigil/Singing

This ritual was preserved and carried on from the early Christianity funeral rituals. When news about death reaches to the ears of the people they gather, relatives and neighbors start gathering to join the mourners. Females who come stay around the body to guard it while others assist in the domestic chores such as fetching some water and fire wood. The male take part in digging the grave. Vigil or wake keeping takes place in the deceased’s home where the mourners gather to keep the family members company during the difficult moment, a moment when they are in a state of shock and grief over the sudden death of the loved one. It is a kind of celebration for the Christian community.

During the vigil service, there are usually greetings from the organizer to call on people’s attention. Worship songs are conducted by praise and worship groups or a choir.

\textsuperscript{418}Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani.
member or a member of the congregation. This is followed by opening prayers to commit the service into God’s hands so that God may lead the service. Songs are then sung, choruses, hymns, testimonies by church members concerning the life well lived by the deceased and Choruses concerning their own lives. The pastor reads the word of God usually done by the pastor from the church where the deceased was a member. In one burial the researcher observed Bishop Kiponda preached the word of God to the mourners. After the word a prayer is conducted for the entire mourner and for those who would like to receive Jesus Christ in their lives. Choruses are then sung till morning, the songs and choruses are sung to praise God for the life well lived and to give hope to those who have gathered. The rite of vigil is a birth right for the assembly to celebrate communally the death of one of its members. Shange highlighted that during such time, the people benefited from the support offered by friends and relatives.

3.3.10 Theological Meaning for the Vigil

This ritual originated from the early Christians and it is built in the faith in Jesus Christ that the believers should pray and watch because the hour for Jesus’ coming is not known, therefore the church keeps vigil. Vigil helps the friends and relatives to express their love and concern for the deceased and the family members. Saint Paul in his letter to the Romans; taught the believers to cry with them that cry and laugh with those who laugh, as it says a friend in need is a friend in deed. The believers here have

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420 Bishop David Kiponda in an author observation at a burial on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
423 Good News Bible c/f Romans 12: 15.
the opportunity to exercise their unity in supporting those who are bereaved. It is during this moment that one needs a friend to offer spiritual comfort and hope. According to Shiino, vigil offers an opportunity to the family, friends and relations to express their feelings of pain and deep grief. 424 Nwoye argued that in the African culture, pathological grief is not known due to the nature of support offered to the bereaved person. Same as the Christians they support each other during such times.425

3.3.11 Grave Digging

Since death concerns every member of the community, the grave is dug by both Christians and the African traditional religion adherents. Pastor Alfred Musya confirmed that grave digging is done by men who come to the home of the deceased.426 However, Pastor Gideon Karisa said that if the indigenous make some demands like demand for traditional wine uchi wa mnazi (traditional wine) and some cigarettes then the Christians may allow only fellow Christians to dig the grave.427 Those who dig the grave do it out of humanity in the sense that they do not need payment, though its courtesy to by them some soda to show gratitude for their hard work. Bishop David Kiponda said that the site for the grave is usually identified by the head of the family or a brother or an uncle to the deceased.428

426 Pastor Alfred Musya at an oral interview with the author on 24th June 2016 at Mariakani.
427 Pastor Gideon Karisa at an oral interview on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
428 Bisop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.
3.4 On the Burial Day

On the burial day there is usually a program, which guides the day’s activities. Depending on the financial position and the duration given for preparation, the program may be typed and several copies made for the many people who will attend the burial. If time does not allow for the program to be typed, then only one or two copies that are handwritten may be prepared to guide the master of ceremony. The program of the day may start as early as ten o’clock. It may start with a prayer, and welcome by a family representative.

3.4.1 Speeches

In most of the burials that the researcher attended; there was usually a program which guided the proceeding of the funeral services. The speeches start with a family representative who welcomes all the guests. In one of the burials the researcher attended there were some choirs who sang to entertain the mourners, and to encourage the beloved ones and to give them hope in the afterlife.

Then there was speech from the elder of ten homes followed by speeches from politicians who were around starting with the aspirants. One of the burials which the researcher attended was of a mother of about fifty years of age. She was a parent and a grandmother. She was a member of the board of management in one of the schools. So one of the school boards of management member had to give a speech on how they had lived well and cooperated with her in carrying out the school activities. The board of management from where one of her children was learning also had to give a speech to comfort the sons who had been left. The politicians who were already in position, each
was given opportunity to give their speech. The speeches that are given by different categories of people depend on the social status of the deceased and his / her close relatives like children father, brother or sister. This can make the people giving speeches become many, making the program long and delay the burial or few making the program short. The length of the program depends on the number of guests who will be allowed to give speeches. Joyce Shidha, who had lost her husband, contended that if the people giving speeches are many, they need to be controlled by the master of ceremony or else this may delay the program.429

During the burial of Joyce’s husband who was a church leader and a village elder, there were very many people who gave long speeches until the mourners started complaining of getting late for the burial yet some people were from very far and needed to go back to their homes. Those who were remaining were given only two minutes each at least to say their names.

3.4.2 Eulogy / biography

The climax of the speeches is the eulogy. The eulogy gives the history of the deceased which starts from birth till death. In one of the burials; the history started with birth, this shows the year when the deceased was born. For this case the deceased was born in 1960 and died in 2016. The names of the deceased parents were given and the village where he was born was also given and the clan which he belonged to was given. The early Christian life was mentioned; this showed when the deceased started going to church was as early as from childhood. Concerning education, the schools which the

429Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.
deceased attended were given and the academic levels; the lowest and highest academic were also given.

The history gives details of the deceased’s life including the matrimonial life. The year of marriage is given and the number of children which they were blessed with is also given. The children are also mentioned. Rachael Shani who had lost her mother said that children, grand children and great grand children are given in number to show the family she had left behind.\(^{430}\) Edward Kalume said that their deceased mother had left six children, thirty three grand children and twenty five great grand children.\(^{431}\) The eulogy is a written document, however it is part of an elaborate ritual which helps to celebrate the rites of passage of the dead, thus it has religious values. With the church work which the deceased has done in giving service to God, it gives religious values and ideas come to the surface of the mind. The religious life lived by the deceased is linked with the kind of personality of the person.

Luwayi confirmed this in his work, \textit{the dialogue with the living}: Biography in the order of a Christian’s funeral services in the Yoruba society, that biography gives the beginning, the course and the ending of human development.\(^{432}\) It helps to give a reflection of one’s life; whereby good life is linked to religion. In this case it is of great importance as most people consider eulogy as a document that gives information and people would want to believe that once it has been read it is digested. Pastor Joseph Charo said that the eulogy may be a detailed written report or it can be given briefly

\(^{430}\)Rachael Shani Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June at Mariakani.

\(^{431}\)Edward Kalume in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.

orally by one of the close family members depending on how well the family is prepared before the burial day.\textsuperscript{433} In most cases it is a story generated by some members of the bereaved family. Luwayi explained that usually the eldest child or member of the extended family may be involved in constructing the eulogy\textsuperscript{434} This shows that it is a ritual practice performed by not only the Agirama Christians but by other African Christians.

The life history in most of eulogies varies historically with the experience and with the material conditions which shape life at one particular time. The history reveals the religious identification and involvement in the religious activities. The politicians, who give speeches, emphasize the achieved merits of the deceased which could only enhance the reputation of the individual, of a role player or as a good citizen. Bishop Kiponda said the Christians mainly emphasize the religious part of the life history of an individual while the indigenous may emphasis on the political achievements of the individual.\textsuperscript{435} Although eulogy is an important document, in most cases it is prepared in a hurry and in most cases; some of the main points are left out. Lawuyi argues that it would be of great importance if people would be empowered to write their own biographies in order to preserve the main information for future use.\textsuperscript{436}

\textsuperscript{433}Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{435}Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani.
3.4.3 Ritual for the Word

After the eulogy the church takes over the service. The Pastor who was the deceased’s spiritual father; mentions where the deceased used to attend fellowships then welcomed other pastors, who said their names briefly and said something they wished to the gathering. The pastor host may choose another pastor to give the word. There is opening prayer for the word and a closing prayer after the word has been given. At one of the burials the researcher attended, after the word there was a vote of thanks given by one of the family members in appreciation of all the people present at the burial for their heartfelt support during the trying moments for the bereaved family. This happened in other burials which the researcher attended. On the burial day, the Pastor from the church where the deceased used to attend gives the word. Like the early Christian burial liturgy, the Pastor uses selected verses from the bible to proclaim the paschal mystery, to convey the hope of being gathered together in God’s Kingdom. They teach remembrance of the dead and encourage the witness of a Christian life. The word stresses the importance of living a life that pleases God, to give hope in the resurrection and related words.

The researcher witnessed the sermon when one of the preachers at a funeral gathering was preaching. The preacher asserted, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they will not test the second death.” He stressed that the deceased is blessed because he had died believing in the Lord and Jesus will raise him again on the last day.437 Though he had died he would be resurrected into new life. Pastor Gideon Karisa said that the word enables the gathering community of believers to celebrate life without

437 Good News Bible c/f Revelation 14:13
end which is promised by Jesus Christ. Like in the early Christian liturgy, the selected readings help the Christian community to come to a full grasp of the theology of Christian death, the Paschal mystery of Christ and hope in resurrection.

3.4.4 Viewing the Body

The last viewing of the body is allowed for the mourners to see their beloved one for the last time on earth.

Plate 9: Family members viewing the boy of their beloved grandmother

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438 Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
Bishop Kiponda said that viewing of the body is done so that the family can see their beloved one for the last time. He further added that viewing of the body ensures that the deceased is really the one whom they are going to bury. Joyce Shidha said it helps the family members to know that they are going to return their really beloved one, not any other person back into the soil; the body is then escorted for burial.

Viewing the body is done in different phases; firstly it is done immediately when death news has been pronounced. As people gather in one by one, they go straight to where the deceased is laid to see the body, cry and go to join the others in groups of their choice. This ritual is performed by the mourners to confirm that death has really occurred as narrated by one of the respondents Bishop David Kiponda. This is confirmed by Shiino in his work on death and rituals among the Luo in South Nyanza, though his work is written on the Luo death rituals while this work is on the Agiriama of the Kenyan Coast. Viewing the body is once more done at the mortuary when the family receives the body to take it home for burial. To ensure that what they are carrying home is the body of their relative and not any body of their beloved one. To ensure that the body was well preserved and well dressed as required. On the day for burial, during morning hours before the service begins, viewing is done to say bye to their beloved one and for the new arrivals to see the body for the first time. This ritual is performed again before the body is escorted to the grave, to ensure that they are burying the right person. As people view the body they give their condolences in form of money which is used to clear hospital bills and cater for the funeral expenses.

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440 Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.
441 Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.
3.4.5 Singing

During the whole morning period, there is prayer and singing throughout. Pastor Joseph Charo said that the selected ancient hymns sang express the believers’ hope in the resurrection. Grace Kadzo said that the singing breaks the monotony of wailing and crying of the mourners. Atinga asserted that these songs give hope and comfort to the community of believers. The music gives greater solemnity to a ritual action; songs give meaning to the rituals and help the family members to come to terms with the loss of their loved one.

A Christian hymn: Sung during burial

God be with you till we meet again

By His counsels’ guide, uphold you

With His sheep securely fold you

God be with you till we meet again

Till we meet, till we meet

Till we meet at Jesus’ feet

Till we meet, till we meet

God be with you till we meet again

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443 Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
444 Grace Kadzo Charo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
446 From a burial program in one of the burials the researcher attended.
The song was sung by the mourners to say by to their loved one, their faith and hope was that the deceased had gone to be with the Lord Jesus Christ. It was also their hope that one day they would meet again and be happy together.

3.4.6 Escorting the Body to the Grave

It is a farewell by which the Christian community together pays respects to one of its members. Emmanuel Charo said that this depends on the social status of the deceased\textsuperscript{447}, the cascade is escorted to the grave with songs; hymns which affirm that the community members commend their loved one to the mercy of God. This acknowledges the reality of separation and affirms that the community and the deceased who were once baptized into the one body share the same destiny, which is resurrection on the last day when Jesus Christ will come back\textsuperscript{448}. When the Church elders die, the pastors ensure that the body is carried by fellow Church elders, usually men since men are strong. Women are emotional and cry a lot and may not be able to carry the coffin; they can be overcome by emotions and let the coffin drop when they collapse due to those emotions.

One respondent who is a pastor confirmed that the body of pastors is carried by fellow pastors to bid farewell to their fellow pastor. The body of an ordinary church member is carried by fellow church members; fellow church members who show respect to the deceased as it is his/her last service to attend them here on earth. It is usually very painful, the family members follow next to those carrying the body while crying; knowing for sure that it is the last day for their beloved one. The song and the word of

\textsuperscript{447}Emmanuel Charo in an oral interview with the author on 28\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.

God give hope for eternal life to the community of believers. As said earlier, this is an old Christian tradition which symbolizes the journey of life as pilgrimage to God’s kingdom of peace and light, and the new eternal life which one day everyone will embark in this final journey.

3.4.7 Burial

The mourners gather at the grave, the body is carried facing the direction of the grave. The head faces sunset, Joseph Kazungu said that this direction symbolizes that when Jesus comes back the dead shall rise back to life, just like the sun sets and rises again every morning to start a new day. Plate 12 below shows mourners gathering around the grave waiting for the body of their beloved one to be laid down to rest.

Plate 10: Mourners gathering around the grave waiting for the body for burial

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Joseph Kazungu Kenga at a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
Mourners gather around the grave waiting for the body of their loved one to be laid to rest, in the tomb ‘you came from the dust and you shall return to the dust.450 As the body is being lowered to the grave everyone comes to the full reality that it is indeed their end of physical contact with their beloved one. They break into a loud cry; again the last word is said “dust to dust” the close family members are given some soil to throw into the grave three times marking the beginning of filling the grave with soil. Prayer may be said to commit the deceased’s soul into the hands of God and asking God to let the deceased’s soul rest in peace. In three of the burials I attended, the pastor said that there was no need to pray to God for the deceased to be given a good place in heaven since one makes his/her choice of where to spend his/her eternity while still alive, it is a personal choice and the preacher encouraged people to make the right choice. On his sermon, Pastor Joseph Charo said that we are strangers on the earth, our home is in heaven, we have to live life that pleases God for us to see God451. He further said that we have to make the right choice while still alive so that when we die we may see God our heavenly father.

### 3.5 Post Burial rituals

Washing of the tools used at the grave is done to remove dirt. Those who take part in the filling of the grave also wash their hands, faces and legs. This is a practice done by both the Christian and the African indigenous religion adherents like the indigenous do, in order to remove the dirt. Mwawara Garero contended that the dust from the grave site has to be washed there. He explained that it has to remain there

450 Good News Bible C/f Genesis3:19.
451 Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
where it belongs; carrying it home is like carrying death with you to your home.\textsuperscript{452} Pastor Joseph Charo said “we have no restrictions as to whether one should wash or not for we believe that the blood of Jesus Christ protects us from any danger and calamities.”\textsuperscript{453}

\subsection*{3.5.1 Placing Flowers at the Tomb}

Soon after the body has been laid to rest and the tomb sealed, the close family members may put some flowers on the tomb. For three of the burials the researcher attended, there were flowers placed on top of the tomb by the close family members such as sons and daughters, father, mother, brothers and sisters. During the burial of Joyce Shidha’s husband who was a church elder, the pastors were also given opportunity to put some flowers after the burial was completed.

Plate 11: Family members, relatives and friends placing flowers on a sealed tomb

\textsuperscript{452}Daniel Mwawara Garero in a Focus group discussion with the author on 16/2/2016 at Bengo.  
\textsuperscript{453}Ibid.
The master of ceremony guided friends and relatives to participate in placing the flowers on the tomb. Grace Kadzo and Shani Yaa, who had lost a mother; Kang’ombe Kalume, asserted that placing of the flowers shows the love that they had for their beloved one who had gone before them.\footnote{Rachael Shani Yaa and Grace Kadzo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.} Pastor Gideon Karisa said that the ritual of flowers can be repeated yearly when the family remembers the annual anniversary of the death of their beloved one.\footnote{Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.} However, Pastor Joseph Charo said that once a person is dead, his/ her earthly life is over.\footnote{Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.} He further said that the deceased person goes to be with the Lord Jesus so there is no need for celebrating the death anniversary; he said it is like worshiping the dead.

### 3.5.2 Prayers

The close family members are called together for prayer. Bishop Kiponda said that this time is given for all the family members for protection, strength and courage to accept living a life without their beloved one.\footnote{Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani.}

### 3.5.3 Tribute

A family representative gives direction on what the mourners will do after the burial. Therefore, a prayer for thanks giving by one of the pastors which acts as a closing prayer after which the mourner’s are served with food which was prepared for the guests. This food is served to show appreciation to the mourners who have left their homes for the burial, also it is a meal to say bye to their loved one. After the meal everyone is free...
to leave at their own pleasure. However, those close relatives may take some days before they depart to their homes. This is to keep company the bereaved family members as they adjust to the new life; to live without the deceased.

3.5.4 Sharing the Wealth of the Deceased

The deceased’s belongings such as clothing have to be used even when the original owner is dead. Shani Yaa who had lost a mother Kang’ombe Kalumesaid; “we cannot throw the clothes because they remind us of our beloved one who died. Throwing them is like we don’t love the owner of the clothes anymore.”458 Equally, Grace Kadzo who had lost a grandmother the same family with Shani Yaa said that throwing the clothes was like the grandmother died of a dread disease like leprosy.459 This means that the clothes for a person who may have died of a dread disease such as leprosy are not to be shared amongst the family members even if the deceased is a Christian. After the burial, the close family members remain in companying the beloved members; on the second or third day they leave for their homes. Before they leave the deceased’s clothes have to be shared. This practice is unlike the indigenous Agiriama practice; the indigenous Agiriama wait up to Nyere za mwezi (the hairs of the moon) then they distribute the deceased’s belongs. In two of the burials the researcher witnessed, the family shared the clothes on the second day when the extend family members were about to leave for their homes. On the second day morning, the family members both male and female asked each other what was to be done.

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458 Rachel Shani Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
459 Grace Kadzo Charo in an oral interview with the author on 16 June 2016 at Mariakani.
Edward Kalume, a son to the deceased said that before the clothes are shared to anyone they had to pray first. The eldest son asked the researcher to pray so the researcher conducted the prayer with the family members. One of the Pastors said that the prayer is for protection and to clean the clothes so that whoever wears them may not be troubled by even spirits. This I found to be similar to the Agiriama indigenous ritual of the cleaning of the home and the things left behind. The division process was to be carried out in a manner that each person gets something. The elder son, whose mother Kang’ombe Kalume had died, said that a person who had no close ties to the family had to carry out the process.

One of the neighbors who had accompanied a family member to the deceased grandmother home was allowed to divide the things. It was a must for each person, whether they liked the person, or whether they did not, to get a share. However, for those who did not want to wear those clothes they were allowed to look for a person whom they wished to give. Thus, some of the bereaved family members ended up having a double share. The researcher asked the bereaved adult why it was necessary to have an outsider to do the distribution. The elder son, Chula Kalume said that it was done so as to avoid favoritism. This is because some of the clothes may be new, good or old and discolored yet they have to be shared.

The family members said that, that is how sharing was to be carried out. Concerning other belongings like land and animals; the family would organize for a day to come and share in the guidance of the senior pastors to avoid disagreements. In the

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460 Edward Kalume in a focus group discussion with the author 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
461 Chula Kalume in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani (2nd discussion).
case of widows and widowers, the pastors confirmed to the researcher that marriage ends at death, prayer for the family was to set free the widow/widower after which he / she was free to remarry at his / her own wish. However if one married too soon after the death of spouse it would raise suspicion on the love of the deceased. The pastors said that it is advisable for one to give him / her enough time to allow God to work in their lives.

3.6 Conclusion

From the study findings above, it is very clear that there are burial ritual practices that are performed by both the Christians and the Agiriama African religion adherents. However, there are some ritual practices which are not the same; they are different from those for Christians. This chapter leads us to the next chapter which is intended to analyze the areas of conflicts between the Christianity and African traditional religion on burial rituals and practice. From the findings of the two ritual practices, there are similarities and differences. Some of the similarities include; closing the deceased’s eyes and the mouth, breaking the news of a death, washing the body, guarding the body, preparations for burial, viewing the body, consultations, vigil, digging the tomb and putting the body in its final resting place. The differences in the two ritual practices include; observations to be made before breaking the news of a death, holding the ear, shaving the hair of the deceased. The Agiriama African religion adherents’ prefer traditional mortuary rites and have traditional post mortems. The language used for the songs, slaughtering of animal, cleansing the home, throwing the death ritaly. The

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462 Pastors Alfred Musya, Joseph Charo, Joyce Shidha, and Gideon Karisa had the same view that marriage ends upon death of one of the spouses and the other partner becomes free to marry again.
conduction of the Nyere za mwezi ceremony, by the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents is not practiced by the Christians.
CHAPTER FOUR

AREAS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND INDIGENOUS
AFRICAN BURIAL RITUAL PRACTICES AMONG THE AGIRIAMA
COMMUNITY

4.1 Introduction

The researcher dedicated chapters two and three to the study of the Agiriama African religion adherents’ burial rites and the Christian funeral liturgy respectively. In chapter two the researcher concentrated on the study of the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents’ burial rituals and practices. Theresearcher attempted to analyze each ritual practice from the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents’ perspective. In chapter three the researcher attempted an analysis for the Christian funeral liturgy with reference to PEFA church. The researcher attempted to give the meaning of the burial rituals and practices as well. The study of the two chapters, that is, chapters two and three set the background to this yet another very important chapter. In this chapter the researcher intends to compare the two by analyzing the areas of conflict in the burial rituals and practices. The comparison leads to the identification of the similarities and differences and therefore, a discussion on the conflicting areas. It is of great importance to compare between the Christian and the Indigenous Agiriama burial rituals and practices in order to discover the conflicting areas.
4.2.1 Treatment for the sick

The Agiriama African religious adherents take the sick person to a religious specialist for treatment. They also contact sooth sayers and diviners to look for possible ways to heal the sick as seen in chapter two and in the literature review. Mwawara Garero noted that these days’ things are changing in that the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents may take the sick person to hospital for treatment.\textsuperscript{463} Nevertheless, he added that the Kaya elders prefer the traditional healers to modern medications. In the case of very old people, Chula Kalume said that a person may have suffered illness for a very long period of time.\textsuperscript{464} Such a person may even start developing some bedsores and may not be able to eat or drink. This makes those people attending such a sick person unable to eat, hence becomes a burden to the family members. In this case, the family members have to consult a religious specialist to identify the cause of the long suffering.

Mwawara Garero contended that some of the reasons include: the sick person during his life time, may have gone to a herbalist and was given a charm to swallow \textit{wamiza Pingu} (swallowed a charm), or one might have connected his/her spirit with a certain tree or animal.\textsuperscript{465} If that animal is identified and killed, then the person dies. He further said that some rituals may be performed to make such a person die.\textsuperscript{466}

Kache Charo Menza noted that a long time ago when a person had suffered long without dying, an elder woman from the family would sit on the face of the sick person

\textsuperscript{463}Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{464}Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mtondia.
\textsuperscript{465}Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{466}Ibid.
and cover the sick person with her hando (traditional skirt) to cause suffocation leading to death.\footnote{Kache Charo Menza in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariaani.} She further said that if this was done while the person was still strong he/she would struggle to free him/herself, by biting the buttocks of the person sitting on him/her. “This caused psychological effect to the person committing such an act of assisting someone to die; one would feel guilty in her conscience,” she said. Karisa Iha said that these days it is very rare to find very old people because when one grows old and start growing grey hair he or she is mistaken for a witch which put them at the risk of being attacked by some people and killed.\footnote{Karisa Charo Iha in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani.} This was confirmed by Mwawara Garero who said that grey hair is a natural thing; “I believe old is gold,” he noted. However, he asserted that these days gray hair is like \emph{alaana} (curse)\footnote{Daniel Mwawara Garero in a Focus Group Discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.} that is why those with grey hair have to apply chemicals like easy black to make the hair artificially black to avoid being called a witch. This is confirmed by Kalume Tinga who asserts that for decades, diviners and healers have been misconceived and condemned wholesale as "witchdoctors", "wizards" or “witches”.\footnote{K. K. Tinga, Cultural Practice of the Midzichenda at cross Roads: Divination, Healing, Witchcraft and the Statutory Law. AAP55. 1998. P. 173-184.}

This was also confirmed by Rechard Airo when he said that the elders are few because they have been killed for being mistaken as witches.\footnote{R. Airo, Towards the Inculturation of ‘Nyere za Mwezi,’ An Agiriama Funeral Rite with Reference to St. Thomas Catholic Church Unpublished Master’s Dissertation, Pwani University, 2016.} The elders are the ones who are concerned with the matters of community health; the art of traditional healing has been passed on to them due to their wisdom, yet their lives are constantly in danger for being mistaken as harmful people. Airo confirmed this in his work where the Kaya elders said that they were few in number because of being mistaken as bad people, hence
some have been killed. On the other hand, the Christians do not consult diviners for treatment they pray for healing while some pray and go to the hospital to be treated. Bishop David Kiponda noted that it is the will of God to heal every sickness and set his people free.472

4.2.2 At the death bed

The Christians as well as the indigenous care for the sick, hence they tend to gather in the dying/ in the death chamber to show love, solidarity with the family of the dying and also to the person dying, to give hope and encouragement. Joyce Shidha asserts that we have to give hope to those in need such as when one is sick. It is during this time when those around the dying person pray to God, assist the person to prepare his / her ways. Pastor Alfred Musya noted that God is happy when you assist a person to turn to God by repenting their sins.473 Bishop Kiponda noted that there are some sins that one may not even know that he/she committed them.474 He added that God is holy and loving who welcomes repentant sinners to his kingdom. Hence it is good to confess the sins that the person may know and thosewhich he or she may not know.

Pastor Gideon Karisa says “wehave to help the person to prepare to meet with Jesus in paradise by confessing their sins.”475 Grace Kadzo confirmed that it is during this time when we have to be together to show love, strengthen our hope and faith in Jesus and to give the family support and consultation.476 The Agiriama African traditional religion adherents pray for the sick through the ancestors commonly known

472 Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 216 at Mariakani.
473 Pastor Alfred Musya I an oral interview with the author on 24th June 2016 at Mariakani.
474 Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 2nd February 2016 at Mariakani.
475 Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
476 Grace Kadzo Charo in an oral interview with the author on 10th April 2016 at Mariakani.
as *koma* (the spirits of the dead people). Joyce Shidha said that this is not accepted by the Christians, she said that God forbids ancestral worship or worship through the ancestors.\(^{477}\) Ade confirmed that the African people worship the living God through the ancestors because they believe the ancestors are people whom they once knew so they believe that they can present their needs to God.\(^{478}\)

### 4.2.3 Death Calls for Togetherness

Death calls people to be together as human beings are social beings *umwenga wa atu* (unity in human beings). The funeral gathering and celebration is a must since death causes fear among the bereaved family members. Both the Christians and the African religious adherents among the Agiriama community, emphasise togetherness during such difficult moments. It is the Agiriama traditions to help each other in happiness and sorrow because death affects the family as well as the larger community in which the individual lives. In this case death is an event that calls for the gathering of the community *lalo zima* (the whole community).\(^{479}\) During such times, the community members respond immediately to give a helping hand, to sympathize and condole to feel and to suffer with the bereaved family members. Bishop Kiponda asserts that it is religious to do so, he confirms that Jesus himself went to give condolences to Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus of Bethany and in the process Lazarus’ life was restored.\(^{480}\)

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\(^{477}\) Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\(^{rd}\) April 2016 at Mariakani.


\(^{480}\) Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\(^{nd}\) February 2016 at Mariakani.
Equally, Mwawara Garero says that it is a cultural demand to respond positively and with urgency upon hearing news of death of a neighbor or a relative.\textsuperscript{481}

During the study as the researcher was attending a burial of a grandmother Kang’ombe Kalume, the body had been brought home and there was an overnight vigil. In the morning as people were preparing to take breakfast, and proceed with the burial, another person who had died for away and belonged to a nearby home, was brought to their home. On reaching home, this was the father of the family. Unknowingly, the family members who did not know that their father had passed on had gone to the shamba to weed. When they received the sad news, they came home wailing and crying. Two sons and their wives came with their hoes on their shoulders threw the hoes and started weeping loudly. It was not funny because they were expected to be at the burial for the neighboring grandmother. People were amazed. Some of the mourners asked: “why are you crying now?” “You went to the shamba while your neighbors were burying, did you think that we were burying an animal! Now death has come to your family you cry? Do you think your father is the only person?”

To avoid such embarrassment one has to be with their colleagues all the time except when going to relieve themselves. One may leave the group with permission from the bereaved family member. Christine Kadzo Ngala said that when you want to leave shortly you have to inform at least one of the bereaved family member so that you may not be mistaken for running away\textsuperscript{482}.

\textsuperscript{481}Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{482}Christine Kadzo Ngala in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariani.
Hadija Mdzomba Kombo one of the Kaya elders noted that death occurs to everyone, it happens here today; tomorrow it is there, so one has to show some humanity and respect for the dead.\textsuperscript{483} The Christians said that it is Biblical to be with people as Jesus commanded his disciples to love one another. Pastor Joseph Charo said that the Christians are like brothers so the (brotherhood) \textit{undugu} has to be demonstrated during such difficult times.\textsuperscript{484} The greatest commandment is love for God, and fellow human beings.\textsuperscript{485} Pastor Gideon Karisa asserted that Christians have to love and help even them that are afflicted.\textsuperscript{486}

Kenga Chai confirmed that the spirit of brotherhood among the Agiriama is seen through helping one another “\textit{udugu ni kufahana si kuhalana}” (brotherhood is assisting each other not only looking alike).\textsuperscript{487} Schanz holds that, to be a Christian is to be in Christ, to be Christ is to be one with him and those he called to be his body.\textsuperscript{488} Just like the Agiriama indigenous people, the Christians are concerned for each other is not only found during death but it is seen throughout one’s life time. Jesus Christ commanded his disciples to remain in love and unity and this calls for caring for each other. Pastor Gideon Karisa noted that death is not a private matter it calls for friends and relatives.\textsuperscript{489} Alice Charo, one of the family members who had lost their mother asserted that death is not a private matter, hence it requires the community to respond immediately either

\textsuperscript{483} Hadija Mdzomba Kombo in a focus Group Discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2916 at Bengo at Rabai.
\textsuperscript{484} Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{485} Good news Bible /f Mathew 22: 3-40.
\textsuperscript{486} Pastor Gideon Karisa at an oral interview with the researcher on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{487} Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 15\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Kilifi (1\textsuperscript{st} Interview).
\textsuperscript{489} Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.
indigenous or Christian we are all people.\textsuperscript{490} This was confirmed by a Tinga in his study “Death and Dying”, when he asserts that people respond to the occurrence of death; whether Christians or traditional the motivation is the same, so this shows that it is not only the Agiriama people who gather during such moments but also the Frafra of Northern Ghana.\textsuperscript{491} Thus it indicates that some other African communities gather and support each other during sad times. Tiny happy asserts that mourning the dead is a universal practice which is mediated by religious and cultural practices in different societies.\textsuperscript{492}

In view of this, the Agiriama African religious adherents as well as the Christian funeral rites are directed at those still alive as well as the dead person. Bishop Kiponda noted that the Christian liturgy is conducted for those still alive, to give them hope and encouragement.\textsuperscript{493} In view of this, the Christians prayers are offered for the family members who are still alive to aid the healing of their hearts whereas for the indigenous people prayers are for the dead and the living, equally in both cases prayers are held for the wellbeing of the family for peace and prosperity. Pastor Gideon Karisa argues that there are some church denominations like the Catholic Church who pray for the dead. However, he explains that it was his belief that the dead have no relationship with the living; he added that they are asleep and Jesus Christ would wake them up on the day when he comes for the second time.\textsuperscript{494}

\textsuperscript{490}Alice Charo in a Focus Group Discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Matano Mane.
\textsuperscript{493}Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{494}Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author at Mariakani.
Conversely, the Agiriama prayers are done through the ancestors *K’oma* whom they believe are close to the living and watch over them as seen in the literature review. In the researcher’s comparative analysis the ecclesial family is a faith community that embraces spiritual realm as it is the binding force in Christ inspired by the spirit and embraces both the living and the dead in a mutual relationship. The church is a family of believers in Christ so the Agiriama are one large family bound together by the reaction of ancestors and every member of community counts as confirmed by Chidongo who asserted that the Agiriama community live together in the spirit of *ubuntu, utu*, “I am because you are;” this is demonstrated in the togetherness of the Agiriama community in both the indigenous Agiriama and the Christians, death calls for the gathering of the community.

4.2.4 Closing the Eyes and the Mouth

As seen in chapter two and three in both the Christians and the Agiriama African religion adherents’ people, upon the confirmation of someone’s death, the eyes and the mouth of the deceased have to be closed. It is an act of humanity and out of love to attend the dead up to the last moment. The pastors asserted that it is a way of showing concern for the need. Pastor Alfred Musya confirmed that throughout Jesus’ ministry, he was concerned with the need. In view of this, it is the duty of the Christians to be concerned with the need. The Agiriama African religion adherents do this out of love and to show respect for the dead and the ancestors.

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496 Pastor Alfred Musya in an oral interview with the author on 24th June 2016 at Mariakani.
The Agiriama African religion adherents believe that the dead have gone to be with the ancestors while the Christians believe that the dead person has gone to be with the Lord Jesus. Bishop Kiponda explained that; when a righteous person dies he/she goes to Abraham’s bosom where he/she is comforted of the many problems which he/she faced when on earth. Equally, Joyce Shidha said that there is a place where people go when they die. At that place she said they rest and wait for the Day of Judgment.\textsuperscript{497} In this case the Agiriama A.T.R. adherents believe in a spiritual world of ancestors while the Christians believe that there is a place in heaven where the righteous go to be with Jesus while the sinners are thrown into eternal fire.\textsuperscript{498} The indigenous believe that the people who are bad such as witch and sorcerers upon death their souls become wondering spirits. Mwaiha Mwambire said that bad people have no place in the ancestral world, instead their souls keep on wondering on earth which is dangerous to those still alive. He added that such spirits can cause problems to the living.\textsuperscript{499}

4.2.5 Breaking the News of a Death

In both cases the death news is first declared by women since women are the ones who nurse the sick. Though there is no limitation to the Christians any close family member can break into crying unlike the A.T. R. adherents people where a religious specialist has to be contacted to see if there are any secrets concerning the deceased. Rachel Shani said that for men, crying may be seen as a sign of weakness, so they cry silently, while the woman may cry as loud as they can.\textsuperscript{500}

\textsuperscript{497}Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{499} Mwaiha Mwambire in a focus group discussion with the author on 10\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Matano Mane.
\textsuperscript{500} Rachel Shani Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.
4.2.6 Restrictions to the family members

For the death of young babies, the kaya elders asserted that the mother and other family members are not allowed to cry because they believed that crying would make such death come back to the family. Certainly, upon death they check for signs of the cause of death. The elders hold that for people who die of leprosy, oaths and other dread diseases no one is allowed to cry or shed tears for doing so it is like calling the disease back to the family.\textsuperscript{501} Spiritual leaders have to be contacted to perform some rituals for the wellbeing of the family members and the Agiriama community at large \textit{lalo rosi} (community at large) When the very old people die, like the kaya elders, then the elders have to come to give some guidelines on how the family members are supposed to conduct themselves and on how the burial is to be conducted.

To sum up the Agiriama African religious adherents have many restrictions when death occurs in the family unlike the Christians who believe that prayers are a powerful weapon which breaks every evil bond.\textsuperscript{502} “When the older family members agree to sit for funeral it means that they will have to undergo all the cleansing rituals and practices including throwing the death,” explained Joyce Sidha.\textsuperscript{503} Pastor Joseph Charo said that throwing of the death is incompatible to Christianity since it encourages fornication and adultery.\textsuperscript{504}

\textsuperscript{501} Daniel Mwawara Garero, Mariam Mohammed Salim, Baya Nzaka Kombo, Hadija Mdzomba Kombo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai
\textsuperscript{502} Good News Bible c/f 2\textsuperscript{nd} Corinthians 10: 3-5; 1\textsuperscript{st} peter 5: 8-9.
\textsuperscript{503} Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{504} Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.
4.2.7 Categorising death

The Agiriama A.T.R. adherents tend to categorise death according to the causes, such as normal death, abnormal or bad death. The ritual performance also depends on the age of the deceased, the cause of the death. The Christians treat all deaths equally, Rachel Shani said; “God is our protector, what causes pain and suffering is the devil”. Bishop Kiponda said; “I believe I cannot catch leprosy because of attending a deceased who died of leprosy”. Moreover, the Christians do not leave a piece of shroud for the widow. Joyce Shidha asserted that marriage ends at death. She explained that when one of the partners dies the surviving spouse is free to marry whoever she/he wants. Bishop Kiponda asserts that there is no relationship between the dead and the living.\textsuperscript{505} His stand is confirmed by the bible teachings which assert that for the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward’ for the memory of them is forgotten.\textsuperscript{506}

The Kaya elders have to be dressed just like the way they dressed on the day when they were being initiated into the elder hood. This is similar to the Christians who dress their dead like bride and bride groom. The priests and bishops have to be dressed as if one is going to give a sermon at the pulpit. Bishop Kiponda said it is to give them honor and respect in their work of serving the Lord God.\textsuperscript{507} Mwaiha Mwambire explained that death is not the end of life; one still performs the functions of eldership even after death in the spiritual world.\textsuperscript{508} In contrary, the Christians whether young or old, upon death they use a white wedding gown. Atinga confirmed that the female

\textsuperscript{505}Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{506}Good news Bible c/f Ecclesiastes9:5; 1\textsuperscript{st} Timothy 4:1.
\textsuperscript{507}Bishop David Kiponda at in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{508}Mwaiha Mwambire in a focus group discussion with the author on 10\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Matano Mane in Kilifi.
Christians are dressed in white garments while the male are dressed in full suit. Most Pentecostal preachers wear full suit which is an official wear when going for preaching. Hence it is not only the PEFA church who dressed as explained above but other church denominations like the Catholics in the case of the Atinga study. There exist some differences between the Agiriama Christians and the Agiriama African religious adherents in the way of dressing the dead.

4.2.8 The Christian and Agiriama songs

Chula Kalume asserted that it is human and the Agiriama tradition to gather during such occasions like during marriage and death. John Mbiti asserts; “I am because we are, since we are therefore I am,” this was clearly demonstrated during difficult times such as when there was sickness and death. During death and funerals people gathered to show how much they loved and cared for each other. This is a common practice for both the Christians and the Agiriama A. T. R. adherents. Richard Airo confirms that the close relatives of the deceased such as parents, spouse, stepmother, brothers and sisters, cousins and friends must gather within the compound of the deceased. Rachel Shani, Chula Kalume who had lost their mother Kang’ombe Kalume, noted; “we have to be together because this is a difficult matter and we need each other”. Patrick Mkutano, a brother to Chula Kalume added; “we have to be together, help one another and encourage one another. Both the African religious

510 Ibid.
511 Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
514 Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
adherent’s people and the Christians gather day and night throughout the mourning period because death does not choose; it takes anyone it feels like.

In view of this, the Christians as well as the African traditional religion adherent’s people guard the deceased’s body day and night; they stay within the deceased’s home. Pastor Joseph Charo explains; “we guard the deceased’s body so that nothing bad happens to the deceased, the love we have for the deceased cannot allow us to leave the deceased’s body alone”. 515 During the day time whether the body is in the mortuary or at home, there would always be people in the deceased’s compound. Those Agiriama A.T. R. adherents who do not attend the funeral gathering without any good reason, they would be accused of having had a hand in the death of the deceased.

The Agiriama community show love and care for the needy. Sick people and nursing mothers who may have just given birth before a burial, may be exempted from attending a burial of a close relative or a neighbor. In view of this, they have a famous proverb; ‘mkongo kahakirwa ngwe,’ (a sick person should not be given a piece of land to cultivate). The Christians call for brotherhood and togetherness. Grace Kadzo Charo explained that if one tries to isolate him/herself during this time then that person is a witch or a sorcerer, an evil person does not like people so they may isolate themselves from people. 516 During the gathering, for both the Christians and the African religious adherents among the Agiriama people, men would concern themselves with the preparations of the burial such as preparing the grave or the coffin. Kenga Chai says those very old men would engage themselves in weaving baskets and mats. 517 He further

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515 Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the researcher on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
516 Grace Kadzo Charo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
517 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4th May 2016 at Mariakani (2nd interview).
asserted that this is the reason why the last day of mourning is called a day for cleaning (siku ya kushera ng’ongo). A day when cleaning is done and the remainder of the used raffia ng’ongo (used raffia) is swept together with other rubbish and burnt. The art of basket and mat-making helped the elders to get some little income when they sell them. Water from the river could carry the bad dirty nongo mbii to the sea and leave the bereaved family members in peace and good health. It is done to protect the family from experiencing more death.

Men and women form separate singing groups such as Kifudu dancers, mwanzele, and uganja. Kasiwa Mwambegu one of the family members said that the songs may depend on the age of the deceased and also the favorite songs which the deceased used to play.518 Sidi Charo said that her husband used to like Mabumbumbu songs and they wanted to play this traditional song during his burial, Mabumbumbuni Wirawe (this was his favourite dance).519 The African religious adherents Agiriama songs are songs of praise to the dead person and the ancestors of the clan; they are short repeated statements, full of imagery and meaning, which should only be sang in a funeral context. This is confirmed by McIntosh who said that they contain abusive words mentioning private parts openly which nobody would like to hear, that is why Christians do not like these songs.520

On the contrary the Christians songs are full of praise to the Almighty God which contain messages of hope for eternal life and give a picture of what happens to the

518 Kasiwa Mwambegu in an oral interview with the author on 6th June 2016.
519 Sidi Charo Mangi in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
believers after death. These songs can be sung even outside the burial and funeral context unlike those for the indigenous Agiriama which are suitable only in the funeral context. Pastor Joseph Charo said that the Christians songs are the same which are sung in the church. He added that during the gathering when death has occurred it is also time to conduct a service to give the word of God to the mourners.

4.2.9 Talking to the dead

The Agiriama ATR adherents speak to the dead by holding the right ear of the deceased as a way of making peace and reconciliation. Kasiwa Mwambegu asserts that they believe that the dead can hear but cannot speak. Holding the ear is done to communicate to the deceased through the ancestors (k’oma) to ask for forgiveness for a member with whom the deceased was not in good terms. It is also a way of saying bye to the deceased for the last time when the deceased is in the tomb. Kenga Chai, Chula Kalume confirmed that it is one of the Agiriama burial ritual practices which is performed to reconcile the deceased with a relative with whom they had a serious disagreement. Kenga Chai asserted that it is a form of traditional prayer addressed through the ancestors “k’oma” to God Mulungu (God).

Conversely, the Christians do not have such a practice. Joyce Shidha confirmed that upon death, the deceased has accomplished his/her work on earth. She further said that judgment waits in heaven; one can ask for forgiveness from people he/she wronged.

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521 Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
522 Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu in an oral interview with the researcher 6th June 2016 at Mariakani.
523 Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia.
524 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 4th May 2016 at Kilifi (2nd interview).
525 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author on 15th April 2016 at Kilifi (1st interview).
and from God when still alive not when one is dead. Bishop Kiponda says; “one can confess his/her sins to a church elder and ask for forgiveness from God, but not speaking to a dead person. He asserted that it is like worshipping the dead which God forbids. Pastor Joseph Charo added that God does not like people who associate with the spirits of the dead. He further said that God forbids the believers from contacting any medium or wizard and from contacting any dead person. Pastor Gideon Karisa said that one becomes unclean by turning to psychics or mediums for help. Joyce Shidha in an elaboration to this point she asserted that there is however a limit to this where the Lord Jesus said He would send the Holy Spirit who will let the truth be known to his believers.

4.2.10 The belief in death as a rite of passage

The Agiriama elders prefer to be buried within two or three days. Thus they do not like to be taken to the mortuary upon death. In view of this, the kaya elders hold that the body has to be well kept to avoid annoying the ancestors. Parkin confirmed that when one died today evening he would be buried tomorrow in the evening. This is done to ensure that the body is buried while it is still in good condition. Kache Charo Menza said that for those very old people, they are buried on the third day to give time to

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526 Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.
527 Good News Bible c/f James 5: 16.
528 Bishop Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.
529 Good News Bible c/f Leviticus 20: 5-7.
530 Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani referring from the Good News bible c/f Deuteronomy 18: 10-14.
531 Pastor Gideon Karisa at an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani when he referred to the Good News Bible c/f Leviticus 19:31.
532 Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.
the family members to prepare *formbono* (castor oil). Daniel Mwawara Garero said; “we do not like our people to be taken to the mortuary, we prefer them dying at home, and we do our own preparations.” He further added that some of the mortuary practices are not accepted by the ancestors, he said that the post mortems done at the modern mortuaries and the modern body treatment are not accepted by the ancestors. The Agiriama A.T.R. people believe in an afterlife, they see death as a rite of passage that one continues to live even after death thus post mortem would dishonor and contaminate the body of the ancestor.

The African religious adherents Agiriama people have great love and respect for the dead, they do not talk ill of them due to their respect of the dead and due to the fear of death that they have. Conversely, the Christians have no restrictions so long as the financial status of the deceased allows for the dead to be taken to the mortuary then they have no objection. Rachael Shani noted that the family, relatives and fellow church members may give some donations to cater for the expenses. Like the case of Joyce Shidha whose husband had passed away and was a church elder, before death he had said that he would like to be taken to the mortuary for preservation as the family prepares to give him a good send off. Upon death, the deceased’s wishes were honored, the families were not in a position to do so, however the church and relatives donated the mortuary expenses, and the body was preserved for four days as the family prepared for a good send off. Bishop David Kiponda, Pastor Gideon Karisa and Joyce

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535 Kache Charo Menza in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
536 Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
537 Ibid.
538 Rachel Shani Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
539 Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.
Shidha the wife of the deceased explained to the researcher that once the soul leaves the body, there is no more relationship between the deceased’s body and the soul. Bishop Kiponda confired: “when Jesus comes back to take his church, the deceased will be given a new body which can never be corrupted.”

Inview of this, the mortuary post-mortem deals only with the mortal body which is corruptible and has got nothing to do with the immortal body which Jesus Christ shall give the righteous. Pastor Gideon Karisa said that we respect the dead because of the honor and love we had for them while they were still alive.

4.2.11 Instructions for Close Relatives

The Agiriama A.T.R. adherents have many prohibitions to the living bereaved family members as discussed in chapter two of this study. The many prohibitions are mainly for the bereaved close family members such as the widow/widower who is not allowed to eat food from the family until the ritual of mixing the hands is done *kutsanganya mikono* (joining hands). Chula Kalume narrated that the widow is not allowed to eat food from the family until the day when a boy who shares a name with the deceased is given a hen to act like a husband to the widow. Chula narrated that the boy on that day will go to the widow, call her by name ‘*Kache, Kache, Kache*’ (three times) upon hearing her name she will answer ‘bee!’ (Yes) and ask, “what is it my husband” she will then go to receive the hen (*kumuhokera*) then the boy will have

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540 Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
541 Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.
542 Bishop Kiponda in oral interview with the author at Mariakani with reference to Good news Bible c/f 1st Corinthians 15: 53; 1st timothy 1: 17.
543 Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
544 Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the researcher on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia.
already been told by the elders what to do. Chula added that that the boy will say; “take this hen prepare it for my relish quickly, I want to go for work.” The widow will take the hen and prepare it with ugali (warí) when the food is ready the widow will call the boy to come and eat.

Chula Kalume added that the boy will take a lump of ugali and a piece of the cooked hen and feed the widow, and the widow will take some ugali and feed the boy, so they feed each other for the first few lumps and then continue to eat for themselves until satisfied.545 When this ritual is over the widow is free to eat food cooked within the family because they say she has mixed the hands (adzatsanganya mikono). Chula Kalume emphasized that this ritual is very important for the well being of the family, failure to this death of another close family member may occur.546 Mwaiha Mwambire emphasized that the close family members should not have sexual intercourse as this could lead to serious consequences.547 Hadija Kombo said; “the widow is not allowed to shake hands with anybody, because it is believed that every death that occurs, there must be someone’s hand responsible for that death.548 Parkin David asserted that the bereaved family members have to sit and sleep on mats, they are not allowed to sleep on their beds.549 Mariam Salim said that the bereaved family members have to observe these

545 Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia.
546 Ibid.
547 Mwaiha Mwambiri in a Focus Group Discussion with the author on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
548 Hadija Mdzomba Kombo in a Focus Group Discussion with the researcher on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
rituals throughout the mourning period which takes more than a week for the wellbeing of the family and the community at large.550

Conversely, the Christian counterparts do not have such restrictions since they believe that death is the will of the almighty God and to live is the will of God too. Joyce Shidha contends; we do not have such restrictions because we believe in Jesus Christ whose blood was shed on the cross to wash away our iniquities and to heal those who believe including the diseases caused by not following the burial rituals.551 Edward Kalume,552 Alice Charo, Rachael Shani who had lost a mother, said that they had no prohibitions concerning death and burial.553 Edward added that the prayers we make are a very powerful weapon which can break the bounds of every curse. He added that the prayers can heal and deliver us from the problems and traditional bonds of the ancestral worship. Pastor Gideon Karisa said sexual relationship is ordained by God for the married people, in reference to the teachings of the bible.554 He further said; “there is no harm when it is done with the right person at the right time and at the right place.”

The Christians pray to God for the family blessings and chase the evil spirits which are mostly feared by the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents’ people. Christine Kadzo Ngala said that the prayers made for the family members are powerful

550 Mariam Mohammed Salim in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
551 Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.
552 Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
553 Rachel Shani Yaa, Alice Charo, Edward Kalume in a Focus Group Discussion with the author on 16th June at Mariakani.
554 Good News Bible c/f Genesis 1:27.
enough to break every bond of the devil so there is no need for many restrictions as if we have no faith in God.555

4.2.12 Burial of young babies/ Kuzikaahoho

Burial for young babies among the indigenous Agiriama is done by women and immediately after death has been confirmed. Babies are buried inside the house under the mother’s bed *muvunguni* (under the bed), Hadija Mudzomba argued that babies who die within the first two to three days, since they have not seen the outside of the house (*bado kumbozwa nze*) are either buried under the mother’s bed or under the big water container (*biga*).556 She further added that such infants are buried without clothes but instead the women use castor plant leaves (*makodza ga mbono*) or the women may use grass (*lukoka*) simply because the innocent child has not seen the outside world and has not been assimilated into the clan. On the other hand the Christians treat every individual equally; Edward Kalume confirms that every person is equal in God’s eyes557 so to him the young babies should be given the same respect and the same burial like that for the adults. Grace Kadzo noted that a young baby should be buried immediately since the mother has no strength to mourn for her child, keeping the baby for a long time is like torturing the mother.558

Daniel Mwawara said that the babies especially the cases of still birth have to be buried the soonest possible because it is the tradition *kikwehu* (tradition) and people have to stick to their traditions because forsaking the traditions is like enslaving

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555Christine Kadzo Ngala focus group discussion on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
556Hadija Mdzomba Kombo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
557Edward Kalume in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
558Grace Kadzo Charo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016at ariakani.
ourselves *mwacha mila ni mtumwa* (forsaking traditions is slavery) and no one would like to be a slave in his/her own motherland.\(^559\) He added that a long time ago, a woman gave birth to a still born, when she was informed that the baby was dead, and when she was shown the baby, she could not accept the loss so she collapsed and died on the spot.\(^560\) He said that is why the young baby has to be buried as soon as possible to save the mother from the agony and pain. Chula Kalume said it is also done so as to prevent witches from taking particulars from the baby which could render the mother sterile.\(^561\) Contrary to the indigenous practices concerning the burials of young babies, the Christians bury the young babies outside the house at the normal burial ground for the family.

Conversely, The Christians allow the dead child to stay as long as the family wishes before the baby is buried to give the family time to prepare and give the baby a good send off. In both cases the Christian bereaved family members stay close to the grave to witness every detail unlike the Agiriama adherents to African traditional religion, whose men are not allowed to witness the burial of small babies but only women. Burial of young babies is considered to be a women’s affair. The A.T.R. adherents’ women again are not allowed to bury adult people and even witness what goes on during burial inside the grave. Joyce Shidha holds; “we have to be there to see our beloved for the last time, to see how he/she is laid in his/her final resting place.”\(^562\)

\(^{559}\)Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\(^{th}\) February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
\(^{560}\)Ibid.
\(^{561}\)Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mtondia.
\(^{562}\)Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\(^{rd}\) April 2016 at Mariakani.
4.2.13 Putting the Body into the Tomb

The African traditional religion adherents do not allow women to look inside the grave whereas the Christians have no restrictions. The ATR.\textsuperscript{563} Agiriama woman the body is laid on the right hand side and men on the left hand so that a husband and his wife have to face each other as if they were sleeping on a bed to symbolize their love for eternity. On the other hand, with the Christians whether male or female, the body is laid facing upwards direction, the head towards sunset. Joseph Kazungu Kenga said; “the dead are buried facing upwards from above, Jesus will come.”\textsuperscript{564} He added that the believers shall see Jesus coming down in the clouds from heaven to take his church.\textsuperscript{565} Pastor Alfred musya said that the Christians do not bury the deceased with their belongings for the belief that they will need those belongings in the next spiritual world\textsuperscript{566} which is in contrast with the African indigenous religion (AIR) Adhents people belief who may bury the elders with some of their belongings with the hope that they may need them in the spiritual world.

4.3 The post Burial Rituals and Practices

The African traditional religion adherents have very elaborate post burial rituals, such as slaughtering of animals, cleansing the home, throwing of the death and remembrance. Slaughtering depends on the family’s financial status and the social status of the deceased. Sometimes slaughtering is done just before the body is taken out of the house for burial; so that those carrying the body can step on the fresh blood and by

\textsuperscript{563} A.T.R. means the African traditional religion adherents which is the African religion for the African people in their African soil.
\textsuperscript{564} Joseph Kzungu Kenga in an oral interview with the author on 10\textsuperscript{th} April at Mariakani.
\textsuperscript{565} Joseph Kazungu Kenga in an oral interview with the author on 10\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mariakani in reference to Good News Bible c/f Acts 1:9; Revelation 1:7; Mathew 24:30; 1\textsuperscript{st} Thessalonians4:1..
\textsuperscript{566} Pastor Alfred Musya in an oral interview with the author on 24\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.
doing so they believe the deceased has stepped on the blood (*azhoga mlatso*). Mama Sidi explained that the deceased has become a spirit and the blood is the food for the spirit, it is for the deceased to eat and go peacefully to the spiritual world.\(^{567}\) On the other hand, the Christian counterparts do not slaughter at the grave. Joyce Shidha contends that this is termed as idol worship which God does not tolerate any rival.\(^{568}\) Bishop David Kiponda explains that the Christians slaughter animals on the burial day, only to prepare food for the many guests who will have attended the burial. Moreover, he said that slaughtering is done far away from the grave and it has no connections with the deceased.\(^{569}\) Slaughtering of animals for the Agiriama ATR adherents is mainly done to give the deceased a good send-off as he/she joins the world of the ancestors. This belief is in sharp contrast with the Christian belief in life and death.

### 4.3.1 Mourning Days

Kache Charo Menza asserted that there are days when the Agiriama are expected to sit as they mourn for their beloved one.\(^{570}\) However, she said that the mourning period depends on the age, sex, the type of disease which caused the death, the position of birth of the deceased and whether the deceased is the first one to die from the mother. This was confirmed by the Kaya elders, the ATR adherents adult and youth family members. Charo Katana, one of the ATR adherents youth noted: “we know that our people do sit for mourning for some days but I am not sure for how long they sit.”\(^{571}\) This reveals that the youth attend burials and funerals; however, they do not understand some of the

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\(^{567}\) Sidi Charo Mangi I n an oral interview with the author on 12\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mariakani.

\(^{568}\) Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the on 23\(^{rd}\) April 2016 at Mariakani with reference to Good News Bible Isaiah65:4.

\(^{569}\) Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.

\(^{570}\) Kache Charo Menza In an focus group discussion with the author on 12th 20 April 2016 at Mariakani.

\(^{571}\) Charo Katana Kithi in a focus group discussion with the author on 12\(^{th}\) April 2016 at Mariakani.
traditions. If the deceased is a small child people do not sit for many days for mourning, since it is a small child. If the death was caused by a dreadful disease like leprosy people do not cry for fear of the disease and they do not sit for the usual many days. Instead they hold a silent funeral ritual *hanga ra kizinya* (funeral held secretly) as explained by Sidi Maya. On the contrary, the Christian treat every death equally.

However, the Christians do not sit for many days for mourning, after burial they condole by giving out some contributions to cater for the expenses. Though, Joyce Shidha said condolences may be offered during the viewing of the body. After burial the mourners are served with some meals since they are hungry and also as a way of celebrating the life of the deceased. Then the mourners are free to leave at their own pace, those who come from far may sleep. Grace Kadzo said that the close bereaved family members may stay indoors for about three or more days. Rachael Shani said some may decide to have a condolence service on the third day after burial to mark the end of the mourning period. Pastor Joseph Charo said because in most cases the deceased may have overstayed in the mortuary, the bereaved family members may prefer to conclude on the burial day to reduce the expenses of feeding many people.

### 4.3.2 Shaving the Hair / *Kunyola Nyere*

According to Ngumbao Chome, Kitsao Kahindi, Chula Kalume, hair is shaved in the fourth day, if the deceased was a man and for a woman it is done on the

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572 Sidi Maya in an oral interview with the author on 16th April 2016 at Mariakani.
573 Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.
574 Grace Kadzo Charo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
575 Rachel Shani Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
576 Pastor Joseph Charo in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
577 Ngumbao Chome and Kitsao Kahindi in an oral interview with the author on 15th May 2016 at Mariakani.
third day, a razor bled or knife is usually used. The first one to shave marks the end of
the mourning period and beginning of new life, a life to live without the physical
presence of the deceased. On the contrary the Christians do not shave their hair after the
death and burial of their loved one whether young or adult. In reference to the bible,
Bishop Kiponda said that shaving the hair as a sign of mourning is a pagan practice.\textsuperscript{579}
He asserted that the bible says; “you shall not make any cuts on your body for the dead
or tattoo yourselves: I am the Lord.”\textsuperscript{580} For this reason the Christians do not shave their
hair as a sign of mourning.

4.3.3 Throwing of the Death/\textit{Kutsuha Kifo}

The deceased wife/husband is given another man or woman whom she/he does
not know to go and have ritual sexual intercourse in the bush, Sidi charo, and other kaya
elders explained this ritual in detail. Daniel Mwavara said if it is a child who has died,
the father and mother will throw the death.\textsuperscript{581} Asha Nyavula said that when it is the
death of a baby the case of still birth or one who has not seen outside the house, there is
no throwing of the death.\textsuperscript{582} This is because the mother is still bleeding and cannot have
sex during this period. If the husband/wife, son or daughter refuses to ritually throw the
death then an alternative form of ritual is performed to set such people free
\textit{Kubururushwa}. On the contrary, the Christian counter parts do strongly oppose this
practice. Rachael Shani said that to live is the will of God and to die is the will of

\textsuperscript{578}Chula Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
\textsuperscript{579}Good news Bible c/f Jeremiah 16: 10-13; Leviticus 19:28, 21:5; Deuteronomy 14:1.
\textsuperscript{580}Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author at Mariakani he said this in reference to
Good News bible c/f Leviticus 19:28; Leviticus 21:5.
\textsuperscript{581}Daniel Mwavara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in
Rabai.
\textsuperscript{582}Asha Nyamvula Juma in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in
Rabai.
God. Death has been in the world since time in memorial and no one can ever stop it from taking anyone it chooses.

Bishop Kiponda in his sermon during the burial of Kang’ombe Kalume said that people have tried to ‘throw death’ but all in vain. He narrated that, in one occasion, after burial the widow was given on unknown man as usual to go and ‘throw death’ as per the tradition. Then after some months the widow was seen to be pregnant, the family members knew very well that it could not be for the deceased husband because, before his death and burial, he had been sick for long. The elders decided to ask the widow; “how come you have become so characterless, how come your husband is dead and you are with a baby?” the widow explained to the elders that she had been faithful to her husband but the pregnancy was as a result of throwing the death. Alas! The elders were shocked on hearing that; “did we ‘throw the death’ or planted death.” He further said that in another accession, the widow was given an unknown man to go and ‘throw the death,’ after some time the widow became sick. When she went to the hospital she was diagnosed as having HIV virus yet before that she was negative. In both cases, death was brought home, not being ‘thrown.’ Therefore, Bishop Kiponda illustrated this to show that this practice has become out dated and it is only exposing the widows to some other dangers like getting unexpected babies and contracting sexually transmitted diseases like HIV and AIDS. Moreover this practice encourages adultery which is not allowed for the Christians to practice (adultery).

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583 Rachel Shani Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
584 Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.
585 Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.
4.3.4 Remembrance / Ukumbusho

After the burial and after the normal funeral service the family arrange for a memorial service well known as “the hairs of the moon” Nyere za mwezi. Chula Kalume. Mwaiha Mwambire asserted that this ceremony marks the end of the mourning period among the Agiriama people. The hair that grows after shaving the heads of the bereaved family members in the first funeral is not cut until the second funeral. Sidi Wanje said the Nyere za mwezi is done after a period of at least three months depending on the financial status of the family.

Robert Kasiwa, Benzima Mangi Yaa, said that the Nyere za Mwezi ceremony is usually held when the new moon has been seen, just like the Muslims who start their fast or end their fast when they spot the new moon. Airo said that it refers to the shaving of the hair upon the sighting of the moon. Mariam Mdzomba Sali, Mwaiha Mwambire and Mwawara Garero said that, during this ceremony the deceased’s belongings such as shamba, clothes and livestock are shared to the living family members. It is also during this ceremony when the widow (s) chooses a close kin to the husband to remarry. This is done to ensure that the family does not suffer after the loss of the husband. In the contrary, the Christian counter parts do not have this practice of “Nyere za mwezi’ however Pastor Gideon Karisa said that some of the Christians

586 Chula Kalume in an oral interview on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
587 Mwaiha Mwambire in focus group discussion with the author on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
588 Sidi Wanje In a focus group discussion with the author on 19th June 2016 at Mariakani.
589 Robert Kasiwa Mwambegu in an oral interview with the author on 6th June at Mariakani.
590 Benzima mangi Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 19th June 2016 at Mnyenzeni.
592 Mariam Mohammed Salim in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
593 Mwaiha Mwambire in focus group discussion with the author on 10th April 2016 at Matano Mane.
594 Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
may decide to build the grave with cement during which the family members may hold a part for the occasion.\footnote{Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.} He further said that some may remember the deceased by placing some flowers on the grave. Bishop David Kiponda said that cementing the grave is a family matter because the bible does not support this practice.\footnote{Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani.} The deceased’s belongings may be shared at any time according to the family arrangements.

4.3.5 Summary of the findings and further insights

After having gone through this chapter concerning the areas of conflict on burial rituals and practices among the Agiriama Christians and the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents it came out clearly that these differences are the ones which have put the Agiriama burial rituals and practices at cross roads with the Christian faith.

The table below shows the similarities and differences of the two burial ritual practices.

Table 3: Similarities and differences of the two burial ritual practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Agiriama Christians beliefs, burial rituals and practices</th>
<th>Agiriama African traditional religious burial ritual practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before death-when one is very sick</td>
<td>They believe in an after-life to be with the Lord Jesus Christ in Paradise. Believe that there is a day for</td>
<td>Believe in an after-life in the spiritual world of ancestors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Judgement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Upon death</strong></td>
<td><strong>Before burial</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| judgement, the righteous will go to heaven and have eternal peace, the sinners will go to hell for eternal suffering | Closing the eyes and the mouth of the deceased. Breaking the news of a death after prayers.  
- washing the body done by same sex  
- Guarding the body | - Dressing the body  
- Viewing the body  
- consultations  
- vigil  
- digging the tomb  
- feeding the mourners | - ritual for the word  
- Last viewing of the body  
- escorting the body to the tomb  
- |
| | | | - prayers  
- burial done by distance relatives as |
| | | | - prayer  
- burial done by distant |
family members watch relatives as family members watch.

| After burial | -washing of the jembes | -washing of the jembes |
| -settle down to eat | -settle down to eat |

Table 4: Differences and points of conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Agiriama Christians religious beliefs on death and burial rituals</th>
<th>Agiriama A.T.R adherents beliefs on death and burial ritual practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before death</td>
<td>-they believe that to live or to die is the will of God</td>
<td>-Believe that death is caused by evil forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-when one is very sick</td>
<td>-death is a gate way to heaven</td>
<td>-Believe in death as a rite of passage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-the dead and the living have no relationship</td>
<td>-Believe in an ancestral world of spirits where the dead people go to live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-pray to God through Jesus Christ</td>
<td>-death is seen as a rites of passage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Jesus Christ is the sacrificial lamb no animal sacrifice</td>
<td>-the ancestors watch over those living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-the sick are prayed for, confess their sins and taken to hospital</td>
<td>-Burial rituals assist the spirit of the dead to join the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Upon death

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pray to God through Jesus Christ</td>
<td>Ancestral world and live peacefully.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-No connection between the dead and the living</td>
<td>Death has a cause such as nature, evil spirits, witchcraft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-the dead are taken to the mortuary</td>
<td>Pray to God through the ancestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-hair may be trimmed or left</td>
<td>Offer animal sacrifices for the dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-female are dressed in white wedding gown and men in suit</td>
<td>The sick are treated by traditional healers after consultation of diviners and soothsayers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Holding of the deceased’s ear for reconciliation</td>
<td>Death is categorized according to the cause such as normal, abnormal and bad death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-dead are not taken to the mortuary</td>
<td>-Shave the hair of the deceased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| --Dress the dead in white                                           | --Dress the dead in white
| During burial | -no strict instructions for close relatives
-Christina funeral songs have courteous words reflecting hope for eternal life.
-music bands or discos are expensive and require big budget
- the music bands leave immediately after burial
-post-mortem done in the mortuary is reliable and is expensive | shroud and the dead elders in their official clothes
-instructions for close relatives including sex prohibitions
-Agirama funeral songs have vulgar language and full of imagery
-traditional music performed freely by the mourners
-performance continues after burial
-post-mortem is done at home at a small fee not reliable |
| -Babies are buried at the normal burial ground like adults
-no restrictions for women
-traditional mat not required
-Body is laid down facing upwards direction head facing sunset. | -Babies are buried under mother’s bed or under big water pot with leaves instead of clothes
-women are not allowed to be near the grave during burial
-a traditional mat is a must in the grave
-Body is laid down facing

During burial -Babies are buried at the normal burial ground like adults
-no restrictions for women
-traditional mat not required
-Body is laid down facing upwards direction head facing sunset.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After burial</th>
<th>Shungwaya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- they have few number of day for gathering at the deceased compound after the burial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- not biblical to shave hair after the lose of a loved one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- slaughtering is done on the burial day to feed the many guests not a sacrifice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- death come from God can never be eliminated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no wife inheritance, widow is left to struggle all alone.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no more ceremonies after burial.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- property may be shared a few days after the burial.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Many prescribed number of days for gathering after burial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- shaving the hair of the close relatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- slaughtering of animal as sacrifice done on the fourth day after burial.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the ritual of throwing the death, widow/widower have sex with a stranger this encourages adultery. It can lead to sexual transmitted disease infections.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- wife inheritance to have a new head of the family for care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- remembrance through hairs of the moon ceremony. They may spend so much on the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
feast which may lead to misuse of family resources. Property shared after the hairs of three moon ceremony which marks the end of the mourning period.

At times, the Agiriama find it hard to live without performing some of the indigenous burial and funeral ritual practices. The idea that the A.T.R. adherents people may assist a dying person to hasten his/her death is in sharp contrast with the Christian teaching. Life is a gift from God and no one is allowed to take it, therefore assisting someone to die is unchristian practice. In an interview, Joyce Shidha noted that this is a cruel act because everyone has a right to live as much as he/she can. The Kenyan law gives every individual the right to life, so this act is against the laws of this country. Though it is done secretly, it leaves the individuals who perform it with a guilty conscience hence it has got psychological effects. Consultation of traditional healers is not a Christian practice; Pastor Gideon Karisa said that it is like turning to other gods which God forbids.

598 Pastor Joye Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.
600 Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
Bishop Mackenzie contends that it is not God’s plan for people to seek any assistance for healing from somewhere else except from God the creator. Bishop David Kiponda confirms that it is the Christian right to be healed by Jesus because Jesus is the healer. He added that the Christians are healed by the stripes of Jesus. However, Grace Kadzo argues that some of the Christians when faced with problems like severe illness may fail to hold upon the faith and may secretly go to be treated traditionally or go to be treated in hospitals. She further said that her late husband was taken to a traditional religious specialist for treatment yet he was a Christian. She said that she was wondering whether God was going to give him eternal peace since he died at the traditional healer while undergoing treatment. Pastor Gideon Karisa contends that Grace Kandzo and Chula Kalume said that it was good to leave such matters which are beyond our human understanding since God is the one who knows the hearts of all people and is the great merciful judge.

Other burial rituals and practices like the throwing of the death tears some believers between Christianity and African indigenous religion (kikwehu). Grace Kadzo said that some of the Christians with little faith secretly contact traditional religious specialists to be given traditional herbs for protection (kubururushwa) against the ancestral spirits and the mystical dirt of the death (kithio cha kifo) (dirt of the death). Atinga asserted that this has to be normalized through a purification rite for the

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601 TIMES TV GNI sermon preached on 20th January 2016 at 10:00 pm, Good News Bible c/f Exodus 15:19.
602 Bishop Kiponda in an oral interview with the author at Mariakani, with reference from Good News Bible C/F Isaiah 53:5-7.
603 Grace Kadzo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
604 Grace Kadzo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
605 Chla Kalume in an oral interview with the author on 14th April 2016 at Mtondia in Kilifi.
606 Grace Kadzo Charo in a focus group discussion with the author on 18th June 2016 at Mariakani.
woman. He further said that at the death of a person and before the deceased joins the ancestors in the life hereafter, all those who have had relations with him or her have to purify themselves from this ‘dirt’, which they had contracted during their relationship with him/her. Hence, the deceased’s wife or widow in this case is left with the fear that she might become crazy or sick and die if the ritual is not performed or if she is not given any charm for protection.

The African traditional religion adherents’ funeral songs place yet another tug of war between the Christians and the indigenous Agiriama people. Pastor Joyce Shidha, a strong believer in Jesus Christ, at the burial of her late husband said; “I cannot agree to sit for funeral.” This is because she knew that once she agrees to sit on the traditional matsvitseka (mats) then on the last day of mourning she would be asked to do the ritual of “throwing the death which is against her faith.” Christine Kadzo advised her not to agree to sit for funeral because she said the climax would be to cleanse the home and throw the death. In this case the brothers to her late husband became so furious and said that they did not want anything to do with Joyce. Karisa Iha Charo, one of the deceased brothers, said; “you woman have no respect for your husband that is why you killed him.” It was not true that the widow, Joyce Shidha had killed her husband, it was just because Karisa and his A.T.R. adherents relatives were not pleased with her refusal to sit for the funeral.

609 Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23rd April 2016 at Mariakani.
610 Ibid.
611 Christine Kadzo Ngala in a group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.
612 Karisa Charo Iha in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
Sidi Charo narrated that Yaa Baya was very famous, successful and an elder of the *Wamwabaya* clan (Mwabaya), upon death; some of his sons were Christians. He had left a wish concerning the kind of tree he wanted to be used to make the coffin. The sons did not follow their late father’s wish and used a different kind of tree which had small pieces of timber.\(^{613}\) She further noted that, because of this reason, the coffin was small and could not allow the body to be laid straight comfortably to rest in peace. She said that the legs were folded to make the body fit in the coffin. Grace Kadzo added that during the viewing of the body the deceased body was already covered with some small ants which were a bad sign.\(^{614}\)

After the burial had been conducted, Sidi Charo narrated that, some months later, the deceased’s spirit started appearing in dreams to the family members who were not Christians. In addition, the spirit also appeared to those who were newly converted demanding for a bigger coffin for burial claiming that he was tired of folding his legs in the small coffin. The new converts were still attached to the A.T.R. burial practices. Sidi Charo narrated that, the deceased’s spirit appeared to those members still living, several times with the same message but the sons did not pay any attention.\(^{615}\) She further noted that one day in the widows’ house were found two big cobras lying together side by side. They called for people and the two snakes were finally killed. On the following day the house caught fire, yet all the fire in the kitchen had been put off.

The family elders consulted religious specialists to identify the cause of all the misfortunes. Shani Yaa said that after several consultations it was discovered that the

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\(^{613}\) Sidi Charo Mangi in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.

\(^{614}\) Grace Kadzo Charo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th June 2016 at Mariakani.

\(^{615}\) Sidi Charo Mangi in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
misfortunes were caused by the late head of the family who was demanding proper burial with a decent coffin as he had instructed his sons before his death.\textsuperscript{616} When the message was delivered to the elder son, he said that those were just propagandas his father was gone and had no relationship with the family anymore. Sidi Maya said that on his way to the working place, his car refused to start off, he called several mechanics to check on the problem but there was nothing wrong. His Uncle Mangi Mweri told him to consider his father’s wish, when he agreed; the car was able to start without any problem. A day was chosen to carry out the second burial for the already buried man. The family members set a date and made all the necessary arrangements for the function.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter examined the burial ritual practices which are similar to both Christians and the African traditional religion adherents among the Agiriama community. It also analyses the burial rituals which are different from the two religious groups. The Agiriama ATR. Adherents view of life and death contrasts with the Agiriama Christian view on life and death. It is also clear that for both the Christians and the ATR. Adherents’ Agiriama people, death calls for togetherness, it is a communal event. In both cases there is the fear of the unknown, so whenever one falls sick, the family members try as much as possible to look for cure, however, death is inevitable. The following rituals must be performed upon death. Closing of the eyes and the mouth is done as a first step to prepare the deceased. After the necessary preparations have been made death news is spread to the members.

\textsuperscript{616}Rachel Shani Yaa in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2016 at Mariakani.
The Agiriama ATR adherents have many prohibitions which aim at giving the family and the community protection, unlike the Christians who believe that God protects people not the many rituals performed. It is also very clear from this chapter that the Christians do not sit for many days like the indigenous people during funerals. Moreover, they do not shave their hair which is a sign of mourning and beginning of new life to the ATR adherents among the Agiriama community. The many differences noted in this chapter are the causes of the conflict which has forever existed during burials between Christians and the indigenous African religion adherents among the Agiriama; there is an urgent need therefore to address this matter to enhance peaceful co-existence between the Christians and the African traditional religion adherents among the Agiriama Community. To this end, the next chapter tries to suggest possible solutions for the ever experienced conflicts between the two religious groups during burials.
CHAPTER FIVE

TOWARDS A DIALOGUE BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND THE A T R ON
BURIAL RITUALS AND PRACTICES: THE SEARCH FOR A POSSIBLE
SOLUTION

5.1 Introduction

Inter-faith dialogue refers to the cooperative, constructive and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions ‘faiths’ and or spiritual or humanistic beliefs at both the individual and international level. An inter-faith can also be defined as involving persons of different religious faiths. Inter-religious is a relationship with other religions such as Christianity and Islamic or traditional religion. In this study, inter-faith dialogue can also be referred to as the inter-belief dialogue to avoid implicitly excluding atheistic, agnostic, humanistic and others like the African traditional religion. To surface here, the term inter-religious dialogue has the same meaning as inter-faith dialogue.617 The inter-religious dialogue can be made locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.618

Raymond Panikkar asserts that the intra religious dialogue is in itselfa religious acting that neither unifies nor stifles but re-links us in all directions. He further says that this has to take place in the core of our being in our quest for Slavic truth. In whatever sense we may understand these two loaded words.619 In this study, the inter-religious

619 Ibid.
dialogue will assist the Christians and the ATR adherents Agiriama to understand the religious traditions relating to death and burials. It will also help to identify the meanings attached to each one of them which make up both the Christians and the African traditional religion adherents. The conflict which has ever existed between the Christians and the African traditional religion adherents among the Agiriama has created so many rifts among the Agiriama community. Thus, the Inter-faith dialogue will help to access the whole of the liberating truth, if our neighbors seem to have other beliefs and practices which are sometimes totally incompatible with our own convictions. Hence it is time to search for truth, to be ready to be taught by others and to learn from each other as we search for salvation. Inter-religious dialogue is an act of assimilation because it tries to assimilate.

The bible as the source of messages of salvation and the evangelizing mission of Christ, the book of Isaiah\textsuperscript{620} relates to God as calling people to come to him to reason and confess of their sins. God wants a person to come and reason out to have a dialogue with him for proper understanding and forgiveness which brings eternal life in Jesus Christ. Hence, Christianity and the African traditional religion must come together to reason out for better understanding of each other in order to bring a harmonious coexistence between the African traditional religious adherents and the Christians.

5.2.1 Principles of the inter-religious Dialogue

The major purpose of the dialogue is to learn that; that is to change and grow in the perception and the understanding of reality and then to act accordingly. In this case it is good for one religious group to learn what entails change. To learn that the other

\textsuperscript{620} Good News Bible c/f Isaiah 1:18.
partner or religious group view the world differently and change the attitude towards that partner positively. The negativity which has forever existed towards each others’ religion has to change for better and peaceful core existence. In addition, the inter-religious dialogue must be two-sided project within each religious or ideological community and between religious or ideological communities. The two way dialogue has to be between the Christians and the ATR adherents among the Agiriama community concerning the burial ritual practices. Conversely, each participant must come to dialogue with complete honesty and sincerity.

The two religious groups must come together to describe the major and minor problems affecting the two religious groups; that is the Christians and the ATR adherents. The Christians and the ATR adherents must not compare their beliefs with each other partner’s idears or practices. This is because the partners’ idears may be different yet all concern faith. Moreover, each partner must clearly define himself or herself so that the others can understand him/her better. Conversely, each partner must come to the dialogue with no hard and first assumptions as to where the points of disagreements are and in this case they are the burial rituals which are not compartible to Christianity.

### 5.2.2 A Way Out of the Conflict between Christianity and the A T R on Burial Rituals and Practices

As said earlier in the previous chapters, during death and burials there is in most cases conflicts between Christian and the African traditional religion adherents among the Agiriama community with regards to what kinds of rituals to be used. Having
outlined the problem, the researcher would like to try as much as possible to propose some steps that would help to bridge the gap in and thereby ease the agony, of dissatisfaction which has created a rift and torn families apart every time death occurs in the Agiriama community. The researcher however, does not wish to pretend to suggest that her proposed solution would be panacea to the enormous problems that exists. It is the researcher’s hope and belief that every positive suggestion no matter how small it may be would be of great contribution towards finding a permanent solution to the problem. It is from this point of view that the researcher wishes to consider some of the suggestions which she gathered from both primary and secondary sources.

5.3 The Urgent Need for a Dialogue

According to Geertz, culture has meaning, no matter how or what the burial rituals and practices are, they have meaning attached to them and the performance is aimed at caring for the community wellbeing. The Agiriama African traditional religion adherents burial rituals are also performed to ensure that the deceased’s soul arrive safely at the spiritual world of ancestors. In view of this, the Agiriama ATR adherents’ burial rituals and practices have much deeper meanings as seen in chapter two and three. In outlining the Christian burial rituals and practices, it was noted that within the Agiriama Christians burial ritual is the conspicuous lack of any post burial rituals. The bereaved family members are left in the middle, between turning to traditional religious specialists secretly to equip themselves with charms and herbs for protection against the spirit of the dead or to uphold to their faith in Jesus Christ.
Grace Kadzo, who had lost a husband, confirms that after the burial she had to look for a traditional religious specialist to be cleansed *kuburushwa* (to be set free) secretly for she feared that the spirit of her dead husband would come to her and disturb her.\(^6\) On the other hand, to the ATR believers, the burial rituals are as important as the burial itself, so they accord their dead long and elaborate funeral rituals. In view of this, the above are the major source of conflict between the Christians and the African traditional religion adherents among the Agiriama during burials. Certainly, there is so much yearning of the Agiriama Christian communities and the indigenous religious adherent’s people for lacuna to be filled as far as the research findings are concerned. The research was conducted between January to July 2016. A total number 70 respondents were selected to participate in the study through interviews and focus group discussion. These can be seen from the table range from the ages between 16 and 70. Their educational level also ranges from basic to university level, though their ages and educational level is not indicated since this was considered as personal information and not necessary for this study.

The question “have you ever attended burials where there were serious disagreements between the Christians and the ATR adherents Agiriama on the way the burials were conducted,” 7 respondents said that there was no conflict. This is a percentage of 10 percent. The 63 respondents representing 90 percent said that there have been so many disagreements in the way burials are conducted and the details are given in chapter four. Those who said that there was no conflict represented the burials where all the family members including the deceased were either Christians or adherents

\(^6\)Grace Kadzo Charo in a focus group discussion with the author on 16\(^{th}\) June 2016 at Mariakani.
of African traditional religion. The family members in this case had a common faith and a common belief; either they were all Christians or African traditional religion believers. This shows very clearly how enormous the problem under investigation is.

Despite all the conflicts on Christianity and the African traditional religion burial rituals practices, the Christians in the PEFA church still hold strongly that the church should not give in to the ATR burial ritual practices to be performed at a Christian’s burial. The Christians hold strongly that the ATR adherents Agiriama community burial rituals are performed to appease the dead and it is not a Christianity practice. Bishop David Kiponda argued that to allow African traditional burial practices to be performed at the burial of brethren is like to be friends with the world.\textsuperscript{622} He further explained that to be a friend of the world means to be an enemy of God; this displeases God and will lead those who allow this to happen to miss eternal life.\textsuperscript{623}

To the question “how was the disagreement solved?” 7 participants said that there was no disagreement, this represented 10 percent. 63 representing 90 percent said that the disagreement/ conflict was solved through dialogue \textit{masumuriro} (consultations) where the Christians and the ATR adherents’ family members sat down and had several discussions on how best the deceased should be buried. Pastor Gideon Karisa said that during burials if the close family members wish to bury a deceased Christian in the African traditional religious adherents’ way then the Church has no objection, they give them a chance to conduct the rituals as they wish.\textsuperscript{624} Conversely, Joyce Shidha argued that it is not fair for a Christian who has lived a good Christian life then upon

\textsuperscript{622} Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at mariakani

\textsuperscript{623} Ibid

\textsuperscript{624} Pastor Gideon Karisa in an oral interview with the author on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2016 at Mariakani.
death to be left in the hands of ATR adherents’ *mataifa* (non Christians) to bury him or her.\textsuperscript{625} She further explained that it is disrespecting to the deceased’s faith.\textsuperscript{626}

On the question “suggest some ways you would like such conflicts to be avoided in future,” only 10 respondents 14.29 percent of the respondents were not sure of what should be done. 60 respondents, representing 85.74 percent suggested that people should be buried according to their faith and beliefs. Moreover, they added that, people should be respected either dead or alive. The youth were very bitter about it and wanted the dead to be respected. Daniel Chengo, Dume Chengo in a focus group discussion said that people should be empowered on matters concerning death and the conflict that occurs during burial.\textsuperscript{627} Benson Dume Chengo insisted that people should be encouraged to make wills as far as they would like their burials be conducted and let those wishes of the dying people be respected.\textsuperscript{628} However, the challenge is that the Agiriama people fear death and would not like to talk about death. As seen in the previous chapters, some would leave a group before the discussion is over because of the fear of the word death. Moreover, the Christians may not honor the wishes of the ATR adherents wishes; hence this point is left unsatisfying to solve the conflict through making wishes. To this juncture, the researcher wishes to assert that the analysis of these key questions which guided the entire research are very crucial and require and reveal the stark reality of the problem on the ground. To this end, here lies the justification for this project. The table below shows a summary of how the three key questions were answered.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 2016 at Mariakani.}\textsuperscript{625} & \\
\hline
\textbf{Ibid.}\textsuperscript{626} & \\
\hline
\textbf{Daniel Chengo, Dume Chengo,Titus Hinzano, Mariamu Nyevu and Kadzo Hinzano in a focus group discussion with the athor on 26\textsuperscript{th} March 2016 at Mariakani.}\textsuperscript{627} & \\
\hline
\textbf{Ibid.}\textsuperscript{628} & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Summary of how the three key questions were answered.}
\end{table}
Table 5: Summary of how the three key questions were answered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presence of conflicts</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Yes there was conflict</th>
<th>percentage</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Through dialogue</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to ones faith</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making wishes</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>71.43</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Proposal for a Dialogue as a Tool for Success

As illustrated by the researcher in this project, the Agiriama AT.R adherents like any other African communities such as the Frafra of Northern Ghana,629 do not live in isolation from their Christian counterparts. Shange asserts argue that social support from friends and family is important during bereavement; however, it is the quality of the social support that is important and not merely being there.630 Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview asserted that a person cannot live alone mtu ni atu (a man is for

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To be a human is to live with others not in isolation. Furthermore, he said that people do not run away from problems but look for solutions to the problems. Pastor Joseph Charo, pastor Gideon Karisa, Joyce Shidha added that in all these things we are more than conquerors and our victory is from above not by running away from the problems.

In every home, there are a mixture of both the Christians and ATR adherents’ people. It is only during such times like during death and burial when the Agiriama Christians and the African traditional religion adherents feel divided due to the different beliefs on the burial ritual practices, thus the need for an urgent solution for a peaceful co-existence between the Christians and the ATR adherents among the Agiriama community. As already indicated in the literature review the Christians and the ATR adherents view each other with superstition which makes each one see their religion as the best. Kenga Chai in an oral interview argued that there is so much negativity. African traditional religion is seen as satanic or devil worshiping. He further said that the negativity has gone to the centers of learning where learners are only allowed to be speaking in English and not their mother tongue. Atinga asserted that the suspicion which exists results in disregard and disrespect for each other’s faith and the ritual performance. Kalume Tinga explains that this negativity has rendered the traditional healers to be at crossroads with the statutory laws. This has lead to the killing of the elders who are being mistaken for witches, as confirmed by Richard Airo where the

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631 Bishop Davir iponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February at Mariakani.
632 Ibid.
633 Joyce Shidha referring good news Bible c/f Romans 8:37.
elders were complaining of being killed due to being mistaken for witches.\textsuperscript{634} It is in this light that the researcher feels there’s need for dialogue which will dispel all the doubts and suspicion which has existed ever since the implantation of the gospel on the Kenyan soil by the early missionaries. Bishop Kiponda explained that the dialogue (\textit{masumuriro}) will assist in giving way to respect and deep regard for the spirituality found in both religions.

Pope John Paul II was a major advocate of interfaith dialogue, where he promoted meetings in Asia in the year 1995.\textsuperscript{635} In 2013, Pope Francis became the first Catholic leader to call for sincere and religious inter-belief dialogue with atheists both to counter the assertion that Christianity is necessarily an expression of darkness of superstition, which is opposed to the light of reason.\textsuperscript{636} In the traditional Christian doctrines, the value of inter-religious dialogue had been confined to the acts of love, understanding towards others either as anonymous Christians or as potential converts. In most cases evidence points to the Catholic Church as depicted earlier but for the PEFA church there is hardly any evidence of ever having tried to engage in dialogue with other religious leaders.

Bishop Paul Mackenzie of Good News international has tried to dialogue with other religious leaders such as the Muslim leaders.\textsuperscript{637} However, this dialogue was not intended to discuss in particular burial ritual practices; it was rather to address the issues

\textsuperscript{637} Message Preached in Times TV by Good News International Preacher Bishop Paul Mackenzie on 26\textsuperscript{th} June 2017.
of evangelization of the Good News message of making Jesus known to other nations. Bishop David Kiponda said that in any accession such as when death has sneaked into a home both the Christians and the adherents among the Agiriama community have to sit down for dialogue to make all the necessary arrangements.\footnote{Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Mariakani.}

Atinga asserts that the Church encourages her sons and daughters to engage in a prudent dialogue with charity with those other religions.\footnote{S. A. Atinga, \textit{Death and Dying. A study of the Mortuary rites of the Frafra of Northern Ghana in the Light of the Christian Funeral Liturgy an Attempt at Enculturation}, Catholic University.2006. (Unpublished PhD Dissertation).} However, his study is based on the Catholic Church and is aimed at inculturation while this study is a case study of the PEFA church and is guided by the interpretation of culture and the proposal for an inter-religious dialogue. The PEFA church has made very little effort in having dialogue with other religions. It is from this perspective that the researcher wishes to propose dialogue rather than a confrontation as a way out of the burial conflicts between the Agiriama Christians and the adherents of African traditional religion in Kilifi County, Kenya.

\section*{5.5 Benefits of the Inter-Religious Dialogue}

The inter-religious dialogue will help to bring people together to discuss, to foster the understanding from these people who think different from the other, which are the Christians and the indigenous believers of religion. The understanding will help the two religious groups to live in peace and harmony. It will help people work together to make the world a better place to live in. Knitter asserts that God can make use of other
religions, they are not merely useless and rejected completely. The Agiriama ATR adherents’ find their religious practices equally important the way the Christians find theirs. To bridge the gap then the inter-religious dialogue would be of great help. The inter-religious dialogue causes empathy, where someone is able to view another religion from the perspective of its believers. It brings hospitality, like the tent of Abraham that was open on all four sides as a sign of hospitality to any new comer. The Christians should welcome the adherents of African traditional religion to Christ by showing them love and concern. Inter-religious dialogue leads people to humble themselves which entail respect for a person’s view of other religions.

Garero Mwawara one of the Kaya elders said that there is need for the Agiriama traditions to be respected. This can be achieved if the two conflicting group members humble themselves and come to dialogue together for the search for a possible solution. Hedges states that when we are informed by a particular thought, world of what other religions are it will affect how we engage the religious of the other. This will help us to understand their thought and beliefs. Through the inter-religious dialogue the two religious group members will be able to share the common challenges which they face and the disintegrated family members will be able to reunite. This requires learning about the other’s history. This should be done bearing in mind the core theological principles and values of each religious group.

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642 Daniel Mwawara Garero in a focus group discussion with the author on 16th February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
5.6 Challenges of Dialogue with Christianity and ATR on Burial Rituals

Kenga Chai asserted that in every step of life there are successes, challenges, consequences and implications that may follow as a result of a decision made in life.645 He further added that the interfaith dialogue requires that the concerned people come together for discussions with the aim of finding a solution.646 This was said earlier and requires an understanding of each other through discussions. The church as seen in the previous chapters has viewed the African indigenous religion with negativity, thus the challenge to the Christians to adhere to the theology of inter-religious dialogue. This was confirmed by Atinga who asserts that the church has for long seen herself as possessing the totality of the truth and viewed the others with negativity.647

The church is very reluctant in engaging in dialogue with the African traditional religion adherents. Through the findings, the Christians may just refuse to take part in the African traditional religion adherents’ burial rituals without any reason. Just like the case of the late Yaa Mangi whose sons refused to allow the African traditional religion adherents Agiriama elders to perform the traditional songs Mabumbumbu dance which was the deceased’s favourite song and dance. This as narrated by Sidi Charo Mangi, who argues that since then the deceased’s spirit, her late husband has been appearing to her asking for his mabumbumbu dance. However, since she knows that even if she tells her sons who are Christians, they would not do anything so she keeps it to herself.648

645 Kenga Chai in an oral interview with the author at Kilifi.
646 Ibid.
648 Sidi Charo Mangi in an oral interview with the author on 12th April 2016 at Mariakani.
The kaya elders; Mwaiha Mwambire, Daniel Mwawara Garero and Kenga Chai asserted that this can be interpreted as disrespectful and a disregard for their indigenous religion practices which was aimed at sending the deceased well to the spiritual world. Mwawara Garero said that if the family starts experiencing problems due to negligence of the burial rituals, to correct this mess the Kaya elders ask for a very heavy fine.\textsuperscript{649} Therefore, there is need for the evangelizers and preachers to understand and recognize the Agiriama rich and varied culture in order to make their message of salvation more effective and to be more meaningful to the evangelized, hence, the need for an inter-faith dialogue. This is not an easy task because some of the cultural practices are already at cross-roads with the Christianity faith and practices.

Moreover, some African traditional religion practices like the forced wife inheritance undermine the human dignity. Joyce Shidha said that the Church has to remain firm in following the teachings of the bible. In this case she confirmed that the church cannot be forced to bend to the worldly things ‘we cannot follow what the world wants us to do,’ she said.\textsuperscript{650} This poses a challenge that the church may not be willing to allow the adherents of ATR to participate and perform the traditional burial rituals. Hedges asserts that the reasons why dialogue may be difficult are culture, economics, politics and a history of violence are involved.\textsuperscript{651} For people to come together there may be certain obstacles which may hinder the success of the dialogue.

\textsuperscript{649} Daniel Mwawara Garero in an oral interview with the author on 16\textsuperscript{th} February 2016 at Bengo in Rabai.
\textsuperscript{650} Pastor Joyce Shidha in an oral interview with the author on 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 2016 at Mariakani.
5.6.1 **Time factor**

To call religious leaders for dialogue requires time and proper planning for the dialogue to be a success. Bishop Kiponda said that most preachers and evangelists are very busy people and it makes it difficult to meet for dialogue. Pastor Gideon Karisa narrated that some of the pastors’ work as part time preachers and work to earn their living so they are engaged in various activities and may have very little time to meet for the dialogue.

5.6.2 **Financial problem**

Calling people together may need some funds to cater for their needs while conducting the dialogue. Pastor Joseph Charo said that when people come together they may need things like food and water to use while the meeting is in progress or after the meeting has taken place. The venue could also need some money to be paid if the meeting takes place in a hotel or other private institutions where the owner may need some fees.

5.7 **CONCLUSION**

With reference to embracing dialogue, God calls all people to reason where he promises them that even if their sins are as red as scarlet; they will be washed and made as white as snow. This depicts that dialogue brings understanding of each other, hence enhancing forgiveness. Geertz asserted that every ritual action has meaning.

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652 Bishop David Kiponda in an oral interview with the author on 12th February 2016 at Mariakani.
653 Pastor Gideon Karisa in oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
654 Pastor Joseph Charo at an oral interview with the author on 18th May 2016 at Mariakani.
655 Good News Bible c/f Isaiah 1:17-19.
attached to it. Therefore, the Christians should embrace dialogue and find the meaning of each ritual practice performed by the ATR adherents during burials. This will enable the Christians to understand the reason why the Agiriama adherents of African traditional religion Agiriama cannot simply do away with their cultural practices even when they become Christians. At this juncture, the researcher wishes to emphasize that there is an urgent need for the intra-religious dialogue between Christianity and the indigenous religion for a peaceful co-existence. If possible, matters concerning death should no longer be feared, instead people should be sensitized and encouraged to make wills on how they would like to be buried. The wishes of the dying and the dead should be respected because they are helpless and depend on the mercies of those still alive.

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CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, there is presentation of the summary of the major findings of the entire study and the conclusions drawn from the chapters in the study. It also presents recommendations and suggestions on areas for further research. The main purpose of this study was to examine the Agiriama Christian’s and African traditional religion adherents burial rites practices. This was done with the aim of identifying similarities and differences. This helped the researcher to establish the areas of conflict which exists between the A.T.R adherents and the Christians among the Agiriama community during burials. The study was guided by the interpretation of culture and the inter-religious theories. It was assumed that both the Christians and the A.T.R adherents Agiriama can understand each other through dialogue for a peaceful co-existence.

6.2. Summary of the findings and conclusions of the study

This study dealt with the analysis of burial conflicts between Agiriama Christians and African Religious adherents of Kilifi County. The first chapter gave an introduction and the background of the study. In the second chapter the Agiriama burial rituals and practices were analysed. The third chapter analysed the Christian burial ritual practices a case study of Pefa Church. The fourth chapter of the study examined the areas of conflict between the two rituals. The fifth chapter presented the possible solutions to the existing conflicts between the Agiriama Christians and the African
religious adherents of Kilifi County. Chapter six is the final chapter of this study and it presents summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study. The study explored a conceptual framework with concepts borrowed from the ‘interpretation of culture’ theory by Geertz. Every ritual practice that the A.T.R adherents and the Christian Agiriama perform has some meaning. This framework formed the basis for establishing the reason as to why the African religious adherents of Kilifi County Kenya value so much the traditional burial ritual practices that they can not simply abandon them. The study also used some Biblical teachings concerning death and afterlife. This assisted in giving the theological meaning of the Christian burial ritual practices. To bridge the gap, the study proposed an inter-religious theory by Jonathan Napier. This was also borrowed from the biblical teachings on dialogue. The data obtained was organized and arranged in themes according to the objectives of the study for the purpose of analyzing and interpretation of the burial ritual practice. What follows is a discussion of the summary of the study objectives.

Data for the study was obtained through participant’s observation. The researcher was able to attend five burials. The researcher was mainly concerned with what rituals practices were performed from death till burial and some days after the burial had taken place. The researcher also used Focus Group Discussions, oral interviews and obtained the necessary information. In addition, the researcher used secondary sources to gather more information and seek clarifications on what was obtained from primary sources. The data obtained was organized and arranged thematically according to the objectives of the study for the purpose of analysis and interpretation. Below is a discussion of the summary of the study objectives:
The first objective was to analyse the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents’ burial ritual practices, which formed chapter two of the study. It established that the Agiriama A.T.R adherents have elaborated burial rituals which must be performed when one dies. These burial rituals are very important for the family wellbeing and they assist the spirit of the deceased to rest in peace in the spiritual world of the ancestors. The burial rituals among the Agiriama A.T.R adherents are as important as the burial itself. They believe that failure to observe the burial rituals would hinder the deceased’s spirit from reaching the ancestral world which they believe that the deceased’s spirit become wondering and could cause harm to those living family members. It was established that death among the Agiriama community is a community affair and the death of children was not given due importance.

The Agiriama ATR adherents believe that death provokes the need for celebration, through the funeral rituals. The funeral rituals are both for the living and for the dead. The celebration brings together the community which has been disturbed by the death. In order to comfort each other, this is necessary for the healing of the hearts of the bereaved family members and the community at large.

The burial ritual practices bring about the equilibrium of the community that has been disturbed by death. Among the Agiriama community, like the Frafra of Ghana, the dead are not just the one time members of the family who are gone before but are still effectively full members of the family and the community. The dead are the custodians of the moral and religious lives of the living. The dead watch over the living and the living offer sacrifices to the ancestors (k’oma) during burials. During burials, the living
have the task of ensuring that the dead arrive safely to the ancestral world by giving them proper burial rituals.

The Agiriama ATR adherents view life in fullness in such a way that whatever they do, they perceive it with reference to community life. To the Agiriama what promoted human life was considered worth it, thus to the Agiriama people life is given by God and it is sacred. Whenever one was sick, it was a community problem hence, the members did all that was possible ways to make that person get well.

The Agiriama people cared for each other in times of happiness and in times of sorrow. So it was a duty of every member to show love and care for the afflicted. To live alone and to die alone to the Agiriama was like a curse and an evil act. Hence the spirit of togetherness undugu (brotherhood) was highly emphasized among the Agiriama people. Like other African communities, the Agiriama ATR adherents people, life is connected to their ancestors in such a way that there is no clear cut line between the living and the living dead, hence they pay great respect to them. This is contrary to the Christian counter parts that have no relationship with the dead. Thus the elaborate burial rituals and practices help to bring a check and balance between the living and the living dead.

The Agiriama people display great respect for their dead for they believe in an afterlife. The elaborate burial rituals and practices are performed to safeguard both the dead and those living as discussed in chapter two. The Agiriama love togetherness which is seen as Ubinadamu/ Utu (humanity). Hospitality among the members of the Agiriama community is expressed in their collective responsibility umwenga (unity) seen when one has a problem just like when death occurs. They stayed together to comfort the
bereaved. During such times each family gave their contribution which shows a spirit of love and care for each other even after death. Some gave donations *Midzi-chenda* in form of money while others provided foodstuff and animal for slaughtering on the day for slaughtering. The elaborate burial rituals helped to heal the hearts of the living and give the deceased a smooth journey to the spiritual world. Conversely, the Christians believe that it is only God who can comfort their hearts through faith in Jesus Christ.

Cleansing the mourners and the home also ensured that the family and the community at large stayed healthy *Uzimawa lalo* (community health). This explains why the Agiriana people probably could not renounce or do away with some of the burial rituals even when they became Christians. The Christians believe that the blood of Jesus Christ and prayers to God through Jesus Christ is a powerful weapon against any danger. The Agiriana believe that every death has a cause such as nature, witchcraft and sorcery, failure to obey the ancestors. On the other hand, the Christians believe that death came to the world after man had disobeyed God. Life is given by God and it is him alone who has the power to take someone's life away.

The Agiriana tend to categorise death into normal death such as death of very old people who have lived their lives to the fullest. They also have abnormal deaths which include death of young ones. Bad deaths are death where one dies alone far from family members. Other bad deaths include death from drowning, suicide, being struck by lightning, and accidents. Once death has occurred, the cause must be established so that they may prevent such death from striking the family again. The Christians believe that death cannot be prevented at all cost. The burial rituals and practices depend on the way in which death occurred and the age of the deceased. Burial rituals and practice also
depends on the social status of the person. The position of birth also determined whether a person should be given full burial ritual.

6.2.1. Primary burial rituals

The Agiriama African indigenous religion adherents perform very many rituals for their dead. However, all the rituals are performed only when elderly men died. A certain number of rituals are omitted depending on the age, sex and marital status of the deceased. The ritual performed include: closing of the eyes and the mouth, strengthening the body to rest on the back facing upwards, spreading the death news whereby every family member is informed on what has transpired to their beloved family member. The ear of the deceased is held ritualistically in case the deceased had a serious disagreement with one of the close family member. Washing the deceased is done to make him/her presentable to the many visitors. The study found that, the Agiriama A.T.R adherents’ people have their own mortuary rites and prefer to keep their dead at home rather than taking them to the mortuary.

This study noted that the Agiriama community has great love and care for each other even death can not stop this love. Upon death, the deceased is never left alone until burial takes place. The deceased’s body is well prepared and dressed nicely for burial because death is seen as a journey to the ancestral world. The dead are dressed well because they are on a journey to the world of ancestors. When a pregnant woman dies, the Agiriama do not bury her with the baby inside her womb: a traditional postmortem has to be conducted then she is buried in the same tomb with the baby. The Agiriama funerals concern the whole community; therefore, consultations have to be
done so that the elders are involved in the arrangements. Throughout the mourning period, the Agiriama keep awake to guard the dead and to accompany the bereaved family members. The close family members of the deceased are given strict instructions which they have to follow. Failure to observe the instructions could lead to another death of a close family member.

The Agiriama community has funeral songs which are suitable only for the accession not outside the context. The funeral songs such as *Kifu du* dance use very abusive words which one would not want to hear when there is a mother, father, daughter or son. For this reason the Christians cannot withstand these songs. The study found out that the Agiriama women are not allowed to stay close to the grave. Burials are conducted by men while women stay a distance away watching what happens. The study identified that the Agiriam community use mats for burial as a sleeping mat for the deceased.

6.2.2. The post burial ritual practices

The post burial rituals for the Agiriama people include washing the jembes immediately after sealing the tomb. The mourners also wash their faces, hands and legs. This study also found out that the Agiriama Afrian traditional religion adherents have a specific number of days for mourning. The mourning days have specific prescribed rituals to be observed such as shaving of the hair of the close relatives, slaughtering of animals for ancestoralsacrifices and for food for the mourners. On the last day the widow/ widower, father or mother to the deceased has to conduct the ritual of throwing
the death. An Agiriama religious specialist has to perform the ritual of cleansing the home to make sure that the family stays health.

6. 2.3 The Christian’s burial rites practices

The Christian burial rituals were discussed in chapter three of the study which was the second objective of the study. Under this objective, the study also discussed the theological meaning of the Christian burial rituals. It was found that the Pastors and church elders conducted the burial rituals for their deceased members and this helped the deceased’s family members to come to terms with the reality. The study established that the Christian burial rituals were conducted up to burial and that the post burial rituals were lacking. It was further noted that pastors, church elders and other believers conducted prayers for the bereaved family members. They also surported the bereaved families with some finances and foodstuffs; this makes them feel encouraged and focus their faith in Jesus Christ.

The areas of conflicts between Christianity and African indigenous religion on burial rituals were discussed in chapter four of the study. It was noted that most of the pre-burial rituals for both Christians and the adherents of African traditional religion among the Agiriama are similar. However, there are some differences on the belief in death and after life which have contributed to the many differences on the ritual performance. The African indigenous religion adherents believe in an after life to be in a spiritual world of ancestors. Hence, there is a link between the livings, the living dead and the ancestors. To reach the ancestral world, both the pre-burial rites and post burial rites are mandatory. On the other hand, it was noted that to the Christians death is
centred on Christ’s death and resurrection. The Christian believe in an after life; to be with the Lord Jesus Christ in a good place known as heaven or paradise. It was noted that the Christian also believe on the day of judgement, when those found to be righteous will go to heaven, while those found with sins will be thrown to hell. Hell is believed to be a place of torment where the sinners will suffer for eternity. It was established that some of the African traditional religion adherents people’s burial practices such as; cleansing the deceased’s home, burial of babies under the mother’s bed, ritually throwing of the death, wife inheritance and offering animal sacrifice for the dead were in sharp contrast with Christian teachings. The burial rituals have caused many conflicts when death occurred in a family where there were different faiths. From the findings from the respondents, the study found that the Agiriama Christians in PEFA church in Mariakani in Kilifi County have done little in interpreting the Agiriama culture with reference to burial rituals and practices.

The fourth objective was to suggest possible solutions for the existing conflicts. The study established that there is need to interpret the Agiriama culture to establish the meaning of every ritual practice performed by the African indigenous religion adherents. It was established that an understanding of each other’s faith and beliefs is of paramount. The study noted that the understanding could only be achieved through an inter-religious dialogue between the two groups. It was also noted that little has been done on the engagement of dialogue between the Christians and the African traditional religion adherents among the Agiriama people. It was found that this study was the first study that attempted to examine the cultural heritage and Christianity concerning burial rituals and practices and how these two groups are at a cross roads during burials. For
this case, this study established that although the PEFA church has been in Mariakani in Kilifi County for many decades, it lacked any proper evidences in engaging with the local communities and culture.

The study found that anything to do with culture is considered evil and superstitious. It is therefore, important for the indigenous and the Christians to engage in dialogue. It is also important for the cultural practices to be interpreted to remove the notion of negativity which exists.

Although some cultural practices are for the wellbeing of the community little has been done to interpret them for a better understanding. There is need for a proper dialogue between the Agiriama indigenous religions (AIR) and Christianity so that those bad concepts which have been overtaken by time and space can be interpreted and replaced by good elements. This study argues that the interpretation of culture and interfaith dialogue are vital aspects which the church needs to address with an urgency for the wellbeing of the Agiriama community.

6.3.1 General Conclusions

The study found that the Christians have some burial rituals which they perform upon the death of their loved ones. The Christians like the adherents of African traditional religion among the Agiriama perform the following rituals: the eyes and the mouth of the deceased have to be closed and the body laid down straight facing upwards. Prayer has to be conducted to give the family strength, protection and courage during the mourning period. The deceased’s hair may be trimmed or combed nicely to make it neat. The body must be washed and dressed with nice clothes to make the deceased look nice and
presentable before the many guests who come to view the body. The news of the death has to be spread to the relatives living near and far. The body may be taken to the mortuary to give the family time to prepare for a good send off for their beloved one. The Agiriama Christians too guard the deadbodies of their loved ones. Therfore, they stay awake day and night during which they sing Chistian hymns and choruses to comfort the bereaved family members. The grave is dug at the usual family burial ground by the neighbours with the full authority of the head of the family. Preparations for the body for burial are done at the mortuary where the body is washed again and dressed well. The close family members may select common clothes to wear on the burial day such as *dhera, kikoi, T-shirts and khanga*.

There is ussually a program organised and followed by the master of ceremony. There are speeches from various people starting with the family members. The euology or biography of the deceased which may have been prepared after death is read. Singing and dancing Christian choruses accompanied by the ritual of the word is conducted. The mourners are then given an opportunity to view the body for the last time. Then the body is escorted to the grave for burial. After the body has been buried, prayers are conducted for thefamily members. The jembes are washed and flowers may be placed at the newly cealed grave. A family representative gives a vote of thanks followed by a closing prayer. The mourners are saved with food and they can leave at their own dicition. The close relatives who remain sleep in the deceased.s compound. The deceased’s clothes and other belongings may be distributed to the family members.
6.4. Recommendations for further research

The Agiriama adherents of African traditional religion adherents post burial rituals have many days for sitting and mourning with a lot of feasting. These can be reduced to minimize the expenses encountered during the mourning period. The research recommends that a study of Christian burial rituals and practices should be done with different Pentecostal churches for more understanding of the Christian burial rituals. The findings of this study should be used to further equip the Christians and the Agiriama adherents of African traditional religion on the importance of burial rituals. The research recommends that studies on the topic of burial of young babies be carried out. From this study, young babies are not given any burial ritual. The only ritual for the young babies is the burial with grass or leaves under their mother’s beds. The burial of young babies is left for women. It has to be investigated whether their spirits become wondering spirits due to lack of burial rituals or that they join the world of the ancestors. The Christians give the young babies burial equal importance like the adults, because to the Christians everybody is equal before God. This has to be investigated whether there is any effect to the child’s mother and the community at large. The Agiriama adherents to African traditional religion adherents believe that if the dead child is given many burial rites it may have negative effects on the mother’s fertility.

The researcher recommends further research on the post burial rituals like throwing of the death if there are any alternatives to such indigenous burial rituals which are even violating human rights. It would also be of great interest to explore further the challenges faced by those who throw the death in contrast to those who do not cleanse their homes nor throw the death. The study recommends that a comparative study be
carried out on how other cultures other than the Agiriama treat the death of a child and the death of a mother with a baby in her womb. The researcher recommends that more research on the topic be carried out for more clarification of the findings.
REFERENCES

A. BOOKS


Kenya, CPH-Kampala, Uganda.


**B: Journals**


**C: Unpublished sources;**

**Articles**


APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of Respondents only those who gave out their names

Category A. Pastors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>NAME</th>
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<th>PLACE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bishop David Kiponda</td>
<td>12/2/2016</td>
<td>Kaloleni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pastor Gideon Karisa</td>
<td>18/5/2016</td>
<td>Mariakani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pastor Joseph Charo</td>
<td>18/5/2016</td>
<td>Mariakani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pastor Joyce Shidha</td>
<td>23/4/2016</td>
<td>Mariakani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pastor Alfred Musya</td>
<td>23/4/2016</td>
<td>Mariakani</td>
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</table>

Category B: Church Elders

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<thead>
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<th>Place</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Joseph Kazungu Kanga</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>16/6/2016</td>
<td>Bale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Charles Baya</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>2/1/2016</td>
<td>MATANOMANANE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Christine Dama</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>18/5/2016</td>
<td>Mariakani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rachael Mangi</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>21/4/2016</td>
<td>Mnyezeni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Grace Kadzo Charo</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>16/6/2016</td>
<td>Bale</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Category C: some of the bereaved family members (In some pseudonyms were used instead of their real names)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Shani Yaa FGD</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>16/6/2016</td>
<td>Bale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Edward Kalume FGD</td>
<td>adult</td>
<td>16/6/2016</td>
<td>Bale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Grace Kadzo Charo FGD</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Chula Kalume FGD</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Alice Charo FGD</td>
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<td>Bale</td>
</tr>
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<td>Bale</td>
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<td>Joyce Shidha Iha</td>
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<td>23/6/2016</td>
<td>Mariakani</td>
</tr>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Sidi Maya</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>14/4/2016</td>
<td>Mariakani</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Emmanuel Charo</td>
<td>youth</td>
<td>28/6/2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Daniel Chenga</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>28/6/2016</td>
<td>Mariakani</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Dume Chengo</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>26/3/2016</td>
<td>Mariakani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Titus Hinzano</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>26/3/2016</td>
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</table>
**Category D: Kaya Elders (they agreed their names be included)**

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kenga Chali 1,2</td>
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<td>4/5/2016</td>
<td>Kilifi</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Daniel Mwawara Garero</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>15/4/2016</td>
<td>Kilifi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Mwaiha Mwambire</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>16/2/2016</td>
<td>Matano Manne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Chula Kalume</td>
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<td>14/4/2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kahindi Chome</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>16/2/2016</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Hadija Mdzomba Kombo</td>
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<td>16/2/2016</td>
<td>Bengo</td>
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<td>Mariam Mohammed Salim</td>
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**Category E: ATR adherents Bereaved Family Members**

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<tr>
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<td>Sadiki Maya Inter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Robert Kasiwa Mwambega</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Sidi Wanje</td>
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<td>19/6/2016</td>
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<td>Changawa Karisa</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Mariakani</td>
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<td>Mnyazi Chanzera</td>
<td>Youth</td>
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<td>MARIAKANI</td>
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</table>
Appendix 2: Informed consent form

STUDY TITLE: AN ANALYSIS OF BURIAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN AGIRIAMA CHRISTIANS AND AFRICAN RELIGIOUS ADHERENTS OF KILIF COUNTY, KENYA

RESEARCHER: MARGARET DAMA YAA

Dear participant,

I am a master student at Pwani University. I wish to undertake a research study to explore the burial rituals and practices among the Agiriama Christians and the ATR adherents of Kilifi County. The benefit of the study is to make a contribution to the needs of people to live in peace and harmony especially when faced with difficulties such as death. The study is aimed at developing guidelines to equip the community with necessary knowledge concerning burial rituals and practices in order to avoid misunderstanding when sending off our beloved ones upon death. The study is also a requirement towards the completion of my course at Pwani University.

I seek permission from you to have you participate in the study. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can withdraw at anytime when you feel that your rights as a participant is infringed in one way or the other. Equally you can contact my research supervisor(s) Dr. Tsawe Munga wa Chidongo and Dr. Stephen Muoki at Pwani University. I appreciate your willingness to participate in this study.

Participant’s signature……………………Date……………………

Researcher’s signature……………………Date……………………
Appendix 3: Approval for data collection

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY:

MARGARET D. YAA

REFERENCE NO:
ERC/MA/001/2018

ENTITLED:
Conflict between Christian and African traditional burial and ritual practices among the Agiriama community

TO BE UNDERTAKEN AT:
KILIFI COUNTY, KENYA

FOR THE PERIOD OF ONE YEAR
HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE
AT ITS SITTING HELD AT PWANI UNIVERSITY. KENYA
ON THE 6TH DAY OF APRIL 2018

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

LAY MEMBER

Pwani University
Ethics Review Committee.

Pwani University; www.pwani.ac.ke, email: e.thomas@pwaniuni.ac.ke, tel: 0719 182218.
The ERC: Giving Integrity to Research for Sustainable Development.
Appendix 4: Confirmation and approval of Masters Research proposal
Appendix 5: Interview guide for the bereaved Adults

My name is Margaret Dama Yaa, a Pwani University MA student conducting a research entitled: ‘AN ANALYSIS OF BURIAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN AGIRIAMA CHRISTIANS AND AFRICAN RELIGIOUS ADHERENTS OF KILIF COUNTY, KENYA, the case study of PEFA church of Kenya, Mariakani branches in Kilifi County.

Please answer all the questions and give additional information where necessary. The information will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the MA thesis.

SECTION A

I) Personal details

Sex: Male [   ] Female [   ] (Put a tick)

(a) Age: 1. 19-28 [   ] 2. 29-38 [   ] 3. 39-48 [   ] 4. 49-58 [   ] 5. 59

II) Questions

1) How old was the deceased?

2) What was the sex of the deceased?

3) What was his/ her marital status?

4) What was the cause of death?

5) Was he/she a Christian or African traditional religion adherent?

6) Where did the death take place and when?

7) What was done immediately someone dies?

8) if a  Christian what burial ritual practices were carried out:
a) immediately after death
b) before burial
c) after burial
d) after one week
e) after a month and above

9. Was there any disagreement on the way the burial was conducted?

10. How was the disagreement solved?
Appendix 6: Interview Guide for Bereaved family members

1. Are you a Christian or African traditional religion adherent?

2. How old was the deceased?

3. What was his/her sex?

4. What was his/ her marital status?

5. When did the death take place?

6. Was he/she a Christian or an African traditional religion adherent?

7. What was the cause of the death?

8. What practices were carried out?
   a) immediately after death
   b) before burial
   c) after burial
   d) after one week
   e) after a month and above

9. What Christian burial rites were carried out?

10. Were there any African traditional religion adherents' burial ritual and practices curried out?

11. If yes how did the Christian family members feel?

12. Was there any disagreement concerning the way the burial was conducted?
13. How was the disagreement resolved?

14. Suggest some ways through which the church may improve on the burials practices so that to have peaceful burial ceremonies.
Appendix 7: Interview Guide for Kaya Elders, Clan Elders

What is your name?

What is your clan?

What are the ranks of the Kaya elders?

Please explain to the researcher the Agiriama African traditional religion adherents burial rituals and practices with reference to burial of: (a) babies

(b) unmarried women
(c) unmarried men
(d) barren women
(e) married men and women
(f) elders
(g) inheritance

What happens immediately after one dies?

What were the preparations before burial?

What was done during burial?

What was done immediately after burial?

What was done after a week?

What was done after a month and above?

Are these practices the same as these for Christians?
Which practices differ from those for Christians?

Have you ever attended burials where there were serious differences or disagreements between Christians and the Arican traditional religion adherents, among the Agiriama on the way the deceased body was buried?

Explain what happened

How was the disagreement solved?

Suggest some ways you would like such disagreements to be avoided in future.
Appendix 8: A map of Kenya to show where Mariakani is located\textsuperscript{657}

\textsuperscript{657} https://www.google.com/search?q=map+of+kenya+showing++kilifi+county&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8 also refer to The Comprehensive Primary School ATLAS\textsuperscript{\textregistered} Longhorn Publisher www.longhornpublishers.com 3rd Edition 2015 page 21.
Appendix 9: Agiriama Funeral song

Topola nitopo
Atopolwayeni mche msichana
Mkaza mtuni wari na nyama
Ndafa ni ole niriche kutopola
Komatsi Mulungudzulu,
Enwi K’oma zosi za mashehe na
Masharifu navoya vidzo na vidze,
Viivishukena k’anda

Translation: English

Let’s screw (penetrate) it is soft
Anunmarried non-virgin will be screwed (penetrated)
A man's wife is maize meal and meat
I will die and stop screwing (penetrating)
Oh you ancestral spirits and god in heaven
God, allyoegreat spirits of Sheikhs and
Sharifs, we beseech the good things (and)
Let them come and the bad things be at bay.

---

Accessed on 16th March 2016 Source
Appendix 10: Agiriama Aprayer for holding the year

Agiriama Language

Uwe wa kosana na ............ Hatha mukiapizan

Ukiamba ukifwa asidze kuzika naye akifwa kunda kwenda

Muzika. Vino udzathangulia mberezahaki....

Kadima bule yyu mwanziyo kukosa kukuzaika.Fulani.....

Kadima kukosa kukuzaika uwe. Nyosi muamwenga, ba funakuvoya

Umusamehe............

Kala radhi naye............

Musamehe akulage tototo wende mzima mwanangu.

(Vruuu.............anamvivira madzi). Madzi ganamwagwa hatha mara tahu.

Translation: English

Yes, so and so ............

You had a serious disagreement with this........

And you swore that you do not want to see her/him till death

And he/she should not come to your burial now.

Now you have gone before and she/he cannot stay without

Attending your burial. She feels very sorry, we beseech you to please

Forgive her/him. She/he wants you to go peacefully. Please allow her/him to

Burry you. (Vruuuuu...) drinks the water and throws at the deceased’s head

Three times

---

659 Maiha Mwambire oral interview with the author on 16th February 2016 at Matanomanne.