

DEDICATION

THE PLACE AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN
THE S.D.A. CHURCH IN KENYA
(1911-1990)

This thesis is dedicated to my mother
Johnstone Okemwa, whose belief in
female education inspired my early

By

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late father Fred Johnstone Okemwa, whose belief in the importance of female education ensured my earlier education.

Fred Johnstone Okemwa

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

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This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya. The theoretical framework used in this study examines patriarchy as the basis of women's subjugation. This is because the patriarchal society clearly defined what women should do, say and how they should behave. Women's sphere of influence was the home.

The basic argument in this study is that women have been relegated to a subordinate position. Consequently, these women only play minor roles in the church. Chapter One outlines the procedure that is used in investigating and analysing data. It also lays out the methodology used.

Chapter two describes the traditional Gusii society. It uncovers some of the subtle aspects of this society plus some practices and beliefs that are oppressive to women. This information is used as a basis for analysis in later chapters.

Chapter three examines Adventist missionary education. This discussion shows how the missionary education contributed to the subordination of women in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya. The missionaries trained men to become

evangelists while women were encouraged to get married to the mission boys.

Chapter four examines the factors influencing the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church. These include the white missionaries who have been serving the S.D.A. Church in Kenya since its establishment, the Bible, the teaching of Ellen G. White and the culture of the Abagusii. This chapter also analyses the ordination practice in the S.D.A. Church. An attempt is made to show how ordination has been used to keep women out of the leadership positions and decision making in the church.

In Chapter five, the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church are described and interpreted. Here, it is observed that women play only minor roles. Finally, we conclude that the S.D.A. Church has hampered the wholistic development and participation of women in church affairs. Therefore, it is suggested that the S.D.A. Church has to open all ministries to women in order for it to adhere to the authentic christian principles.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Elders:
Colporteurs: These are the people who evangelize and sell books and other forms of publication by approaching individuals in their homes and offices in the S.D.A. Church.

Deacons: These are male servants or attendants in the S.D.A. Church. They serve the church in practical ways such as caring for the church building and property, and assisting in the celebration of the ordinances.

Deaconesses: These are elected women in the S.D.A. Church who gather and prepare clothing, food, especially for the communion, and other supplies for the poor. They also visit the sick and are generally responsible for community services.

Feminism:
The Dorcas Society:

A lay society of women in the S.D.A. Church. The members gather and prepare clothing and other supplies for the poor. They also visit the sick and are generally responsible for community services.

Elders: Two categories of elders are referred to in this study:

(i) Local church elders in the S.D.A. Church

(ii) Clan and sub-clan elders in Gusii society.

Local church elders are religious leaders who are allowed to take the place of the church pastor in his absence. They conduct worship services and preach the word of God to the congregation.

Clan and sub-clan elders in Gusii society were usually wealthy men who had many wives and sons. They acted as judges whenever there were misunderstandings between members of the clan or the sub-clan.

Feminism: Is a movement opposed to discrimination of women on the basis of their gender. It therefore opposes any ideology, belief, attitude or behaviour that establishes or reinforces such discrimination.

**Feminist
Liberation
Theology:**

A branch of liberation theology which addresses itself to the oppression of women in various contexts. It seeks to make people aware of the forms of oppression of women suffer and the need to oppose them.

Field:

It is a local conference made up of a united organized body of churches in a territory in the S.D.A. Church.

**General
Conference
of Adventists:**

This is the highest body in the structural organization of the S.D.A. Church.

**Women's
Liberation
Movement:**

Decisions made by the General Conference in session are usually respected by the S.D.A. Churches all over the world.

Oppression
of women:

Is the use of power or coercion whether violent or non-violent to constrain women's freedom, weigh them down bodily, mentally, socially, or otherwise. In this study, exclusion of women from levels of decision-making, allowing them to perform only subordinate roles and failure to recognize as worthy what women do are some of the indices of their opposition.

Sexism:

Unequal treatment of people because of their gender.

Union:

A united body of local conferences or fields within a larger territory in the S.D.A. Church.

Women's
liberation
Movement:

Is a movement concerned with criticizing male oppression and domination and working to change the social structure of society to favour the liberation of women from male domination. It is also concerned with creating a sense of independence in the women and nurturing this independence.

Abagusii: The term refers to the people who occupy the Gusii region. They are children of Mogusii, the common ancestor of all the sub-ethnic groups that make up the Abagusii ethnic group.

Dholuo: The term refers to the language spoken by the Joluo.

Ebiee
(sing. Ekee): These are traditional Gusii dishes. They are made of selected stalks of eleusine. Usually each Omogusii woman owns different sizes of ebiee which are for various uses.

Ebundo: Is a type of clay found at river banks. It is black or dark grey in colour.

Ebisarate
(sing. Egesarate): Were fortified cattle villages. Cattle were kept here at night and at any other time when they were not grazing. Young unmarried men lived in ebisarate so as to protect the animals against rustling by the neighbouring ethnic groups especially

the Maasai and the Kipsigis. The young men who lived in ebisarate also learned war tactics and how to make shields and spears.

Egesaku:

(pl. Ebisaku)

In its primary sense egesaku is one or the two doors of a traditional living hut - the one leading to the cattle pen. The term egesaku also refers to any group of people identified by reference to its founding ancestor, whatever is its

range or function. Thus, while the children of a living man are collectively termed as egesaku, so are the members of a clan. The entire Gusii ethnic group can also be referred to as egesaku because it has its eponymous founder. In this study the word egesaku refers to a virtually autonomous social unit of the Abagusii that occupies a discrete territory. Its nearest English translation is the word 'clan'.

Egesagane:

The name given to a girl before she undergoes clitoridectomy. It also denotes the lowest status in the life

cycle of a female. In this status , a girl is viewed as valueless because she can neither be sexually active nor can she bear children.

Egesiria: Is a small hoe. It is usually used by young children when they are learning to till the land. It is also used in weeding crops that are closely sown.

Ekebuse: Refers to the white, cream or yellow earth which is predominantly used for smearing houses in Gusii.

Enyabububu: Is a legendary animal. In Gusii folklore enyabububu is described as a very big animal which is capable of swallowing human beings. It is also associated with loud scaring noises. During the esubo night, male novices were threatened with being swallowed by this animal to test their courage.

Enyomba: (pl. chinyomba) Literary, enyomba is a house or a hut in which a married woman lives, or more specifically still, its inner

room which is normally used for sleeping and cooking. Enyomba also refers to a segment of the clan namely; the sub-clan. Sub-clans are identified by a male founder. Each of its segments claims descent from different houses of the founder. In this study, the latter meaning is adopted.

Esubo:

Is a special ritual ceremony which was performed on the third night after circumcision. The night was characterized by a lot of singing and dancing in the male novices' hut. Novices were also taught and asked to recite several rules of conduct, duties, rights and obligations that pertain to manhood.

Esuguta:

Is a type of grass. The Abagusii associated it with life because of its ability to survive even severe droughts.

Gusii:

Is the region inhabited by Abagusii. Gusii is approximately eighty kilometres north of the present

border of Tanzania and sixty kilometres Southeast of the Kavirondo Gulf of Lake Victoria.

Joluo: This term refers to the people who speak Dholuo. They are the children of Ramogi-the common ancestor of all the Luo.

Kisii: This was the name by which the Abagusii were known to the Nilotic speaking neighbours, the Luo. The British administrators must have adopted this term from the Luo for they too used it to refer it to the Abagusii.

Luo: This is the name by which the Joluo were identified by the colonialists.

Omoiseke: Is a respectable title for a girl who has undergone clitoridectomy. This title also denotes a status in which a girl could get married.

Omoisia: Is the name given to an uncircumcised boy. The name denotes the lowest status of an individual males's life

cycle. In this status, he is not allowed to marry, procreate or own property.

Omogaka

bw'omochie: Is the title given to a man who has his own home, wife or wives and children. He is the head of the family on whom the members of the family depend for daily guidance and material upkeep.

Omonyoncho: (pl.

emenyoncho): This is a large basket that was used for storing grains.

Orotuba:

Is a specially prepared stone on which a girl sat as she underwent the clitoridectomy operation.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Seventh Day Adventists (S.D.A.) are a worldwide evangelical movement with their global headquarters at Takoma Park, Washington, D.C. The S.D.A. belief is related to the 'Adventual awakening' which took place in America as a result of the lectures of William Miller on biblical prophecy between 1831 and 1846. After a study and computation of the Book of Daniel in the Bible, Miller persuaded many people that the probable time of Christ's return would be between March 1843 and March 1844 (Encyclopedia Americana 1, 1984:193).

The S.D.A. are distinguished by their observance of the Seventh Day (Saturday) Sabbath as a memorial of God's creation. They also believe in the imminent personal return of Jesus from heaven to earth as Lord and King (Amayo, 1973:2). For the S.D.A., the Bible is an authentic record of God's self-revelation to the saving acts by Jesus Christ whose life demonstrated God's perfect will for humanity.

An authoritative voice in the S.D.A. movement has been that of Ellen G. White who claimed special revelations from God. She pioneered with leaders such

as Hiram Edson, Joseph Bates and James White. Her ideas were formative in the emergence of the organizational structure of the S.D.A. Church in Battle Creek in 1863 and continue to influence the direction and development of the Church. She wrote forty books and many articles covering such fields as education, health, and Christ-directed living (Encyclopedia Americana 24, 1984:6220).

It is against this background of a strong female presence in the founding years of the S.D.A. Church that the researcher developed interest in the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church. Since the Church's formal organisation has been heavily based on Ellen's teaching, one wonders whether the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church is affected by women's views and if so, how.

The S.D.A. have a great regard for White's writings. In fact, they firmly believe that she was a prophetess and that whatever she wrote was what God revealed to her. Hence, in the history of this Church, a woman, is a pioneer. Given this factor, one is tempted to assume that this Church would readily ordain women into the pastoral ministry, or at least allow them to take up some senior leadership positions in the governing bodies of the Church. This, however, has not

been the case.

To date, the Church is quite sceptical about the ordination of women into the pastoral ministry. On 11th, July 1990 for example, the General Conference met and one of the items on the agenda was the ordination of women. According to the minutes taken, 1,173 voted against the ordination of women while 377 members voted for the practice. The General Conference then gave the following ruling on the issue:

While the commission does not have a consensus as to whether the writings of Ellen G. White explicitly advocate or deny the ordination of women into the pastoral ministry, it concludes unanimously that these sources affirm a significant, wide ranging and continuing ministry for women which is being expressed and evidenced in the varied and expanding gifts according to the in-filling of the Holy Spirit. Further, in view of the wide spread lack of support of the ordination of women to the pastoral ministry in the world church and in view of the possible risk of disunity, dissension and diversion from the mission of the Church we do not approve of the ordination of women, (55th General Conference Minute 136-909 G.A.).

Feminist theologians have argued that the patriarchal ideology which assigns the public sphere exclusively to the male is the root cause of female subordination and subjugation. Consequently, the males have become

definers of culture and therefore reduced the female to silence. This male monopoly of cultural definition has made women the objects rather than the subjects of that definition. Ruether in this context has argued:

...men define both male and female spheres from a male hierarchical point of view and restrict or eliminate interpretations that come from the female point of view (1983:74).

Against this observation, it is important to establish why the S.D.A. Church in Kenya has set limitations with regard to the roles women play. Further, one wonders what the reactions of these women to these limitations are or whether indeed they are aware of them at all.

1.1. A Statement of the problem

The place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church is a topic which is not new to many people in society. Many of the women religious for instance have questioned the tradition of their Church which denies them the right to participate in the Church ministry fully. Some of these women especially in America have demanded ordination (Gardiner, 1976). A random survey on the position of the churches in Kenya on the place and role of women indicates that the Church of the

Province of Kenya (Anglican) is still divided on the question of ordination of women. Some of the Church's Bishops are for the practice while others are totally against ordaining women to priesthood. The Methodist Church of Kenya and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (P.C.E.A.) on the other hand ordain women and have openly articulated their stand on the place and role of women. These churches appreciate the ability and talents of women and have realized that it is necessary to treat women and men equally. With regard to the S.D.A. Church in Kenya, not much has been said on the question.

Among the S.D.A. Churches in Kenya, there are differences in the role that women play. From an initial survey it was established that women in Nairobi took up various roles during the sabbath worship and other church activities. It was however, quite clear that there was a set limit as to what the women are allowed to do by the S.D.A. Church. It was of great interest to find out which roles women play in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya. It was also important to establish why the S.D.A. Church is more seemingly male-dominated in Gusii as opposed to Nairobi.

The women in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya have kept quiet about their place and role in the Church. This

gives the impression that they are content with their place in the Church and what they have been allowed to do, or that they are not aware of how else it could be. In this study, efforts were made to get the views of women themselves on this issue.

The argument in this study is that the S.D.A. women have something to contribute to the Church ministry. Limiting their freedom of participation at various levels has an adverse effect on them and the Church as a whole. In the light of the Feminist liberation theology, this researcher hopes to critically analyse the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church. The researcher hopes that the findings will make a useful contribution to the search for an egalitarian society of women and men in the Church.

1.2. Objectives of The study

The present study has taken a conceptual perspective that sees the patriarchal ideology as the main factor that lies at the base of the question of the place and role of women in the structure of any social organization. For the purpose of analysis, the following five objectives have been put forward in this study:

1. To find out the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya.
2. To assess the general attitude towards women by Christians in the Church.
3. To identify the roles that women play in the S.D.A. Church in Gusii as compared to Nairobi.
4. To assess in the light of liberation theology how women respond to their designated place and role in the Church
5. To identify factors - whether positive or negative, which have influenced the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya.

1.3. Significance of The Study

The S.D.A. Church has been in existence in Kenya since 1906 but very few people know about its beliefs and practices. This study concentrates on the place and role of women so as to put on record the Church's position on this issue. There are few scholarly studies that have been done on this Church. The studies already done emphasize the historical development of the S.D.A. Church in Kenya and its contribution to education. This study is an attempt to cover the

S.D.A. Church especially on the place and role of women, a topic that has been given little coverage.

In the current struggle for liberation of women in society, women in various churches and secular organizations have questioned the place given to them in society and their role in various spheres of life. With regard to the place and role of women, the S.D.A. Church maintains, at least in theory, that women are equal to men. This is based on the interpretation of the creation story in Genesis where God removed a rib from a man and out of it made a woman, (Gen. 2:4 ff). To the S.D.A. this implies equality. They argue that if God wanted the woman to be inferior, God could have used a bone from the foot. If on the other hand God wanted a woman to be superior then the bone used would have been removed from the man's head. Instead, God used a rib found mid-way on the man's body so that they could be equal (White, 1971:15).

If the above interpretations were to be followed in practice, it would imply that women and men in the S.D.A. Church be given equal opportunities and responsibilities. This, however, has not been the case as the Church has outlined what a woman should do and what she should not. This study, therefore, hopes to

shed light on the differences between belief and practice with regard to issues concerning women such as their place and roles in the S.D.A. Church.

Little has been written about women by the women in the S.D.A. Church. This study hopes to analyze the experiences of women and narrate their observations in the S.D.A. Church. Today, women have shown their ability in coping with the demands of various professions. They have successfully coped with responsibilities of leadership in various fields even in church ministry where they have been given a chance. According to Ohanneson:

Men and women in church suffer from deprivation of the female witness in ministry when women are denied a chance into the pastoral ministry (1980:9).

This study is an attempt to establish that the S.D.A. Church has tended to close out vital female initiative which could possibly make the Christian message better understood. Finally, the study is a challenge to female scholars in other churches to write about their place and role in their churches in Kenya.

1.4. Research Hypotheses

For the purposes of analysis, this study assumes the following: First, that the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church are subordinate to those of men because the Church has selected Biblical texts that support their cultural practice and biases with regard to the place and role of women. Second, that women in the S.D.A. Church are theoretically viewed as equal to men but that this is not reflected in practice by the roles they play in the Church. Third, the roles played by women in the S.D.A. Church in Gusii differ significantly from those played by women in the S.D.A. churches in Nairobi. Fourth, that the women have internalized their subordinate place and roles in the S.D.A. Church and as a result, they are ready to disqualify any woman who questions their position. Finally, the patriarchal ideology which is reflected on the culture of the Abagusii, the bible, the teachings of Ellen G. White, and the life of Western S.D.A. missionaries who have been serving the S.D.A. Church in Kenya since its establishment in 1906, have greatly influenced the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church.

1.5. The Geographical Location of the Study

The study was done in four main areas, namely; Gendia Mission in South Nyanza, Gusii District, Nairobi and Baraton University. These areas were selected because of the following reasons:

Gendia mission is a landmark in the establishment of the S.D.A. Church in Kenya. The first mission station was established here in 1906. A publishing house, a hospital and a school were also established here by 1925. The study carried out in this location established the kind of attitude the first missionaries had towards women. This enabled us to judge whether the subordination of women in the S.D.A. Church has any historical basis in Kenya.

Gusii is one of the regions in Kenya where there are many S.D.A. churches. The first mission station was established at Nyanchwa in 1912. Further, Adventist ideals and practices have been most appealing to the Abagusii (Getui, 1985). It was, therefore, natural that a study featuring the S.D.A. be based in this region.

Due to the nature of problem in this study, it was necessary to carry out research in an urban setting. S.D.A. churches are found in urban areas where Abagusii have settled in large numbers. In Nairobi for

instance, there are S.D.A. churches located at the city centre and the residential estates. Nairobi which is a major urban centre in Kenya was selected in order to assess the participation of women in urban church affairs in it as opposed to women's participation in rural church affairs in Gusii. Nairobi is also a cosmopolitan centre within which women work in various professions. For this reason, we expect these women to express their views and feelings with regard to their place and role in the S.D.A. Church more readily than those in rural setting. Further, the headquarters of the East African union are situated in Nairobi. The choice enabled us to reach senior leaders in the Adventist movement in East Africa. Their views were of paramount importance in our study.

The S.D.A. Church has established a university in Kenya by the name Baraton University, situated in Nandi District. The University mainly admits Adventists and both the staff and the students have to adhere to the practices of the S.D.A. Church. In this institution, discussions were held with the staff as well as the students. The institution's library was also quite resourceful especially in materials related to Adventism.

has particularly played an important role in
and perpetuating the myth of male superiority
sees Catholic women and especially those who
as being on the right track towards

1.6. Literature review

A lot has been written about the place and role of women in society, but not much has been written about the place and role of women in the Church. Even less has been written about women in the Church in Kenya. The works already done have been confined to sociological and economic contributions of women in the Kenyan society. Examples include, the work of Pala (1974). Pala's interest is mainly the economic position of women in Kenya and their participation in economic production. Wamahiu (1984), underlines the enormous amount of work women are expected to do. They are expected to bring up children, cook the family food, wash the family linen, keep the house clean as well as do their professional work. Women, therefore, end up working for about sixteen hours a day. Wamahiu suggests that all members of the family should take part in doing the housework.

Wanjala (1986), studied the Catholic women in Kisumu Diocese. In her work, she shows that the Church has particularly played an important role in advancing and perpetuating the myth of male superiority. Wanjala sees Catholic women and especially the women religious as being on the right track towards liberation since

point of view of the Latin American Liberation Theology which mainly addresses itself to the socio-economic conditions of the people. Our study is from the point of view of Feminist Liberation Theology. This is because the aim of this study is to give an analytical and descriptive account of the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church. This theology describes the oppression of women in various spheres of life and gives guidelines on how to identify such oppression.

There are other people who have written on various aspects of the S.D.A. Church. Examples include Bogonko (1977), who analysed the S.D.A. education among the Abagusii. The aim of Adventist Christian Education was to achieve harmonious development of the physical, mental and religious powers of women and men. Bogonko also reckons that the education was aimed at producing Adventists. Education was also the only way to achieve effective evangelization. Bogonko made no effort to show the impact of this education on women relative to men. The present study addresses itself to this issue in chapter three.

Amayo (1978), adequately covers the beginnings of Adventism in Kenya and the world as a whole. He also explains some of the Adventist beliefs and practices.

Amayo (1978), adequately covers the beginnings of Adventism in Kenya and the world as a whole. He also explains some of the Adventist beliefs and practices. On Adventist Christian Education, Amayo mentions that mission schools were opened for both women and men. Since education was the only way to achieve effective evangelization, logically, men and women who received this education were to evangelize equally. For some reasons, however, evangelization of Adventism has been male dominated. An attempt has been made to explain why evangelization is male dominated. The possible effects of this will be discussed in chapters three and four.

In a paper entitled "Adventist Education in Kenya through the Press", 1905-1976, Amayo (1978), discussed how effective education had been through the press in Kenya. However he mentions very little about the role of women in enhancing this education while todate women play a notable role as colporteurs. Women rather than men have been selling the biggest number of publications. They have also been very successful in educating members of the community by approaching them while in their homes and places of work. Our study will analytically assess the Church's attitude towards the various roles of women.

Getui (1985), concentrates on the establishment and impact of the S.D.A. Church among the Abagusii. She mentions some beliefs and practices of Adventists and traces their origin. On women, Getui mentions that the S.D.A. Church established a girl's school at Nyanchwa to cater for female education. This school, she says, provided wives for some of the mission boys. Whether the education provided for girls was purely to make them wives is a question Getui does not address herself to although the objectives of female Adventtist education are discussed in the study.

Ellen G. White, most of whose ideas were formative in the initial organisation of tthe S.D.A. Church, has several teachings about women in her books. She claimed special revelations from God in the 19th century which inspired her writing. In her works, women are portrayed as playing various roles both within and outside the home. Some of her works are reviewed below although they could be more related to the American society in which she wrote. These works have been a great inspiration for the S.D.A. members and some of the decisions made by the Church reflect this. These works are used as a basis for studying the S.D.A. Church in Kenya.

White (1963), sees women as the best group to have identified the needs of other women. She says that women have been successful in teaching the word of God and should always be encouraged to do so. The extent to which this teaching has been applied in the Kenyan context is the object of this study. In her Medical Ministry, book White says that women are best suited for giving treatment to sick women. She recommends that many converted women should train to become physicians so that they can attend to women during childbirth (White, 1963:80). On the question of professional training of women and men as physicians, White did not advocate different training and hence different roles for women and men. For some reason, however, this non-discrimination has not been reflected in the Church ministry today despite White's appraisal of women's role.

White (1923), says a woman's greatest role is to bring up her children to fear God and to selflessly serve others. She says:

The position of a woman in her family is more sacred than that of a King upon his throne (1923:141).

Some feminist theologians, however, have argued against the above ideas. Daly for instance, is against the fact that women should selflessly serve others. She argues that the patriarchal society has given women the privilege of giving literally everything away. In her words:

...this is the rape of the mind and will that robs the female self of precious time, energy and self-esteem (1973:123).

Our view is that both the mother and the father should participate in bringing up their children so that the woman can have enough time to pursue a career of her own choice. Women should not give up everything in the service for others. They too have their own needs and interests that they have to satisfy.

White (1958), discusses a woman's dress in her church. She argues that a woman's dress should always be healthy to her bowels and hips. (The dress should not be too tight or heavy). Women should not be influenced by fashion to the extent of neglecting the influence of their dress to the future generations. This study analyses the discriminatory feelings and attitudes towards the type of dress worn by women and men in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya.

White (1930), describing Adventist home life says it should be a place of prayer. The father as the priest should lay upon the altar the morning and evening sacrifice while the wife and the children unite in prayers and praise. In her book, Messages to Young People, the father is given a priestly role unlike the mother. If the principle of equality of husband and wife were to be applied then, in the home any of them can take the priestly role.

In Desire of Ages (n.d.), yet another of her writings, White mentions the women who Jesus met during His earthly ministry. Examples include the woman with the issue of blood (Lk.8:40-56), the women who followed Jesus as He carried the cross towards Calvary (Lk.23:26-46), and those who visited the tomb on Easter Sunday morning (Lk.24: 1-12). These verses clearly show the high regard Jesus had for women. In the S.D.A. Church, the teachings of the Bible are of great importance. An attempt is made to identify the texts from the Bible the S.D.A. Church readily refers to when discussing the place and role of women. This is to illustrate how selectively the Bible is used in reference to issues concerning women.

White (1952), says that a woman can minister to God most effectively by bringing up her children in a God-fearing manner and keeping her home. This idea reflects the practice of the 19th century American society when women rarely worked outside the home unlike today. Daly is, however, against this view. She argues that a woman who accepts the role of a housewife avoids a fuller participation in being the unique self by actualizing all the God-given talents and submerged in this role she cannot achieve a breakthrough to creativity (Daly, 1973:140). Maleche (1972), and Riria (1983) agree with Daly. They have argued that due to the rate of inflation, the flexibility and uncertainty of the present marriage system and the socio-economic status of most families, women need paid employment for economic security. The views of S.D.A. with regard to child-care and housework are discussed in chapter five of this study.

White (1971), says a wife should submit to her husband who is the head of the family but adds that neither husband nor wife should compel the other to submit to each other's wishes. This implies that a woman should accept her subordinate place in relation to her husband. Further, a woman should not be compelled to her husbands wishes; instead she should willingly do so. Feminist scholars have argued that a woman's role as a wife and mother leads to some

kind of dissatisfaction since housework is devalued by society (Friedan, 1973:9). Thus, to be fully human, women need to discover their own identities. This is possible if they can take up other roles in the society say in religion, politics, the economy; depending on each one's calling and interests.

Stapples, in his article, "To Ordain or Not to Ordain", says women are more actively involved in the work and administration of the North American Protestant churches. On ordination, he says that churches with a high view of the sacraments appear to be more reluctant to ordain women than the non-liturgical churches. The reason underlying this may be a lingering concept of female ritual impurity, hence, the idea of a woman preaching may be more acceptable than that of a woman fulfilling priestly and sacramental functions. This study seeks to establish why women are not ordained in the S.D.A. Church. We shall also address ourselves to the feelings and views of the Adventist women on the issues already raised.

1.7 The Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used in this study explores the patriarchal ideology as the main root of female domination and subjugation. Iglitzin (1976), developed a gender role theory which was based on the premise that to understand a woman's place and role in society, one has to consider the type of society (matriarchal or patriarchal) she is brought up in and lives in.

The roles of women are influenced by the patriarchal ideology. The effects of this ideology on life cut across the economic, social, political and religious spheres of life. According to Fiorenza, the patriarchal social structure is characterized by a sharp distinction between the public and the private spheres of life. The public sphere referred to politics, religion, economics and anything that was done outside the home while the private sphere referred to the home. The public sphere was a man's domain while the private sphere was a woman's area. This made women more dependent and more exploited (Fiorenza, 1984:84-92). In the Gusii society, the public sphere was preserved for men while the private sphere was a woman's domain. Even when the missionaries introduced

formal education among the Gusii, boys were taken to school first before the girls could be considered, (Bogonko, 1977). This implies that the Abagusii prepared the boys for the public sphere first. The girls' domain was the home and therefore, they did not urgently require the missionary education.

The patriarchal ideology stresses male superiority and female inferiority and gender role stereotyping is the result. Iglitzin argues that a society is patriarchal when most of its members hold the following five attitudes: First, the gender division of labour reflects natural differences between women and men. For instance, men are associated with more physical strength than women. Second, women's identity comes through their relationship with men. She is a wife or a daughter of someone. Third, women achieve the highest fulfilment as wives and mothers regardless of other jobs outside the home. Fourth, women are childlike in behaviour and mode of thinking. Finally, women are apolitical. If given a choice women prefer the private sphere of the home and are content with leaving business and politics to men.

Iglitzin sees religion as one of the sources of the patriarchal ideology. The tenets of all major world religions including Christianity reflect the attitudes

and moral values of male priests and scribes who enunciated them. This view is also shared by Daly who sees the Christian Church as a strong oppressive patriarchal structure (Daly, 1973). Fiorenza says that Christianity turned out to be an oppressive patriarchal structure when it was adopted as the official Roman religion and more so when the church was being institutionalized (Fiorenza, 1983:76). The Adventist movement also approved of the leadership of women especially Ellen G. White and as time went by, it too changed. This study hopes to identify the reasons for this change. It is also necessary to find out the factors that influence the place and role of the Adventist women. These will be interpreted in the light of Feminist Liberation Theology.

1.8 Methodology

This study was conducted in two phases. The first phase involved field research while the second phase was mainly library work.

1.8.1 Data Collection

Three main methods were used in collecting data from the field. These were participant observation, oral interviews, and respondent questionnaires.

(a) Participant observation

We attended worship services in selected churches. This enabled us to observe the behaviour of the church members as the worship services were in progress. We were also able to identify the S.D.A. women who actively participated in church activities for interviewing. By using this method we were also able to assess the level of women's participation in church leadership and other activities.

(b) Oral interviews

Due to the population in most churches, some members were selected and interviewed either as individuals or in groups. Members of the Dorcas society and deaconesses were interviewed as groups. After a few group discussions however, it was realised that the women responded to the questions better as

individuals. Some also needed the assurance that their anonymity would be maintained in the work before they could respond to any questions. In every church that we visited, we also interviewed the church pastor, elders and some of the women who took up active roles during the Sabbath worship.

(c) Respondent questionnaires

Specific questionnaires were distributed to the members of the Dorcas society, deaconesses, pastors, the staff and students of Baraton University. It was hoped that by the use of these questionnaires we would get the view of many people. However, this was not the case as some of the questionnaires were never returned. It is only in Baraton University where the staff and students responded to the questions adequately and returned the questionnaires.

1.8.2 Sampling

Due to the time limit and financial constraints, we sampled out the churches in Nairobi and Gusii District. In Nairobi, the central church was visited. Then from the list of churches within Nairobi, every

tenth church was selected. This was to ensure that the choice of churches was a representative sample of the population we studied. As a result, we selected four churches namely; the Maxwell Church, Shauri Moyo S.D.A. Church, New Life Church and Umoja S.D.A. Church. We also interviewed departmental directors, the executive secretary and two female employees of the East African Union.

In Gusii, we restricted ourselves to Gusii district. Although at the time of the study the boundary between Gusii and Nyamira districts had not been clearly identified, the suggestion was that Gusii District would be made up of the following locations: Wanjare, South Mugirango Chache, Majoge Borabu, Bassi Chache, Bassi Borabu, Nyaribari Masaba, West Kitutu and Kisii town. The two main church stations which fall within this region, Nyachwa and Riokindo were visited. We also selected every tenth church from the list of churches in Gusii District. Out of the one hundred and thirty-eight churches, we selected fourteen churches for the study. Thus, the views expressed in this study are those of a representative sample of the church members in Gusii District.

some persons, two or three lines, before

1.8.3 Data Analysis

The data collected from the field were first classified according to their sources and coded. For each source, the data were further broken down into roles of women in the church, the home and the society, the attitudes towards women and the place of women in Adventism. Descriptive methods of data analysis and representation were used.

1.9 Problems Related to The Study

We encountered a number of problems in the course of the study. First, some of the questionnaires that were left at various churches have not been returned. This obviously reflects a gap in our information because some of the people to whom the questionnaires were sent hold key positions in the S.D.A. churches. It is important, however, to note that a majority of the people in the locations of the study expressed similar views concerning the place and role of women. Second, many of the S.D.A. Church members were quite conservative. They did not easily provide the required information. As a result, we had to visit some persons , two or three times, before getting any

information. Third, the funds available for the study were not enough. Finally, there does not seem to be enough well-researched literature on women in Kenya. Hence, most of the literature on women and liberation is from places like America and Britain. There is also inadequate literature on the S.D.A. Church in Kenya. For instance, it was hard to get clear records of the history and development of the S.D.A. Church from the time of its establishment up to 1940s. Therefore, we had to rely on what could be remembered by the eye witnesses who were still alive at the time of research.

sections:

- (i) The socio-political history of the Gusii
- (ii) The making of **CHAPTER TWO**
- (iii) The roles and status of women and men in the

TRADITIONAL GUSII SOCIETY AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN.

2.1 The Socio-political history of the Gusii community

2.0 Introduction

Gusii society is made up of seven sub-clans

namely: Nya. In order to understand the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church, it is necessary first to know the way of life in the Gusii community. (Gusii is

one of the communities in Kenya for whom Adventism has been very appealing). This will help us to differentiate between the trends that came with Western Adventist missionaries and the Gusii cultural practices which the missionaries propagated.

In an attempt to understand the place and role of women in the traditional Gusii society, we shall examine issues such as the structure of the society, child rearing practices, the socialization of women and men into their respective roles, the status of women and attitudes towards them that are held by the Gusii society. To achieve our purpose, this chapter is divided into the following subsections:

- (i) The socio-political set-up of the Gusii society;
- (ii) The making of women and men in Gusii society;
- (iii) The roles and status of women and men in the Gusii society.

2:1 The Socio-political Set-up of The Gusii society

Gusii society is made up of seven sub-ethnic groups namely; Nyaribari, Mobasi, Monchari, Mogirango, Kitutu, Mogisero and Machoge. Before the coming of the

Europeans, these sub-ethnic groups had no common chief. As Mayer observed:

The Gusii were extreme case of a tribe without rulers—a society of commoners without any ranking or status pretension... (1975:26).

These were socially organised along patrilineal system and often were patrilocal. The sub-ethnic groups were further divided into clans, sub-clans and homesteads. Each of these three social units increased in size and inclusiveness from the homestead to the whole Gusii nation. All these were referred to by the same term, *egesaku*, and they were composed of a group of people who recognized a common patrilineal ancestor and occupied a common territory. (Women were hardly regarded as members of an *egesaku*). In this study, the word *egesaku* will refer to a group of clans descended from the same ancestor and who occupy a common territory.

Clans are divided into homesteads (*chinyomba* singular *enyomba*) and each sub-clan is divided into homesteads. Every *omogusii* adult is, therefore, conscious of being a member of a clan, sub-clan and family or homestead. To get a clear picture of the socio-political set-up we shall consider the three

social units separately.

(i) The clan (Egesaku)

The clan was a central unit of social organization. It was a virtually autonomous political unit occupying a discrete territory which in the past was prepared to defend by force against any intruders. Even today clans are territorially defined. Each of them is associated with a certain area of which its people are, in a sense, the owners (Mayer, 1949:9). Thus, the land of the clan Abanyando - the descendants of onyando is referred to as Bonyando; meaning this land belongs to the Abanyando.

Clans were distinguished from other social units by three aspects: First of all, clans believed in a common agnatic descent from the founder, that is, clans people were children of one ancestor who gave his name to them all. Second, people from the same clan practise exogamous marriages. The rule of exogamy makes them members of one family whose inter-marriage is automatically ruled out. Third, the use of classificatory terms organizes clans people into one great family where every individual relates towards the other as sibling, parent, grandparent, child or grandchild, and mutual behaviour is affected

accordingly (Mayer, 1949:10).

Each clan had its own legal set-up, although no formal leadership positions existed at this level. Whenever there was a problem that affected the whole clan, elders of the clan came together in order to discuss and deliberate on possible solutions (elders were wealthy men with many wives and children). They were chosen by their people on the basis of their impartiality, character and wealth. One clan elder was normally selected to preside over the discussion. Several issues could be tackled by all the elders. The presiding elder did not necessarily make all decisions at the meeting. However, when there was a serious disagreement amongst the elders, his opinion was sought. His opinion was respected and adopted as the solution to the problem.

When clan elders met, women were not allowed to participate in the discussions. For, according to the Abagusii, "women never ruled" (Magucha, 0.I 10.5.91). Women were never even consulted when decisions affecting the whole clan were made. This was men's responsibility, namely the elders of the clan. This portrays the inferior social status women held in the clan, for nobody ever sought their opinions or views and yet they were part of the clan.

(ii) The sub-clan (Enyomba)

Clans were divided into sub-clans-chinyomba. Usually, sub-clans were identified by a male founder and each segment of the sub-clan claimed descent from different homesteads of the founder. The sub-clan consists of a male founder, his wives married sons, their wives, and their children. Sub-clans usually grew into clans, hence Mayer's description of sub-clans as "...clans in the making" (Mayer, 1949:11).

Sub-clans acted as separate socio-political units in most respects. Issues involving the sub-clan members were usually solved by the sub-clan elders. And the decisions made by the sub-clan elders were only respected within the sub-clan. For instance, if there was a land dispute, all the sub-clan heads came together to discuss the issue. They identified the rightful owner of the land in question then they authorised him to use it as he wished and at the same time they advised the other party to keep off it. Such a ruling was normally respected.

Women hardly participated in decision-making at the sub-clan level. They did not have to attend the meetings, and if they did, they sat separately at a distance, and quietly listened to the proceedings. They

were hardly consulted for anything. If for instance a woman lodged a complaint against her husband, she was asked to air her complaint to the sub-clan elders. On finishing, she went to sit with the other women while awaiting judgement. The sub-clan elders discussed the issue among themselves in low tones until they arrived at a conclusion. Even if the husband was in the wrong as in cases where he battered his wife in a bid to prove that he is a man or because of the popular Gusii belief that if a man does not beat his wife, she would become domineering (Nyakundi, 0.1. 5-5-91), the elders would not tell his wife. Instead, they blamed the woman and advised her to rectify her behaviour. They would then send her home. The other women too would be advised to go to their homes. After all the women had gone, the man was told that he had actually mistreated his wife. He was advised to treat her fairly next time or else the elders would take stern action against him. According to Nyakundi (0.1. 5.5.91), the elders never showed the complaining woman that she was on the right because she would despise her husband and this would greatly lower the status of a man in the homestead. Thus, even at the sub-clan level women hardly participated in the discussions that took place. The sub-clan elders hardly sought their opinions and even if they aired

their views, the elders simply ignored them.

(iii) The Homestead

A homestead is a basic residential unit which consists of a man, his wife and their unmarried sons and daughters. It should, however, be noted that a man would have more than one wife since to the Abagusii, polygyny was viewed as the "ideal" form of marriage (cf. Levine, 1966:21).

The homestead was headed by omogaka Bw'omachie - head of the homestead. The homestead head was always a man as implied by the word omogaka which is also used as a title for an adult male. The head of the homestead was, to a large extent, an autonomous authority in matters within the domestic sphere. He was an authoritarian head, for as Ochieng' observed:

...the powers of the homestead head over his wives, sons and daughters were great. His orders regarding the whole range of activities within his homestead were commands which had to be obeyed. To back up his authority the homestead head had the benefit of traditional prescription which made it a taboo for sons and daughters to disobey their fathers who had the powers of the curse (1974:198).

Relationships within the homestead could be structured in terms of dominance and submission. The members of the homestead had to submit to the authority of the head. The homestead head was responsible for law enforcement and social mobility. Therefore, all disputes and rule violations arising within the homestead were handled by the homestead head unless he appealed to outside authority as in cases of incest.

The homestead head could marry as many wives as he wished. None of his other wives or even his sons could stop him from taking another wife. The only obstacle could be if he did not have the cattle and goats which were necessary to pay for the new wife's dowry. The number of animals payable as dowry was negotiable although the least number one could pay was six cows, one bull and two goats. Marriage and dowry gave the husband exclusive sexual right over the wife and the custody of all the children she gave birth to (Magucha, 0.1.10.5.91). Some Western scholars have argued that the practice of paying dowry to a girl's parents is one of the factors that indicated and even led to the subordination of women in the African society. For instance, Reed, who wrote on the Veso Sakalava of Madagascar, argues:

...wife came more and more under the dominance of her husband who had paid dowry for her (1975:420).

This is also true for the Abagusii, for, through marriage and dowry, Gusii women were recruited into the lineages of their husbands. And, since marriage in the Gusii society was always exogamous, wives were considered outsiders, who could never be trusted with the secrets of the clan (see pg.144). The missionaries saw dowry as the buying of a wife. This impression was strengthened by the fact that the number of wives a man had was an indication of his wealth (Welbourn, 1965:50).

A woman in the Gusii society was expected to obey her husband at all times. She had to consult him before making a decision and to quickly respond to his demands for food and drink. She also had to be hospitable to his guests. In their description of a good wife, a number of Gusii men were of the opinion that a good wife was one who always respected and obeyed her husband. Below is a selection of some of the responses:

"a woman should never supersede her husband. She should even restrain herself to respect her husband" (Ombuyi, O.I.16-5-91).

"a good wife always responds quickly to her husband's demands" (Magucha, O.I. 10-5-91)."

"a good wife responds even when her

husband coughs" (Ombati, O.I. 5-5-91).

Thus, women are there to serve, and assist their men. While in the field, we observed that Gusii women readily responded to the needs of their husbands but, in our view they have no option. They are immensely conditioned by the patriarchal society. As Figes observed:

Women are totally trapped by patriarchy and are therefore forced to submit to men in order to survive. They are deluded, tricked and bewildered by patriarchal culture, science and even the language of the patriarchy (1970:149).

The Gusii women have been socialised to be "willing servants" to their husbands. Another aspect that demonstrates the authority of the family head was the practice of wife-beating. This was a common and socially accepted practice. When a rebuked wife acknowledged her mistake, she went back to her parents for a goat which she presented to her husband to effect reconciliation. Although one may argue that the woman was beaten for her mistakes, it is noteworthy that the situation was hardly reversed, that is, a woman would not beat a man. In fact, a man with a domineering wife was deemed as weak. The Gusii society therefore, expected a woman to be weak and subordinate

to her husband.

In summary, a "good" homestead head was one who exercised total authority over his wife or wives and children. He was owed obedience, deference and loyalty by his adult sons regardless of how arbitrary he was in decision-making and leadership. Even if the homestead head exploited his children, they would not question as this would be regarded as disobedience.

A "good" head also ensured that members of the homestead performed their roles, since the homestead was a multi-functional unit performing economic, political, and military functions. But how did one become a good family head? How did women and men know their roles? To answer these questions we shall look at how the Gusii society made women and men. The experiences individuals went through as members of the Gusii society were a forum from which they learned their roles in society and what was expected of them. This is our concern in the next section.

2.2 The Making of Women and Men in The Gusii Society

In Gusii, procreation was considered essential in marriage. Wives and husbands shared and still share a strong desire to have children. Essentially, parents

wished they could have both boys and girls as both genders were valuable in different ways. Girls were valued because when they grew up they would be married off and the dowry paid would enrich the family. For, as Levine observed:

Respective marriage requires the payment of cattle and goats to the bride's father, in number and quality satisfactory to him (1966:41).

The more the cows a family had, the richer that family was and consequently, the more influential a family was. Boys were important as they had a permanent stake in the welfare of the homestead. When asked which gender of children they would be more content with, most informants preferred the male. Women especially felt that a girl would always go away (in marriage) while a boy would bury them, take care of them at old age, bring a wife to help in cultivation, build houses and mend fences. This is the same idea expressed by Mayer in his book The lineage principle in Gusii society who argues:

daughters do not make egesaku (clan) because they marry out of one's lineage and are 'lost.' (1949:20).

One's character as an adult is largely determined by the child-rearing process one has undergone. The environment goes a long way in developing and modifying the hereditary traits in every child. In view of this, Levine noted:

...childhood is not unrelated to adulthood. Indeed, adults see in the behaviour of individual children foreshadowing of their adult characters; a troublesome child will become 'bad' while an obedient child who is restrained, responsible, and respectful to his parents' wishes will turn out to be a 'good person' (1966:138).

Boys and girls were brought up differently due to the varying roles each gender was expected to play as an adult in society. We shall therefore discuss the child-rearing practices for boys and girls separately for through these practices, the Abagusii made women and men. Our analysis will exclude the period before a child was weaned, because character training of a child took place largely in the years between weaning and initiation.

(i) Boys

Before circumcision, a boy was called omoisia uncircumcised boy. The behaviour patterns of a child

had to be checked from very early, immediately after weaning. It was the contention of most parents that a child who could walk and talk required punishment in order to learn the correct pattern of behaviour.

If after weaning, for instance, a boy tried to follow or cry for his mother, he was beaten and threatened until the boy stopped this behaviour. This was meant to discourage the boy from further dependence on the mother. Such dependence or a close relationship between a boy and his mother could be very disturbing to the father or whoever adult male was closest to the family, because, the Abagusii sustain the belief that women and men belong to socially different groups. Therefore, they must present different images, and never be seen to come too close, neither literally or figuratively, nor in the sense of imitation or of bodily closeness. Customs and taboos spelt out what boys could do and what they were expected to avoid. Through these avoidances, the special position of men in the Gusii society was being affirmed and 'realised'. As Mayer observed:

parents. Adults would

them: Men were set apart in emphasised ways, both in their general capacity as males, and their kinship capacities as fathers and husbands(1975:263).

were, rather than

A young boy had to learn men's occupations which were hunting, herding, defence of the nation, and cutting down trees. He began by herding small animals, namely, calves, sheep and goats. He was also allowed to follow his father to the fields and the forests where he went to hunt or cut trees. The boy could also hunt small animals such as rabbits (Bogonko, 1977:63). By associating with the father, a boy was exposed to the right image - he physically saw what was expected of him and practically learned his chores. Besides, associating with his father helped the boy to learn how to be omosacha. (The term is used to refer to a social category to which the Gusii initiated males belong).

Parents trained boys in responsibility and obedience. When they grew older, they would be entrusted with wealth which they would have to take care. As we noted earlier, boys were entrusted with the care of small animals. If these animals went astray or destroyed crops the, boys were severely punished so that they could act more responsibly next time. Boys were also expected to run errands for their parents. Adults would never do anything for themselves if they could order children to do it. Children would be ordered to pick up objects even if such objects were, further away from them than from the adults.

Being omoisia was regarded as the most inferior status in a man's whole life cycle (Levine, 1966:41). The only way to come out of this status was by undergoing circumcision. The rituals surrounding the circumcision event were aimed at making a boy a responsible adult. Attributes that were expected of an adult male were therefore instilled in the young boys. These were actually tested during the preparation for the circumcision event and afterwards in seclusion (Magucha, O.I. 10-5-91) as we shall see later in this section. The circumcision event and its attendant rites also conferred upon individuals full membership status in the Gusii community. Through circumcision a boy attained the status of a man with its powers, duties, responsibilities and privileges. There were several stages in the event all of which were very important.

A night before the physical operation was performed, the novice had to choose a sponsor from among the initiated but unmarried boys of the same family. He had his hair shaved. He was treated roughly, even beaten up but he was supposed to endure all the pain. For he would soon be a man and therefore, he had to avoid crying like a woman. (The Gusii society

saw shedding tears as a sign of weakness, such weakness was associated with women). The novices from one community spent the night in one hut. They started the journey to the circumciser's place very early so as to get there before dawn. On the way, they stopped by a river and the novices had a bath.

Once at the circumciser's place a novice was led to a special tree. He stood with his head against the tree in readiness for the operation. The circumciser knelt before the boy to perform the operation. The older boys and men around aimed spears and clubs as the boy's head shouting continuously throughout the operation that the boy would be killed if he moved or showed any sign of pain.

After the operation, the novice was escorted home amid songs and dances but, he did not go into the seclusion hut straight away for the hut had to be prepared. First, a fire was lit. This fire marked the beginning of seclusion period and was not supposed to go off until the end of the period - a month or two later. Second, a special kind of grass, esuguta, was stuck into the floor of the hut which was not to be allowed to wither. After these preparations, the boys were led into the hut. Usually, more than one boy would be secluded in a hut so that they could share the

responsibility of caring for the fire and watering the esuguta. The sponsor helped them in doing this but since he did not stay in the seclusion hut throughout, it was the novices who were expected to keep the fire burning and the esuguta growing.

The first and second night in seclusion were uneventful. But on the third night, a special ceremony called esubo was carried out. The night was marked by a lot of singing and dancing in the novices' hut. The novices recited several rules of conduct, duties, rights and obligations that were deemed manly. For instance, they swore never to sleep in their mothers' huts again or have any association with uncircumcised boys and girls. Then, they were forced to eat a number of caustic and nauseating substances which the older boys told them were delicious foods. Symbolically, this meant that life as an adult male which the boys had just joined was difficult, sometimes even painful but as men they had to accept it. Later, they were threatened with being eaten by some big animal called, enyabububu; they heard the noises, (these noises were made by blowing long horns), attributed to the animals. Soon after, it was announced that the animal was vomiting the novices. This was a way of teaching the boys to be courageous.

Towards the end of the night, the novices were beaten with nettles, made to pull up pegs near the fire with their teeth and had their fingers twisted in long bows. This was quite painful but the boys were supposed to endure it. They were told to call their mothers, but if they did, they were thoroughly beaten up. It was then repeated to them many times that they were now men who did not have to rely on their mothers for anything (Nyakundi, O.I. 5-5-91). The boys, therefore, learned the need to be independent. They were also sternly warned to keep initiation rituals secret from women.

After seclusion, the novice went through several ceremonies, the most significant of which was the anointing of the boy's forehead with white earth, ekebuse. This was done by the father who promised to respect him in return. It was quite clear that the mother was omitted from the picture. In fact, throughout the events surrounding circumcision, the boy was warned against any familiarity with the mother in case he acquired feminine tendencies or started behaving like a woman (Magucha, O.I. 10-5-91). This creates the impression that there is something wrong with the genus of womanhood from which men have to be kept off.

Besides, circumcision and its attendant rites elevated the male novice over and above the genus of womanhood. In our view, this is why the male novice is only identified with the father and the two pledge to respect one another. This possibly implies that women in Gusii society are not worthy of such respect, for as implied by this practice, the novice has no obligation to respect his mother like the father whom he has to pledge to respect. This is supported by Levine's observation that:

Mother-son relations by contrast with father-son are more informal but involve sex avoidance. Mother and son may argue freely without fear of offending each other so long as obscene expressions are not used. A son may respect his mother but is not differential to her, and her interaction has a relaxed, light-hearted quality that is never between father and son (Levine, 1966:28).

This relationship is in marked contrast to a respect for one's elders male and female, which indicates a shared dignity between parents as well as between generations.

(ii) Girls

Girls were expected to go through a genital operation called clitoridectomy. Before undergoing this operation, the girls were known as ebisagane, uncircumcised girls. This was a very low status in a girls' life cycle and from the time they realised this, girls desired to go through the clitoridectomy operation and the rituals surrounding it. This would give them higher status, respect, responsibilities and privileges associated with womanhood. Training girls for their roles as women in the Gusii society, however, started soon after they were weaned by their mothers. Any baby born in the family was normally left in the care of young girls while the mothers went about their daily chores. Practically, therefore, the girls were learning one of their future roles-care for the little ones. They were also expected to learn other women's duties such as grinding eleusine, drawing water, fetching firewood and cooking. Girls would also follow their mothers to the garden and with a small hoe egesiria - they learned to turn the ground (Bogonko, 1977:64).

Girls were believed to mature early, so by the age of eight or nine years, they were ready for initiation into womanhood. They were however, expected to practically show that they were ready for the operation by demonstrating womanly competence. Some harvested whole fields by themselves, kept the houses stocked with firewood and carried water from the river in large pots. The mothers were expected to interpret these actions as demonstrations of readiness for initiation and they actually prepared for the event, (such preparation involved inviting guests and planning what they would eat on the day for the physical operation).

On the day of the physical operation, the girls woke up very early and asked their mothers to give them the fee for the operator. Normally, the mothers pinched them and told them they were too small. This was a test of their determination and readiness. If the girls insisted, they left the houses with their mothers and went to the operator's home. At the home, the girls (one at a time) sat on a stone, orotuba, they were tightly held by the other women. Their eyes were also covered so that they could not see anything.

earlier in this chapter.

This was done so that the novice could see neither the operator nor her tools. This is because the Abagusii viewed women as weak and a frightened lot who would either scream or run away at the sight of the operator and her tools. Since screaming or running away from the operator ashamed the novices' family, the Abagusii preferred to hold the girls tightly so that they would not struggle. This is because, accidents were more likely to occur if the girl moved. This would result in serious mutilation of the girl's genitals (Sanderson, 1981:25).

Once the novices' eyes had been covered and their legs were held apart, the operator - *omosori* - knelt in front of the girls and with her fingers held the tip of the clitoris and cut it off with a razor blade (in the past, a special knife was used for the operation).

When the operation was in progress, the girls were not expected to cry or show any sign of pain. They too had to show their bravery and readiness to face their adult responsibilities with some courage although this could not be compared with what was expected from their male counterparts as we saw earlier in this chapter.

The Abagusii trimmed the tip of the girls' clitoris in order to control their sexuality. The Gusii society strongly believes that girls would be promiscuous if the clitoris was left untrimmed. The reason why the Gusii society tried to control women's sexuality is clearly brought out in Sanderson's view that:

In male dominated societies there exists a widely held notion of the strong, irresponsible and irresistible force of female sexuality. This notion may be held by both men and women. It suggests that a woman left alone without external coercion to guard her 'honour' will act impulsively and for immediate gratification. In traditional societies where female chastity is an essential element of family honour, this view may present a constant and worrying threat to which genital mutilation may be one of the many repressive responses (1981:51).

Clitoridectomy further demonstrates how oppressive to women the Gusii culture is. However, it does not obliterate desire for sexual intercourse. The reduction of the sensitive areas of the genitals may reduce sexual pleasure, and as a result, lack of sexual gratification is common (Steinem, 1983:293). Perhaps this is why it is universally reported that some Gusii wives cry during coitus while others make a 'token' objection before yielding to their husbands' advances. This is clearly expressed by Levine who

observed that during coitus:

...some women cry that they were getting hurt... The men are always mystified as to whether they enjoy it. But wives in polygamous homes complain when their husbands neglect them... (1966:54).

This implies that the women yearn for coitus but because their genitals have been mutilated, they hardly enjoy the affair. This in our view is total infringement on the basic human rights of the Gusii women. In this culture, married women are expected to be sexually active whether they enjoy coitus or not. Even when the women cry or object to coitus, men still force them into it (Levine, 1966:53). This reduces women into mere sexual objects for they have no right to say no to their husbands nor do they enjoy coitus. Further, genital mutilation involves a degree of irreparable and unnecessary loss.

When all girls had gone through the operation, they were escorted home by women who danced and sang wildly. An outsider would view these songs and dances as obscene. Their importance, however, lay in the meaning. Levine, for instance, observed:

The use of obscene language, expressions of desire for prohibited sexual relationships, public mention of the sex act

and its mechanics, immodest exposure and hip movements- all of these ordinary shocking acts are expected and performed by women leading the novices back from the clitoridectomy operation. Another notable aspect of women's behaviour is playing of the male sex role: holding sticks which represent phalluses, singing songs of sex from the man's point of view... (1966:171).

Levine, thus failed to bring out the meaning of the songs, dances and instead concentrated on describing the obscenity and rowdiness of the whole event. Despite all these, however, the girls were being prepared for sexuality which was going to be a characteristic feature of their later life. The girls had changed their status from ebisagane - the uncircumcised girls to abaiseke - circumcised girls, a status within which they had to prepare to leave their home in marriage. It was being impressed upon them that they had attained the status of womanhood and they had been sexually active.

Each girl was led to her mother's hut for seclusion. As she walked on, the women surrounded her so that no man could see her. While in seclusion in her mother's hut, the father kept off this hut for as long as the seclusion lasted. During seclusion, the girl was given a lot of food so that she could heal faster. She received visitors, mostly women who with her mother

taught her what was expected of her as a woman. The training she got was supposed to help her know how to show respect to the men in her own society and that into which she was going to get married. She learned the ways of womanhood. Here sexual relationships were central. Preparation of food, care of the husband and children were also emphasised (Kemunto, 0.I 10-5-91).

An evening before the end of the seclusion period, a cattle pen was symbolically made using cow dung. Particular plants called chintamame and chintobo were placed all round it. Usually this cattle pen was made by girls while they sang the following song repeatedly:

bomame mbokogita mbokoumerania
botata mbokogita mbokoumerania.

The song meant that the novice would now get married and the dowry paid for her would bring back home what the father paid for her mother (Magucha, 0.2. 10.5.91). When the girls had finished making the cattle pen, a boy walked out through *egesieri kia bweri*, the door the novice would use the next day, and kicked this cattle pen destroying it. (On completion of the seclusion period, a girl got out of the house through *egesieri kia bweri* - this door was normally used by outsiders or

visitors and the homestead head's eldest son). This implied that the girl was now ready to get married and that lots of animals would be given to her family, therefore, the cattle pen in the home would have to be destroyed and a bigger one built. She used the door - egesieri kia bweri, because soon she would get married and cease to be part of her birth clan. She would, therefore, become an outsider.

On the day marking the end of the seclusion period, the girl was smeared with river clay, ebundo, on her forehead. She was then taken to the river and bathed thoroughly. This is because to the Abagusii, a wound had to be kept dry in order to heal so the novices were not allowed to bathe until the end of the seclusion period. She was then smeared with oil and given new clothes and beads. It is important to note that a girl was not mistreated during the whole event. She was also held by other women during the physical operation unlike the male novice. This is because of the inherent weakness and cowardice that the Abagusii associated with women (Magucha, I.O.10-91). She was cut off her father, but had to be with the mother throughout the period. Hence, the girl was identified and matched with her lot whom she was joining after going through initiation.

A lot of attention was also paid to her sexual relations unlike the male novice. Hence, clitoridectomy and its attendant rites prepared a girl for sexual relations while circumcision was aimed at making a boy a responsible and persevering adult. And as an adult, he was entitled to some responsibilities, privileges, duties and rights which he did not have before. Thus, we can conclude that the Abagusii prepared their daughters only for sexuality and domestic duties, while they prepared their sons for responsibilities and duties in the larger society. As a result, a woman was always expected to be in the home or in its vicinity while a man was under no obligation to stay at home.

In conclusion, through clitoridectomy and circumcision, the society successfully engraved the mark of womanhood and manhood respectively on the individuals concerned. This rite also marked the end of childhood and entry into maturity life. Novices, therefore, emerged out of seclusion as women and men, ready to take up new responsibilities and duties and also to enjoy the privileges associated with this status. The Gusii society prescribed the social roles of women and men very clearly as is shown in chapter two. These roles influenced the place of women and men in society as we shall see in a later section.

2:3 The Role and Status of Women and Men in The Gusii
Society

Before the coming of missionaries, the division of roles was based on age and gender. During this period, the Abagusii practised subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry. Crops such as eleusine, bananas, sweet potatoes and beans were grown. The animals kept were cattle, sheep and goats. Cattle keeping was very important and in many cases overshadowed cultivation. A large herd of cattle was a sure sign of wealth. As Bogonko observed:

A home without a cow was a very poor home. So every man yearned to own herds of cattle (1977:40).

As mentioned in chapter two (2:2), children grew up learning (by doing) what they were expected to do in the future as adults. Both genders had respective roles to play, these were complementary and together they sustained social life. Gender roles were, however, rarely exchanged especially among adults. Gender roles were also viewed differently by the Abagusii.

As a general rule, the women folk took the less prestigious routine chores while men took roles that were highly valued by the society. In some cases, even

when the work done was basically similar, more value was attached to what the men did than to what women did. For instance, both men and women made baskets for different uses. Men made emenyoncho which were used for storing grains while the women made ebiee which were used as serving dishes. It was considered a much bigger achievement to make emenyoncho, than it was to make ebiee. Hence, after the men had completed making emenyoncho there was a beer party while the making of ebiee by the women always went unnoticed.

Like in many other African societies, such as Luhya and Luo, there were many roles assigned to women in the Gusii society. They were responsible for a greater share of the agricultural work. Their duties and responsibilities in the field included heavy work such as removing felled trees, sowing seeds, selecting seeds for sowing, weeding, harvesting, storing crops as well as processing them for immediate consumption. Gusii women also fed the children, fetched water from the streams, gathered firewood, milked cows and, prepared the family meals. This implies that women worked throughout the day and everyday for their roles were very many and repetitious.

The roles of men were hunting, herding, raiding other clans to get cattle, defending the clan, building

houses, making baskets, mending fences and clearing virgin land for cultivation. All these masculine roles were occasional and Abagusii regarded them to be too strenuous for women to perform. Hence, according to this society, men were assigned the above roles because the roles were very difficult or very heavy, and therefore, required the skill and strength of men. Thus, to the Abagusii, women were weak people who were to be excluded from roles that the society regarded as difficult or strenuous.

Men's roles were more prestigious than women's roles. Thus, animal husbandry was more recognized than cultivation. In describing the importance of a cow, Bogonko says:

A cow was the giver of meat, blood, dung, oil, mattress, a wife...(1977:40).

In short, a cow made life worth living. No such description was given to any of the crops the women cultivated. This did not mean that the crops were not important. In fact, the society needed them for their daily nourishment, but the Abagusii had a tendency for placing more value on male roles.

From the foregoing discussion on the roles of women, we can assess the status of women, among the

Abagusii. To achieve this, we shall critically examine some of the attitudes towards women and their roles. What is said about women will also be an important pointer to their status.

In an earlier section (2:1), we discussed the socio-political setup of the Gusii society. We observed that the smallest social unit in Gusii was the homestead, but that what happened within the homestead was reflected in the clan and sub-clan levels. Essentially, the homestead head made all the decisions and he demanded obedience from all the members. The members of the homestead had to quickly respond to his demands even if they were being misused or exploited. Under no circumstances could a woman become a homestead head. Women were allowed little social interaction with men. There was no occasion when women and men sat together to share a meal or a drink. If all had to drink, their beer had to be served in two separate pots and, usually the smaller pot was given to the women. This clearly shows the inferior status women occupied in the Gusii society. Women were to be protected from getting drunk because they would become irresponsible.

Sometimes men sent their wives or even daughters to go and do corporate work. It was an accepted

practice that after the women had worked, their husbands went to drink and eat the food served by the host. In such cases, men only gave the women some brew in a container so that they could go and sip outside. The women could not sit and enjoy the drink they had worked for. Even at home, a man and his wife hardly had meal together. The food was always served separately - the husband's ugali in one dish, and that for the children and their mother in another. Thus, the husband had his share alone while the wife shared her portion with the children. If there were circumcised boys in the home, they could occasionally share a meal with the father although they too had to be served separately. This practice was meant to emphasize the special position of men in the Gusii society. Through being set apart, they were "created in their own image", as a very special and elevated kind of people. Mayer, commenting on the Gusii man observed:

He had authority and was respected because he was set apart..., (1975: 264).

This special treatment therefore, made the Gusii men feel very important persons. On the other hand, the mother, her daughters, (whether they had undergone clitoridectomy or not) had their food in the kitchen.

Since the Abagusii were fond of classifying and drawing demarcations between individuals in society, we can conclude that the status of women and children in the Gusii society was equal. This is why they were not specially set apart like the men.

The status of women could not even be compared with that of the circumcised boys. The latter were already socially mature and therefore, belonged to a higher status. This is why they had their food served separately of with their fathers'.

From the above discussion, we can conclude that the Gusii society assigned specific roles to both men and women. However, this society devalued women's roles as much as possible while elevating those roles that were performed by men. Thus, a woman did not gain a higher status by performing her roles in the society. Her strength was normally exploited as she performed her day-to-day chores. Yet, she could be beaten very often and humiliated by her husband. We can conclude then that women in the Gusii society were victims of oppression and their status was much lower than that of the men. This is because the Gusii society is patriarchally organized, hence the place and role of women is defined by men.

CHAPTER THREE

3:0 ADVENTIST MISSION EDUCATION

In the previous chapter, we looked at the social-political organisation of Gusii society. We also looked at the making of women and men, gender roles, and the attitude towards these roles. We showed the status of Gusii women in relation to men before the coming of the S.D.A. missionaries.

In this chapter, we shall consider the arrival and the implementation of Adventism in Gusii from 1911, the year the Adventist missionaries made an attempt to start a mission station in Gusii. We shall also look at education as a tool for evangelization of the Abagusii. This is because of the missionaries' contention that the evangelization of the African peoples could only successfully be done by the Africans themselves (Ogutu, n.d.:81). Therefore, the missionaries endeavoured to start schools through which they would evangelize as well as train evangelists. The schools, however, did not only train evangelists, they also affected the status of women and men in Gusii.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss Adventist missionary education and its effect on the

status of Adventist women. To achieve this objective, the present chapter is divided into the following sub-sections:

- (i) The coming of Adventism to Gusii land;
- (ii) The aims and objectives of Adventist missionary education;
- (iii) Female Adventist missionary education;
- (iv) Developments at Kamagambo from 1933 to 1990;
- (v) Ministerial training
- (vi) Implications of female Adventist missionary education.

3:1 The coming of Adventism to Gusii land

The first Adventist missionaries landed in Mombasa in 1905. They travelled by rail to Nairobi and then Kisumu. They made no effort to start mission work in the said towns as other missionary Societies such as the Muslim Society and the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) had already established themselves in these areas. From Kisumu, the missionaries crossed the Nyanza Gulf on a motor boat and landed in Ogang'o area (near Kendu Bay). With the permission of the Luo elders

in the area, the missionaries pitched their tents. Soon they started asking for land on which they would build a mission station (Okeyo, 1988:4).

These missionaries were: a Canadian born, Pastor Carscallen and his wife, and, a black man Peter, Nyambo who arrived from Britain. With the help of E.N.Enns, a German Adventist missionary in Tanganyika (Tanzania), they started the first mission station at Gendia. The missionaries felt that Gendia was a convenient place as it was near the Nyanza Gulf (Lake Victoria), then the only means of communication to Kisumu and elsewhere. They built a church out of wood and grass, an office and some mission houses. To evangelize, a language for communication had to be sought. Pastor Carscallen felt it could be easier for them to learn the Luo language than it could have been for the Joluo to learn English. Therefore, Carscallen and his wife embarked on learning Luo, the language of the Luo. Soon they were able to speak to people successfully. Everyday the missionaries walked from home to home to preach to the people and to invite them to worship at the church.

By 1906, a number of young men and women had been attracted to the mission station. Once these young people identified with the missionaries, they left their homes and stayed at the mission station so

that they would not change their minds. The Joluo fathers were particularly sceptical about their daughters staying at the mission. They felt that if their daughters continued staying at the mission station, they would stop practising the Joluo customs and start adopting new customs such as eating chicken ((Okeyo,1988:12).

Pastor Carscallen, was worried that the Joluo fathers might come for their daughters at night. As a precaution, he put up a two-storeyed building at the mission station. The ground floor was used as a classroom while the one up-stairs was the bedroom for the girls. To go up-stairs, these girls used a ladder. Every night after the girls had gone to sleep this ladder was removed and kept (Mosi, 0.1.16.5.91).

Mrs. Carscallen was in charge of the girls at Gendia Mission. She taught them how to read and write. The girls were also taught some Bible doctrines after which they were baptized.

These girls were then encouraged to choose their marriage partners from among the mission boys. The husbands paid good dowry to their parents. The missionaries then organized church wedding ceremonies for the mission boys and girls (Olweny, 0.1.16.5.91). This encouraged other parents to let their daughters to go

to the mission station.

In 1907, Pastor Carscallen was joined by J.D. Baker and his wife. Baker opened a new station at Wire Hill, fifteen miles from Gendia (S.D.A. Encyclopedia, 1976:730). Later, other missionaries were sent to Kenya by the British East African Union to help the former missionaries in the work of evangelization. Among them were I.R. Evanson and Mr. and Mrs. Morse.

From then on, these missionaries started expanding their influence to other parts of South Nyanza and the neighbouring Gusii District. It is not clear in which year the first missionaries established the first mission station at Nyanchwa in Kisii (S.D.A. Encyclopedia, 1976:730; Amayo, 1973:102). It is, however, accepted that it was between 1911 and 1913, that the District Commissioner of South Kavirondo allocated the Adventist mission some land in Kisii to build an S.D.A. mission ("South Kavirondo Annual Reports", 1908-1912).

Perhaps the reason for these variations is the fact that the Abagusii were not friendly with the missionaries at the beginning, and they would not be, since in 1904 and 1908, the British imperialists had mercilessly butchered the Abagusii and looted a lot of their property. All these incidents were still fresh in the minds of the people. Thus, whenever the

missionaries put up a structure at Nyanchwa, it was destroyed by the Abagusii and the trend continued until 1913.

In 1914, the first World War broke out. This further delayed the work of the missionaries among the Abagusii. This is because the missionaries were taken to a safety camp at Maseno where they stayed until the end of the war in 1918. During war time, the mission stations were either closed or left under some local converts (Okeyo, 1988:16).

In 1918, L.E.A. Lane assisted by a Luo worker-Yakobo Olwa re-opened Nyanchwa station. They built a school since it was quite clear to them that the church had to go hand in hand with the school for effective evangelization (Ochieng', 1974:244).

In 1921, a new group of missionaries came to Kenya. Among them was G.A.S. Madgwik who opened Kendu Mission Hospital in 1925. He was assisted by two nurses, Nielsen and Oslén. Other women in this group of missionaries were Mrs. Bartlet, her daughter Marger and Grace Clarke. These women played a notable role in the implementation of Adventism among the Joluo and Abagusii. For instance, Mrs. Carscallen learned the Luo language faster than her husband. She then taught him dholuo and sometimes acted as his interpreter. She also

organized the Joluo women at Gendia into prayer groups and taught them how to cook, keep clean and care for children. On the Sabbath day, she taught the children Bible classes (Mosi 0.1.16.5.91). Besides, Mrs. Carscallen was in charge of the Joluo girls who joined the mission station.

The contributions of each of the other missionary women in early Adventism was shallowly recorded in the historical records of the S.D.A. Church. In fact, as Beach noticed, the contributions of women in the development of Adventism have hardly been recorded in the past (1976:2). He argued that after going through the records of the church in America, it was as if there were no women after Ellen G.White. However, after searching through minutes taken in meetings and old magazines, he realized that there were many women who dedicated their lives to the development of Adventism. The work of the white women affected the role of the women in Gusii and the other parts of Kenya as we shall see later.

As we have already noted, the S.D.A. missionaries built a church and also started a school. Education was one of the treasures that the missionaries brought to the African. Welbourn has argued that a lasting contribution of the churches in raising the status of

women has been through education (1965:25). How true this observation is with regard the S.D.A. in Kenya is discussed in the latter chapters.

3:2:0 The General Aims and Objectives of Adventist
Missionary Education

From the early parts of the 19th century, the pioneer of Adventist movement, Ellen G. White saw in education a means of achieving the S.D.A. Churches' mission in the world. Since then, the S.D.A. decided to participate in the work of Christian education. The leaders of the S.D.A. organization have always pleaded with the believers to do their best in the establishment of schools of their own. They should not depend on the schools operated by state or nation. This is because the secular schools, and the non-Christian institutions are not safe as they are conducted within the framework of philosophies which are slant, and at the same time repugnant to the principles on which Christianity was built (Amayo, 1973:32).

White observed that education as conceived by the world was narrow and therefore, inadequate to fulfil the purpose for which Christians were called

into existence. She stated that true education had to prepare one for both the present life and the life to come. Based on this, she defined education as:

The harmonious development of the physical, mental and spiritual powers of individuals which will fit them for service on earth and greater wider service in the world to come (White, 1923:141).

The duty of Christians is to love and serve God, to love and serve all human beings. Hence, Adventist education was to prepare the youth to serve God and other human beings during their entire lifetime.

Following the teaching of the founder of Adventism, the missionaries who came to Kenya endeavoured to start schools along with the mission station and churches. They also sent the early converts to the villages to start schools and churches. The objectives of the schools started in Kenya were, however, different from those started by G. White. We shall discuss why and how the objectives were different in the next section (3:2:1).

Consequently, the educational work
 imagination. As Anderson observed

3:2:1 General Aims and Objectives of Adventist Missionary
Education in Kenya.

Unlike America and Europe, Kenya did not have any formal schools on the eve of Adventism. The missionaries were, therefore, faced with a task not only of laying a foundation for Adventist Christian Education, but also a formal education which was otherwise unknown to the local people. It was their duty to spell out the aims and objectives of such an education. Keeping in mind the differences between the literate African societies where the missionaries had come from and the non-literate societies, the missionaries modified the purpose of education as started by Ellen G. White to suit the circumstances they found in Kenya.

The early missionaries and converts worked as teachers-cum-evangelists. This was an unfortunate situation for most of the missionaries had not learned any methods of teaching. A majority of them had little education beyond elementary missionary training. Consequently, the educational work tended to lack imagination. As Anderson observed:

The training they (missionaries) gave was often very superficial and initially included a heavy emphasis on rote learning, aimed primarily at religious dogma and simple literacy (1970:17).

Thus, many missionary teachers chose to use the new African desire for education to force Africans into adopting what they felt was the Christian way of life.

When pastor Carscallen arrived at Gendia in 1906, he started a mission station within which there was a church and a school. This was the trend in all the areas where Adventism spread. Education in these schools had to be in harmony with Adventist standards and ideals. Since according to Adventism God was the source of all moral values and truth, the Bible was a basic reference for the teachers. In these schools, therefore, the students were to seek a true knowledge of God, fellowship and companionship with God in study, service and likeness to develop Godlike character.

As stated earlier, the school system operated by the S.D.A. Church was meant to ensure that the youth received a balanced education, embracing physical, mental, spiritual and social aspects. However, the mission schools in Gusii did not balance all these, for the missionaries shelved academic education. They felt that what Abagusii needed was spiritual growth. Thus, the major task of the missionary enterprise, as

perceived by the missionaries was evangelism of the people (Bogonko, 1976:4). The school was therefore part of general programme.

The S.D.A. Society enumerated the objectives of missionary education as follows: First, the school was to train local evangelists since the missionaries seriously believed that the evangelization of the Abagusii would eventually be carried out by the Abagusii themselves. The missionaries, therefore, learned the local language and reduced it into writing. Then, they taught those who joined the mission centres elementally reading and writing in their native languages (Olweny, O.I.16-5-91).

They undertook the schooling of the converts because it was necessary for them to read the Bible themselves. The mission boys thus learned to read parts of the Bible that had been translated into the local languages. This is what they were expected to teach at the village schools which they were to open after completing their studies at the mission centres. The early mission schools, therefore, grew out of the desire to train evangelists who would win converts from among their people.

Second, Adventist education was aimed at producing all-round Adventists (Bogonko, 1977:133). This implied that the whole being of the convert had to be transformed into what the missionaries deemed ideal. As Berman observed:

The brand of Christianity professed by the Adventist was characterized by virtuous living, regular prayers, being gentle, working hard and keeping the Sabbath (1975:167).

These made the S.D.A. different and to a certain extent misfits in societies because they were made to think of themselves as being in the world but not of the world. The converts who lived within the mission station, therefore, had to follow a programme which was meant to help them learn and adopt Adventist ideals, and also develop the physical, mental, and spiritual powers of each of the converts. Hence, they had to work with their hands, worship, study the Bible and go for classes daily. Referring to the daily activities at Nyanchwa Mission, Amayo remarked:

The members of the villages were called to wake up at the sound of a 6 a.m. bell. A morning worship was to follow after fifteen minutes. The men were required after worship to work in their gardens up to lunch time. The women could follow their husbands to the gardens up to 9 a.m....the classes for girls and women started at 9 a.m. The men's

classes were conducted from 1 p.m. onwards...(1973:122).

Third, Adventist Christian education was aimed at helping the converts to learn and practise habits that were considered ideal in Adventism. The adventists were, therefore, taught how to build well-ventilated houses, (the traditional Gusii hut was very small and often poorly ventilated), how to keep the environment clean, what to eat and what not to (Okeyo, 1988:13). This is because a neglect of cleanliness and poor ventilation would induce disease for, as White observed:

In many instances the premises of the very ones who fell victims of epidemics contained the agents of destruction which sent forth deadly poison into the atmosphere to be inhaled by the family and the neighbourhood (1952:22).

According to Ezeogu who wrote on Adventism in Iboland, the rules of conduct taught by the S.D.A.were to ensure that the converts led a "holy" life. He emphasized:

"Our (S.D.A) creed teaches that the human body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; consequently, it should not be defiled by leading a life inconsistent with God's word ... To ensure that the body is not defiled, they abstain from alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and other narcotics and 'unclean' foods as categorized by the Bible. Attendance at movies or indulgence in worldly pleasures and entertainment is considered sinful. The ideal is to be moderate in those things that the church approves and to shun completely those things forbidden in the Old and New Testament (Berman, 1940:167)".

The school, therefore, endeavoured to operate for each student a programme which would upgrade their health.

Fourth, Adventist education was intended to cultivate the right nature of freedom in the youth. It was the type of education intended to prepare students who would be able to draw boundaries between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood, between justice and brutality. It was meant to prepare independent thinkers and not merely reflectors of other's opinion. It was education geared towards self-government, self-reliance and self-criticism as provided by the principles of the scriptures. This kind of education would set a person free from narrow prejudices based on customs. It was an education which was promoted with the understanding that every person was created in the image of God and was endowed with a power akin to that of the creator (Amayo, 1973:34).

Although most Adventist schools were co-educational, the practice in early Adventist education seemed to differentiate between male and female

converts. For instance, the overall objective of the school enterprise was to produce evangelists and converts. Only men, however, went out to preach after completing their studies. The women did not, hence, the need to consider the purpose of female Adventist education, for it seems it had a different objective from the ones already mentioned.

3.3.0 Female Adventist Missionary Education

The history of female Adventist education can be traced as far back as 1906 when the missionaries arrived in Gendia in South Nyanza (Sec. 3:1). The activities of Pastor Carscallen and his wife attracted many young people, both male and female who moved from their homes and came to stay at the mission station. At first, these young people had to run away from their homes since the Joluo had a negative attitude towards the activities at the mission station.

When the missionaries started their work, the education for women was neglected. It was only in order to raise Christian wives for the male converts that girls were invited to the missions. The first girls at Gendia mission, therefore, learned how to read and write, as well as some religious doctrines, then they

were baptized. Consequently, they were expected to choose their marriage partners from among the mission boys. Their husbands paid dowry to their parents, then they had colourful wedding ceremonies conducted in the church. This encouraged the Joluo parents to let their daughters go to the mission stations (Okeyo, 1988:12).

What happened at Gendia seemed to have set the base and direction for female Adventist education in the mission stations that were opened later. In Nyanchwa for instance, the work of reconstruction and development of the mission after World War I was in the hands of Beavon between 1920 and 1930. To cater for female education, a dormitory was erected in 1922. The first few girls had to run away from their homes to stay at the mission because, like the Joluo, the Abagusii parents felt the missionaries would 'spoil' their girls and then they would not carry out their customary obligations.

As we noted in chapter two, girls had specific roles to play in the home. By staying at the mission station, therefore, their roles were left unattended, and this disturbed the parents. Besides, once a girl matured socially, the Gusii society expected her to get married and have children. And to ensure that this happened, the parents, through the help of esigani (go-

between), chose spouses for them.

The parents, therefore, had reason to stop their daughters from going to the mission station because they would no longer be in control of their daughters. The parents for instance were not sure of choosing marriage partners for their daughters. Consequently, they were not too sure of replenishing their herd of cattle as we stated in chapter two.

At Nyanchwa Mission, the girls received clothing, soap and five cents at the beginning of each week. This was to encourage proper Christian behaviour and "refined" upbringing (cf. Amayo, 1973:122).

Beavon's wife was in charge of the girls. She taught them how to read and write, some Bible doctrines, how to take care of children and husbands, and how to prepare food. On completing their study, these girls were baptized, then they were expected to get married to the mission boys. The girls did not always choose who to marry. Sometimes, the missionaries paired the girls and the boys and insisted that they get married.

Unlike what happened at Gendia earlier, Beavon even prescribed the amount of dowry that was to be paid for these girls (cf. Levine, 1966:46). It had to be six cows, a bull and six goats. This made the Abagusii parents very unhappy and even bitter about the

practice of letting girls go to the mission station. This implies that the Abagusii saw their daughters in terms of the animals they were worth at marriage. If dowry was not paid for a girl, her parents felt they had wasted their time bringing her up as was the case when a girl eloped. Commenting on this Levin observes:

The elopement infuriates the father of the girl, who had been cheated of the bride-wealth. He makes inquiries, finally comes looking for her at the homestead of her lover. Usually she has been forewarned and has hidden herself; the irate father cannot find her and eventually leaves. Sometimes he takes some valued articles from the homestead feeling that he has been deprived of his source of bride-wealth and might as well get some compensation. Some days later, the lover visits the girl's father, admits she is living with him, and offers a reduced bride-wealth for her. The father may well accept in order not to lose everything. Even after such an agreement is made, however, one or the other party may revenge. The father on his side may lure the girl home and then let her be taken by some young men who carry her off to a man who has paid more bride-wealth (1966:50).

The Abagusii parents also took pride in negotiating how many animals their daughters were worth. Hence, Beavon's prescription of the number of animals to be given as dowry touched on the number of animals a father would get in exchange for his daughter. At the same time, the father did not get a

chance to decide where his daughter was getting married since the spouses were already selected at the mission.

At Kamagambo, a mission station that was started in 1913, which later became a centre for Adventist education in Kenya, the practice was not any different. In 1922, Miss. Grace Clarke opened a girls' boarding school there. The first girls were so shy that they had be induced with clothing and sweets to stay at the mission station. The girls were taught reading, writing, Bible, care for the family, cookery and hygiene. Then they had to get married to the mission boys (cf. Amayo, 1973:146; S.D.A. Encyclopedia, 1976:730; Bogonko, 1977:140).

From the above discussion, it is clear that female S.D.A. education from the time the Church was established prepared the girls for domestic work and motherhood. This was not different from the practice of the Abagusii. They too prepared their daughters for domestic work and motherhood from a very early age as we noted in chapter two. Thus, Getui's observation that the girls' school at Nyanchwa provided wives for the mission boys is clear illustration of the goal of Female Adventist Education in the early years of the Church in Kenya (Getui, 1985:166). This was also true for the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) in Central province of Kenya as Strayer observed:

A more practical spur to mission action on behalf of African women lay in the general lack of Christian wives for converted young men, for the backwardness of women compared to that of men was widely regarded as a serious danger for the embryonic African Church ... the solution to this problem was generally seen to lie in greater educational opportunities for girls (1978:81).

The missionaries undertook female education in order to provide wives for the mission boys. They did not intend to raise the status of women through education. This trend continued up to about 1932 in the Adventist missions. After that year, there were some modifications which were as a result of the colonial Government's demand for better educated personnel from the mission schools who would work for it in various capacities (Ogutu, n.d. 99). The Abagusii also resisted missionary education because it was irrelevant (Bogonko, 1976:11). A look at the developments in Kamagambo will give us a glimpse of the changes that took place in Adventist Female Education in the years that followed.

3.3.1 Development at Kamagambo from 1933 to 1990

As already mentioned (3:3:0), Kamagambo developed to become the main educational centre for S.D.A. in

Kenya. It served young women and men from all over the country although the majority were always the Joluo and Abagusii. We shall limit ourselves to development related to and affecting women as our concern is female education.

Between 1933 and 1942, the faculty members at Kamagambo included a Miss Camilla Jorgensen. She was the headmistress of the girls' school. During her ministry, she tried to teach the girls to be efficient Christian wives and mothers. She participated in the teaching of housewifery, first aid, and domestic science. Some of these girls joined the elementary teachers' college after completing standard four. By mid 1940s, some of these girls had graduated from the college and they taught in different schools especially before marriage. After marriage, most of these girls took up their roles as wives and mothers and stopped teaching (Onguti, 0.1.10.5.91).

The teaching only kept the women busy before they took up their main roles in society - motherhood and domestic work. This is what the Gusii society expected of a woman, anything else was regarded as extra-ordinary, (The Abagusii composed songs about the first female teacher and spread word throughout that a lady was teaching). This also implies that the society

was largely sceptical of the usefulness of women in the public sphere of life.

It is noteworthy that it is not only the Abagusii who limited the role of women to the private sphere of the home. Even the European culture during the early 19th century questioned the idea of formal education for women (Anderson, 1970:27), for according to the European society during the Victorian era, women did not need this kind of education. Hence, women's education consisted mainly of training in feminine accomplishments. As Oakley observed:

Girls' schools were geared chiefly to teaching the art of husband catching with a repertoire of superficial accomplishments: a smattering of foreign languages, singing, dancing and practical housewifery (1981:113).

Some of the women trained as teachers, nurses or secretaries, but they did not work after they got married. This is why in the "The Five Year Development Plan" for Nyanza (it is lamented thus:

... the profession has been the most wasteful of all, for the girl is inevitably called within a year or two of qualification to carry out her tribal obligation of early marriage so that the family herd of cattle can be increased or replenished or to enable her brother to obtain stock for marriage (P.35).

This development plan was geared towards improving female education. It was also designed to produce teachers capable of serving in the elementary schools scattered all over the country. The plan was followed by "The Ten Year Development Plan for the Development of African Education" in 1949. The main objective of this plan was to make available within a period of ten years a full primary school course, under qualified teachers for approximately fifty per cent of the children of school age. It also had to make sure that there was a good number of students both boys and girls who would benefit from the education up to school certificate level. The education was to be predominantly academic and whoever completed it had to sit for the school certificate examinations (Amayo, 1973:217). All schools, including the Adventist schools had to go by what was laid down by the Government in these two development plans.

It is, therefore, the Colonial Government's demands that made the S.D.A. missions change their earlier objective of giving a kind of Christian education which they were convinced would make the recipients both better Christians and good citizens. From 1944 onwards, the girls would stay in schools for a longer period of time. They were allowed to sit for

Kenya African Primary Examination (K.A.P.E.) at the end of six years of study in the primary schools. The subjects for these examinations were divided into three groups as follows:

TABLE 1

Subject Groups for Kenya African Primary Examination

Group A	Group B	Group c
Mathematics	Agriculture	Swahili
Geography	Art and Craft	English
Nature study and hygiene	Domestic science	History

The girls were to receive special instruction in sewing, cookery and home management. For them to pass K.A.P.E., they had to satisfy the examiners in any of the three sections of domestic science together with any other three subjects one from each of the groups. The boys on the other hand, were required to pass two subjects from each of the groups. The boys on the other hand, were required to pass two subjects from

each of the groups (PC/Nyanza/3.6.73).

Up to this period, we still argue that girls were still being prepared for domestic work and motherhood roles, although they would sit for examinations, train as teachers and then go out to teach. The society expected them to carry out the domestic obligations as a matter of priority. It was only then that they could teach the other girls what was expected of them as wives and mothers.

They were not really expected to learn anything more than what they needed to work in the private sphere of the home. This explains why the K.A.P.E. examination requirements were modified for girls. They did not have to sit for the same number of subjects as the boys, for the society was preparing each gender for their specific roles.

This idea is also expressed by Oakley (1981:119), who studied education in Britain. She noted that the Board of Education of 1927, the Norwood Education Report 1943, outlined the destiny of girls as marriage and motherhood and the destiny of boys as a job. Hence, the girls and boys went through different educational programmes since they were being prepared for different roles. Besides, they were not equal and would never be. This observation is further strengthened by

the modifications on the Mathematics Paper. The syllabus stated that the girls taking Mathematics would be expected to take only the elementary arithmetical questions.

In our view, the only possible reason for this modification is a belief that the girls were weaker academically. They would only be capable of doing simple arithmetic. Besides, the most urgent thing which these girls were to learn was domestic science. The first girls from Kamagambo sat for Cambridge School Certificate in 1957. With the coming of Uhuru in 1963, more attention was paid to female education. The missionaries also changed their attitude toward female education. This change was as a result of a combination of factors as expressed by Anderson, when he noted:

The initial entry of the missionaries into the sphere of the African schooling although spurred on by humanitarian needs, was essentially evangelical but as they came face to face with the problems, realities and needs of African societies, so individual's beliefs and opinions diversified and a patchwork of different educational practices developed. Further, the missionaries' educational work was affected by the physical and economic conditions, by the reactions of an active perceptive African population and by the ideas and practices of other Europeans, so many of whom became eager to effect their own desired changes on the African society (1970:29).

Since the early sixties boys and girls are treated equally in the Adventist mission institutions. There is no discrimination as to what subjects the girls study. The missionaries in these institutions have a positive attitude towards female education, credit for which is given to the government. At Baraton, an Adventist University, at least fifty per cent of the students are females (Mckenzie, 0.1.29-5-91).

The students are allowed to take any of the courses offered except the women are not encouraged to major in Theology. It is argued that if the female students major in Theology, they will fail to get jobs after graduation. This is because the S.D.A. Church in Kenya will not employ them as pastors. This has been one of the factors that has served to exclude women from higherranks in the Church ministry in the East African Region. For to be employed as a pastor or a minister, the S.D.A. Church requires that one has at least to undergo some Theological training. We shall now look at ministerial training from its beginning so as to establish how women have been excluded. The possible effect of this will be discussed.

3:3:2 Ministerial Training

In 1932, there was great concern for expansion of Adventism from Nyanza to the rest of Kenya. Hitherto, major Adventist missionary work had been concentrated in Nyanza Province among the Joluo and Abagusii (Amayo, 1973:148).

In order to prepare for further expansion, twenty-five men were called for ministerial training in that year. They stayed in Kamagambo for four months during which they learned the basics of evangelism. Those who attended this course were mature male converts who earlier had lived in the missions.

From 1933, there developed a concern for qualified preachers to spread Adventism to other parts of Kenya. In order to provide a more challenging Gospel ministry, it was proposed in 1938 that a two-year ministerial course would be held in 1939 if the institution obtained a special instructor. In answer to this proposal, a two year ministerial training was started for fifteen mature male converts from three ethnic groups - ten Joluo, three Abagusii, and two Agikuyu.

According to Nyakundi (0.1.5.5.91), the students were taught the following courses; Bible doctrines, New Testament History, Old Testament History, Prophecy, Secular History, Evangelism, the Biblical books of Daniel and Revelation, Denominational History, Pastoral Training, Physiology, Hygiene, Geography and Elementary Book Keeping. They also learned the English language. The first ministerial class graduated in 1940. The members of the class pledged to work hard in the fulfilment of the Gospel mission (cf.Mtt.10:7).

From this core group came staunch believers, preachers, teachers of religion and administrators of the churches (Amayo, 1973:149). This training proved very useful and has continued since then although as time went on, single male converts began to be admitted for the course instead of married ones.

The above discussion shows that right from the beginning, ministerial training was reserved for men. Women were not given a chance at all although there could have been some faithful ones (faithfulness was one of the qualities considered for admission to ministerial training). The Church selected married men earlier and later single men.

In our view, this was unjust because gender was used as a criterion for selection. Both women and men need to have been considered equally for ministerial

training. Their abilities, strength, the Christian standing, and any other qualities apart from gender should have been considered. Hence, the S.D.A. Church should have selected some women to join their ministerial training programme so that both women and men would have a chance of serving the Lord in the church.

The exclusion of women from ministerial training was started by the missionaries themselves, implying that leadership in Adventism was a male domain and leaders sought to maintain it. This society strived to keep women off the public sphere as we noted in chapter two. If anything then, the vote taken on 11th July, 1990 by the General Conference when the African Church voted against the ordination of women, should be blamed on the practices of the missionaries and the Abagusii. This is because the practices of S.D.A. were alien and they agreed with the cultural practices and attitudes of the Abagusii towards women.

Lack of opportunity for ministerial training has adversely limited the role of women in the Church. Women are always ill-prepared to take up duties such as being a pastor in church. This view was expressed by Ang'ienda. He said:

If women are to render more specialised services in the Adventist Church, they ought to be awarded the opportunities for ministerial training (0.1.15.5.91).

Pastor Misiani, however, blamed S.D.A. women for this exclusion. In his words:

Women themselves are not interested in ministerial training and work. Ministerial responsibility should, therefore, not be forced on women for they are quite happy with the services rendered by the male Pastors (0.1.15-4-91).

One is, however, forced to question the validity of this view. For women too are eager to work for the church as Luyeho observed:

The S.D.A. does not consider women and men equally for important roles. Women will be selected when there is totally no man who can serve in some of the positions (0.1.16.5.91).

Besides, even if the women were to be interested in the ministerial work, they would not have had the opportunity for it, since formerly this was a man's institution. In fact, whenever people were required to apply for ministerial training, it was clearly stated in the advertisements that it was young men who were qualified and were expected to apply. This implies that

the women would not apply since gender disqualified them automatically according to the advertisements.

There are women who are against the idea of women playing the ministerial roles. In our view, these women may have been conditioned to think that it is a man's job, and that they are not capable of performing ministerial roles since they are women. A number of responses from the women support this view. Aska for example stated:

The Bible says that only men should perform ministerial roles. Hence, since the Bible says that ministerial roles are to be performed by men the S.D.A. Church has to obey (0.1.14.5.91).

Matiang'i noted:

Women are not capable of ministerial work and that is why they should not be given a chance. They (women) are weak, so they cannot baptize or travel long distances to go and preach (0.1.16.5.91).

The women quoted above have been influenced by popular myths that are usually held about women. Below are two examples:

"Women are the weaker sex".
 "God created the man first so that he could lead".

Conditioning of this kind is still unjust for it does not give women a chance to freely choose what they want, for conditioning becomes a limiting factor which is set to exclude women from some spheres of life.

There are also cases where women were interested in Theology but they were discouraged from pursuing the course. In Baraton University for instance, two female students who wanted to major in Theology (Theology Majors are normally employed as pastors after completing their courses) between 1988 and 1989 were discouraged by the University administration. According to Osborne (0.1.23.5.91), they were discouraged by the administration on the grounds that they would not get any jobs since the local fields and conferences only employed men for pastoral work. The two girls ended up taking education as their major, meaning that when they graduate they will be employed as teachers. Pastor Osborne concluded that if women are to be fully incorporated into the church ministry in Kenya, there has to be a radical change in the leadership of the church; it has to cease to be a male-dominated church.

In spite of all the discouragements, a woman was admitted to the ministerial institute at Kamagambo in 1989. This was a mature woman who had been working in a

bank before. After having had a lot of problems with the bank administration over working on Saturdays, she lost her job. She then applied for ministerial training and she was admitted. She was able to complete the course and her performance was very good according to the director of ministerial institute (Ogeto, 0.1.15.5.91).

The South Kenya Conference had a big problem in deciding what to do with her. After several meetings, they decided to send her to work as a chaplain in an Adventist primary boarding school called Eronge in Gusii District. The Conference officials had a problem with posting her because she was a woman. They kept on wondering whether any church would accept her as their Pastor.

The officials now hope that she will do a good job in ministering to the young boys at the boarding school. This reflects the attitudes of the South Kenya Conference towards women ministry. They are sceptical about the performance of women as ministers. Therefore, they would rather give them responsibilities which are nearly like what they expect a woman to do well in, that is, rearing children. This again raises the question of fairness in the church.

This woman had a right to be posted as a Pastor to a congregation of believers like her male counterparts.

For, unlike a majority of the Adventist women in Kenya, she had undergone theological training. Let us now critically analyse Adventist female education as described above. The main aim of this is to show how feminists would view this education.

3:3:3 Implications of Adventist Female Missionary Education

We noted earlier that Adventist Missionary Education was aimed at enabling the recipients to spread the gospel effectively among their people. It is also clear that only men went out to preach and teach while women were expected to make wives for the mission boys.

Consequently, we observed that Adventist female education was aimed at preparing girls for domestic work and motherhood roles. There are several reasons why the missionaries decided on such a practice as we shall see below. This has affected the status of women in the church.

The first possible reason is the male dominance of the missionary structure. The early missionaries were all products of patriarchal societies. In their own societies, the roles of women and men were clearly

defined along gender lines. The European society, for instance, (from where the first missionaries came,) expected women to get married, have children and keep a home (Oakley, 1981:100). This was their greatest role. Even if a woman was a professional in some field (although this was rare), she had to stop practising her profession soon after marriage in order to take up her domestic roles in the home. Therefore, we cannot expect the European missionaries to have presented Adventism outside the context of their culture.

Second, the teaching of Ellen G. White may have had a part to play as we shall see in chapter four (4:3). Although she had such a positive attitude towards women's role and education in society, she in many cases, saw women in terms of their husbands, children and homes (cf. White, 1923:141, 1952:8, 1971:28). She stressed that a woman's greatest role is to bring up her children and keep her home in such a way that it can be an example in the community. She prescribed a minimal role for the husband in the home. She too was a product of the patriarchal society, so her appraisal of women's roles was not different from her society's expectations. The missionaries were well aware of her teachings but because of the male dominance in their own societies, they must have overlooked all

other things the pioneer had said about women's education and roles. They only stressed the role of women as wives and mothers, since this is what they had been brought up to believe.

Third, the local communities to which Adventism was brought also had prescribed roles for women. The women's sphere of influence was the home. Thus, the male dominance of the Abagusii was matched by that of the Adventist Church itself. Consequently, the missionaries trained women to remain where they had always been and to do what they had always done, this time in the Adventist way, which was of course dressed in the western cultural garb.

Domestication and segregation of women because of their gender has attracted the attention of many feminist scholars. Many of them are against the unwarranted domestication of women which they have observed leads to some kind of dissatisfaction in women. Friedan for instance, argues:

The housewifery image makes a woman become a sex creature. She has no identity except as a wife and mother (1973:29).

She concludes that to be fully human, women have to fully participate in other spheres of life in society outside the home. Daly insists that the male and female

roles are learned (1973:125). These are male political constructs that serve to ensure higher status for men. This is the case in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya. The Church has for a long time preserved ministerial training for men. As a result, it is only men who serve the Church in distinguished positions such as church pastors, Union, Field and Conference officials. Many of the church members interviewed now seem to see the above positions as suitable for men while the tasks in the home are proper for women. On this, Fiorenza has observed that maleness and femaleness exist only as reproductive role specialization, and that there is no necessary (biological) connection between reproductive complementarity and either psychological or social role differentiation. These, she observes, are the work of culture and socialization and not nature (1983:84). This is also true of the Gusii society. As we noted in an earlier chapter, the girls learned their motherhood roles during their earlier years of growth, while the boys were not socialized in the same manner, hence the role differentiation.

In conclusion, we realize that evangelism especially as done by trained ministers was the work of men. Through the socialization process, both women and men in the Church have been conditioned to think that

it is a man's job. The woman remains the "queen" of the home. As a member of the Church, however, a woman has a part to play in the Church. Since the Church belongs to the public sphere, and women to the private sphere, the selection of woman's roles is affected. In our next chapter, therefore, we shall look at the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church. Factors influencing their roles will be identified. An attempt will be made to show how these affect the status of the women in the Church.

We also showed that the status of women is affected by the status of men in society and consequently in the Church.

In chapter two we had looked at the status of women in society and role of women. This was necessary in order to discuss the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church since this, to a large degree, is conditioned by life in society. As we had already mentioned in chapter two (2.3), most society is patriarchally organized. This society has perpetuated and institutionalized the subjugation of women in all fields of life. This social, economic, religious and cultural subjugation has also clearly defined the roles of men and women. This division of roles has influenced the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church as we shall see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PLACE AND ROLE OF
WOMEN IN THE S.D.A. CHURCH

In chapter three we discussed the Adventist missionary education. We noted that with every mission station established a school was started. The school was a venue for both evangelizing and training evangelists. We also showed that Adventist Missionary Education affected the status and the role of men and women in society and consequently in church.

In chapter two we had looked at traditional Gusii society and role of women. This was necessary before discussing the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church since this, to a large degree, is conditioned by life in society. As we had already mentioned in chapter two (2:3), Gusii society is patriarchally organised. This society has perpetuated and institutionalized the subjugation of women in all fields of life, namely, the social, economic, religious and political. Gusii society has also clearly defined the roles of both women and men. This division of roles has influenced the roles women play in the S.D.A. Church as we shall see in the present chapter.

To achieve this objective this chapter is divided into the following sub-sections:

- (i) Factors influencing the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church.
- (ii) The ordination practice and its effect on decision-making and the equality of women and men in the S.D.A. Church.

The factors discussed below influence the place and role of women either negatively or positively. Some of these factors have encouraged women to participate more in the Church activities while others have hampered their participation in Church activities. These factors include the missionaries who have been serving the Church in Kenya since its establishment in 1906 to the present, the Bible, the teachings of Ellen G. White and the Abagusii culture.

4:1 The Missionaries

The missionaries have influenced the place and role of women by the example they have shown and through what they have been teaching since the establishment of Adventism. Since Adventism was foreign to the Abagusii,

the beliefs and practises of the denomination depended on those who brought the faith. Since 1906, several missionaries have come from the West and gone S.D.A. Encyclopedia 10, 1976:730-733). There have been both women and men coming to Kenya. While male missionaries came as preachers of the word (pastors and ministers), women came as wives or daughters of the missionaries. Some came as nurses and teachers.

The missionaries' influence depends on the period of time they were in Kenya. Those who came between 1906 and the early 1940s limited the role of women to what were traditionally regarded as feminine roles in their own societies. The roles that the white women played were: teaching children, cleaning and decorating the church building. As members of the Dorcas society and deaconesses, they also made clothes and collected other supplies to help the poor and the needy. These women never preached. They could, however, speak to other women on matters related to Adventism (Okeyo, 1988:14). During the Sabbath worship, these women were passive participants of the worship programme. The Gusii women learned to do what the White women missionaries did. Thus, it was the example that was set by the White missionaries especially the women that determined the role of women right from the establishment of the Church.

The period after early 1940s was marked with a difference in the role of the White missionaries. Maybe this was a result of the women Liberation movements in the West during the 19th century and the intervention of local government which demanded a better deal in the education of the Africans (Bogonko, 1977). As a result, the missionaries had a changed attitude towards women. This was clearly reflected by the changes in the education offered at kamagambo as we noted in chapter three (3:3:3). Unlike the immediate past when the girls who joined the missions were taught to be efficient Christian wives and mothers, women were encouraged to train as teachers after which they taught in various schools. Those who passed K.A.P.E. could continue with their education. Hence, by 1957 at least four girls had sat for Cambridge School Certificate. This implies that if they also passed the university entrance examination, they too would have joined university (Amayo, 1973: 191)

Education could easily influence the place and role of women in the church and society. As Oakley observed:

Education was the golden door, the automatic escape from second-class citizenship (1981:114).

Education would enable women to claim the same position of power and fortune that men have. Hence, education

would influence the level of women's performance of their roles. It is therefore no wonder that the educated women in Nairobi participate more in church activities than the Gusii women most of whom have little or no formal education. Some of the women we visited have a good formal education. This clearly influenced their assessment of the roles of women and men in the church. This is demonstrated in the responses to the question: "why is ministerial work reserved for men in the S.D.A. Church"?. Aska, a farmer who dropped out of school in standard five answered:

....because the Bible says so. Men are also more trusted than women. Women are not respected, neither do they act bravely and confidently. They are weak so they cannot baptize, officiate in weddings or travel to far places to do ministerial work (Aska, O.I.14-5-91).

Luyeho, a tutor at Kamagambo Teacher's College gave the following response:

... the Church underrates the ability of women. Women are capable of doing ministerial work but they have never been given a chance. They too are human beings, made in the image and likeness of God(0.I.16-5-91).

The enlightenment brought about by education has enabled

Luyeho to appreciate the ability of women unlike Aska. The school has been the source of every influential woman in Kenya. Examples are Wilkista Onsando, the Chairperson of Maendeleo Ya Wanawake and Phoebe Asiyu who is a member of parliament for Karachuonyo constituency, among others.

Many Adventist missionaries come to Kenya to this day to work in the Adventist institutions. One such institution is the Baraton University which has a big number of missionaries such as Miss. Magnusson who is very active in performing various roles in the church. She also readily challenges any discriminatory practices against women in and outside the church. Another missionary who has greatly influenced the place and role of women in the church in Baraton is Pastor Osborne. During the period when he served as the church pastor and assistant professor of Theology, he openly challenged the subordination of women in the church and encouraged them to preach and take up various offices in the church. Unfortunately, due to his criticism of the male dominance in the Kenyan church, he was sent back to his home in Washington, D.C. in June 1991. However, one sees a big difference between the women in Baraton and those in either Gusii or Nairobi. In Baraton, a number of women are chairpersons of church offices. Some are

elected elders as we mentioned earlier. Most important, however, is their ability to criticise church practices that they feel are discriminatory without fear.

4:2 The Bible

The S.D.A. Church has selectively used the Bible to support the practice of subordination of women in the Church. The Bible has been used in two ways to achieve this objective. In the first place, the Church refers to particular texts from the Bible that support their claim that leadership and other major roles in the church should be male-dominated. For instance, the informants specifically quoted I Cor. 11:2-16 and 14:33-36 in response to women's role in the church. According to these texts, women should keep off church leadership because St. Paul denies them such roles. Second, the ^{S.D.A.} Church has adopted the trend of leadership reflected in the Bible and it now argues that it has been a tradition which should be respected and continued. For example, the church refers to priesthood in the Old Testament. It maintains that priesthood was always male-dominated. Besides, when Jesus chose his disciples in the New Testament, they were all men. As a result of these, the S.D.A. Church in Kenya feels the women should be placed under men's leadership in the church. Let us look at St. Paul's

teaching in the texts referred to above and the teaching of Jesus in the Gospels concerning the place and role of women.

(i) St. Paul and women

The Pauline texts quoted by the informants reflected how narrowly the Bible has been interpreted in relation to the place and role of women in the church. This is intended to support the patriarchal society's aim to humble women. St. Paul himself was very positive about the leadership of women in the Early Church, but none of such texts were quoted by the church in relation to the roles of women according to our findings.

Women in St. Paul's time were prominent among the early Christian leaders in local churches and among travelling evangelists. These early leaders include Priscilla who with her husband headed the church at Corinth and later went to Ephesus (Acts 18:18, 26; Rom. 16:3). Another leader was Phoebe who moved great distances between churches as a Christian evangelist (Rom. 16:1-2).

St. Paul, therefore, recognised the leadership of women in the early Christian communities. His concept of

ministry was charismatic; established by the actual gifts and functions which a person exercised in the community. These women clearly exercised the gifts which he describes - those of apostles, prophets and teachers (cf. I Cor. 12:28). The passages I Cor. 11:2-16 and 14: 33-36, therefore, need to be understood in their proper contexts, since they do not wholly portray St. Paul's attitude towards the place and role of women in the church.

In I Cor. 11:2-16 and 14:33-36, St. Paul responds to problems created by some women causing disruption during the public worship. These women were quite vocal and they were making themselves very visible by decorating their hair or letting it loose while they worshipped. So St. Paul recommended that women can speak out during congregational worship so long as their heads are covered. However, in chapter 14:33-36, St. Paul is against this. The women had been asking questions and in so doing, acting out of step with the established congregational order. To solve this problem, St. Paul begins with an appeal to the Torah, arguing that according to the law, women have no licence to speak in public, for they had no public rights or duties. They were to remain silent and within the segregated section of the synagogue (Ruether, 1974:117). St. Paul gave this

recommendation to solve a particular problem that was created by the women in the Corinthian Church. There is no reason why this should be regarded as universal, or eternal law.

In his letter to the Galatians, St. Paul affirms the equality and freedom of persons in God's eyes. He wrote:

There is no such thing as Jew or Greek, slave or freeman, male or female, for you are all one person in Jesus (Gal.3:28).

St. Paul's impact on women's leadership in the Christian community is, therefore, double-edged. On one hand, he affirms Christian equality and freedom, therefore opening up a new independent lifestyle for women by encouraging them to remain free. On the other hand, he subordinates women's behaviour in the worship assembly to the interests of Christian mission and restricts their rights as pneumatics (filled with the Holy Spirit) and also as women. St. Paul may have done this because he was a patriarchal conservative for he was a product of a patriarchal culture. He was influenced by this culture which rigidly excluded women from public life and justified this through an ideology of women's generic inferiority (cf. Ruether, 1976:30 and Fiorenza 1984:84-92). However, women have achieved much academically. They also serve in various capacities in the public life, hence,

they are not inferior in any way. Reference to the Bible for guidance on the place and role of women should always take note of the words and actions of Jesus in the gospels. This is because Jesus' words and actions are the basis of the teaching of the Christian Church though not in exclusion of the rest of the New Testament.

(ii) Jesus and women

Jesus chose twelve apostles and charged them with the responsibility of spreading the gospel. The apostles were males because there had to be a link between the Old and New covenants. The twelve apostles represented the continuity of the twelve tribes of Israel. They had to be males because the covenant of God with the Hebrews was symbolised only through the male line. Nonetheless, the twelve were not the only disciples, nor did they exercise all final authority in the church (cf. Lk.10:1 ff). They did not assume the leadership of particular churches where a bigger role seems to belong to St. Paul (Carol, 1976:18).

To understand the position of women in the gospels the point of reference should not be the maleness of the twelve apostles but the mission of Jesus Christ. The centrality of Jesus of Nazareth is essential in Christianity because Christ made God real, brought God

down to earth. However, Jesus' maleness must not be emphasised for it has often aided and abetted the oppression of women in the Church (Brown, 1989:5). A distinction must also be made between the Jesus of Nazareth and the Christ of faith. The Christ is not tied to biological characteristics but to his sustaining and liberating activity on behalf of the oppressed.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus worked to sustain and liberate women from their oppression. For instance, in Mark 5:25-34, there is the account of a woman with the issue of blood. She had suffered continued haemorrhage for twelve years. She had faith that even if she just touched Christ's cloak, she could be healed. From this story, we learn that Jesus interrupts a mission of crucial importance to a man in order to help a woman (Elsie, 1974:4).

St. Luke reveals that women as well as men travelled in the company of Jesus. The women had been liberated from oppressive infirmities and evil spirits. Among these were Mary, Joanna and Susana (Lk. 8:1 ff). Jesus also talked to women on questions of theology. This is especially noteworthy because then, far more than now, popular thought would have placed such matters beyond the interest and competence of women.

Women were also the first witnesses of Christ's

resurrection. They were sent to give the good news to the apostles (Mk. 16:6). The news of Jesus' triumph over death which is the root of all Christian preaching was first announced to women. In view of this, therefore, women do not need further charter for the proclamation now.

Jesus did not teach that women should always be serving others. In fact, He rebukes Martha for being much occupied with serving. By allowing Mary to join the circle of disciples, Jesus overthrows the traditional concept of women's place as upheld by Martha (Lk. 10:38-42).

Jesus initiated the elevation of the status of women. He allowed women to hear His teachings and accepted their company and hospitality as he travelled from place to place proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God. Clearly, Jesus' attitude towards women was bold and surprising by the standards of His day when culturally women were considered as objects of pleasure or as desirable possessions especially for the labour they provided.

In a culture that subordinated and humiliated women, Jesus showed the greatest esteem, respect and sensitivity towards women's suffering. He broke through the religious and social barriers of His time hence, re-

establishing women in their full dignity as human beings before God and people. The model of women Jesus portrays had been obscured by patriarchal views in the Jewish culture. The S.D.A. Church should, therefore, fully understand and apply the example of Jesus in their attitudes and practices that relates to women.

4:3 The Teaching of Ellen G. White

Ellen G. White was a prophetess in the S.D.A. Church. She claimed to have seen visions on the purpose, formal organization and administration of the S.D.A. Church. These visions shaped the Church from the very beginning. The books and pamphlets that were written by Ellen G. White are referred to on many issues by the world church today. Ellen G. White's appraisal of the role of women in the Church has influenced the Church's decisions on the role of women in the individual churches. She encouraged the active participation of women in church affairs. But Ellen G. White was a product of a patriarchal society and, hence, she hardly perceived women's roles that were unrelated to the home. Thus, in relation to this, White observed:

The Lord has work for women as well as men.
Women can do in families a work that reaches

the inner life of persons. They can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach, their labour is needed (White, 1902:7).

White's thrust emphasised the spiritual side - to bring individuals to Christ. While such responsibility applied equally to men, women's role was limited to the family (cf. Beach, 1976:15). It is in the homes where women could have some influence in the early 19th century American society.

White stressed that the greatest duty of a woman is to bring up her children. This was a God given responsibility and each woman is expected to view it this way. In relation to a woman's role as a mother, White observed:

...the work of a mother is sacred and important. She should teach her children from the cradle-up, habits of self-denial and self control. Her time in a special sense belongs to her children. But if it is mostly occupied with the follies of this degenerate age - if society, dress and amusement absorb her attention, her children will fail to be suitably educated (White, 1923:139).

White's assessment of women's role in bringing up children has greatly influenced the role of women in the S.D.A. Church today. Women are assigned duties that

involve teaching and caring for children. For instance, in all the churches we visited, children's Sabbath school classes were mostly in the hands of women. The cradle-roll class, which has the youngest children, was handled entirely by women in all the churches. The informants felt that care for and teaching of children is a women's role. This is because women are tender towards children and they know how to handle them due to their nurturing roles. But as we noted in chapter two (2:2), women are socialized into their roles from an early age. The patriarchal society has assigned women the role of bringing up children and thoroughly socializing them in these roles. In our view, both parents have a duty to actively participate in bringing up children. Hence, in the S.D.A. Church, men need to take part in handling the cradle-roll class.

White identified specific areas of the church programme in which women could play a part. These were mainly related to offering various services to the community. The services were later named "Home Missionary" by the General Conference. Their main duties were visiting the sick, helping the poor and the needy, watching over new converts, corresponding with absent members and searching out backsliders. Referring to the women who voluntarily served in the Home Missionary

Department, Beach noted:

These women were extra-ordinary in the sense that they never seemed to seek recognition for themselves. They tended to spend themselves for others, ignoring their own discomforts and fatigue (1976:43).

These women were products of a patriarchal society which teaches women to be selfless servants in society. Their services in the Home Missionary Department were voluntary and free. Hence, these women spent themselves for others and did not get paid in return like the men. Feminist theologians have argued against the fact that women are ever offering free services to other people. Daly in her radical presentation, argues that the patriarchal society has given women the privilege of giving literally everything away. In her words:

✓ This is the rape of the mind and will which robs the female self precious time, energy and self-esteem (Daly, 1973:123).

Although selfless service is a Christian call which is necessary in our Christian commitment, it has been used to devalue women. This is the basis of Daly's argument. She does not see why women should continue rendering such services since women are looked down upon because they offer such services.

White approved of the service of women in various departments other than ministerial and administrative positions. She herself was not ordained as a minister in the Church despite her role in the formal organization of the church. She was nevertheless addressed as a minister because of her visions and accepted as a prophetess whose work and message were under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise it would have been difficult for a patriarchal society like hers to accept a woman's leadership and direction (Armstrong, 1986:220).

Ever since the establishment of Adventism, men have continued to dominate the executive and top leadership positions in the denomination. For a woman to have been elected to an administrative position within the Church, she had to be exceptionally capable (Beach:1988). The Church, therefore, expects women to display extremely high standards in performing duties if they have to be selected for any responsibility in the Church. Men do not have to display such abilities for they are not so much scrutinized but accepted by virtue of their maleness.

In conclusion, White's assessment of the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church was influenced by attitudes of her society which was patriarchal in character. She

placed women within the private sphere of the home. Even when they could evangelize or do other spiritual work in the public sphere, she limited their roles to the family.

White did not, however, advocate or deny the ordination of women. Her position has greatly influenced the stand of the S.D.A. Church on this issue to this day as we noted in Chapter One (1:0). In our view, the S.D.A. Church should obey the dictates of the present society which is changing its attitudes towards women and accepting them as leaders in various sectors of the society. This is in view of the fact that the Church is influenced by the life in the society in which it is established.

4:4 The Culture of The Abagusii

The culture of the Abagusii clearly defines what is expected of women - what to say, where to say it and what to do. The roles of women are confined to the home. Women are excluded from patrimonial rights, defence obligations and ritual duties to the spirits (Mayer, 1949:7). This is because, in Gusii, women do not belong, they are always considered outsiders. For instance, when still living at their father's homesteads everybody expected them to get married and go away at one time.

And since marriage in the Gusii society is exogamous, women are always expected to get married outside their birth clans (see pg. 45).

As outsiders therefore, women had no rights within the clans into which they were born. Even after marriage, women never fully belong to the husband's clan. They are part of enemy clans (the Gusii consider any other clans apart from their own as enemies), and therefore they would never be allowed to know the secrets of their husbands' clans. This puts women at a disadvantage, since they are enemies living among their husbands' clans, hence their subordinate status (Levine, 1966:190, see also pg 41).

Women were always deemed weaker. This is why they were excluded from defence obligations. Defending the clan was the duty of young men. To prepare for this, young men moved to ebisarate after circumcision to learn war tactics. Women were not allowed into ebisarate since they were considered too weak to defend the clan. They had to be defended and protected. This philosophical presupposition has affected the way women are treated in the S.D.A. Church. The S.D.A. Church has continued the subordinate women in Gusii. This is because women are still misconceived to be weak by men and cannot be entrusted with "heavy" responsibilities such as pastoring

the flock of God. Pastoring the flock of God is apparently men's work for they are "strong enough" for that kind of work.

Women were excluded from leadership roles among the Abagusii. Clan leadership was normally left to the clan elders who were men. The elders solved inter-family disputes and made decisions on behalf of the whole clan. In the family, omogaka bw'omochie made all the decisions and the other family members were expected to comply preferably without question. He was expected to be aggressive and in full control of his homestead. A wife had to be submissive to her husband otherwise she would be beaten and humiliated even in public. The secondary status of women in the family implies that women could not be accepted as leaders even in the Church. Gusii society expected them to be led, directed and to take orders. Hence, if women became leaders in the church, they would take up the responsibilities that the Abagusii have always reserved for men. It will, however, be hard for men to accept the directives of women since according to the Abagusii, a man who is directed or ordered around by a woman is weak (Levine, 1975).

Due to the patriarchal culture, the S.D.A. Church has rigidly excluded women from key leadership positions. Top administrative and executive duties are performed by

men as these are their roles in the culture of the Abagusii. It is no wonder then that Pastor Nyakundi reckoned:

Women have never been known to lead anybody. If the Church gives women leadership roles then many followers especially men will fall off (Nyakundi: 0.1.5-5-91).

The S.D.A. believers define the Church as a larger family - the family of God. God, the head of this family is referred to as "Father", meaning God is male. Although this position is theologically shallow and untenable as God is above human categories of gender, it agrees with the structure of the Gusii family. To the Abagusii, the family head is a man, a woman would never be regarded as a family head even if she supported the family more than the man. Thus, even if women are the majority in the church and it is their efforts that sustain it, they cannot be given leadership positions due to this cultural inhibition.

The culture of the Abagusii has clearly influenced the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church. The allocation of roles is on the basis of gender. The S.D.A. Church assigns women roles that are similar to those that Gusii women play in the society. In our view, however, women and men need to be equally regarded in the church.

Attitudes held by the Abagusii towards the structure of the family need to be changed. Consequently, women will be viewed not as subordinate to men but as equals. This is in view of the fact that in the eyes of God, all human beings are equal and should be equally regarded.

4.5:0 Ordination in the S.D.A. Church

Ordination is a rite by which the Christian Church sets apart individuals for special functions by prayer and the laying on of hands. By this rite individuals are commissioned to administer sacraments such as baptism, to preach and exercise other pastoral care. The S.D.A. Church ordains ministers, Church elders and deacons. These are all male officers. consequently, the S.D.A. Church only ordains men. This has affected the status of women as well as their participation in decision-making in the Church. These issues are dealt with below.

4:5:1 History of the Ordination rite in the S.D.A. Church

The ordination rite dates back to 1853 when elder James White wrote an article entitled "Gospel Order" strongly advocating ordination of persons. This was prompted by the actions of some self-appointed

preachers who refused to co-operate with responsible leader of the Adventist movement claiming:

They had the liberty to do what pleased, to preach what they pleased and to go where they pleased (S.D.A. Encyclopedia 10, 1976:101).

In it he advocated strongly that men who are called by God to teach and baptize should be ordained for the work of the ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands (S.D.A. Encyclopedia 10, 1976:1038).

The practice of setting individuals apart for special work by the laying on of hands upon them has a Biblical basis. For example, in the Book of Numbers, the writer says:

The Lord said to Moses, "take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit and lay your hands upon him before Eliezer the priest and before all the congregation, and give him a charge in their sight... (Numb., 27:18-19).

And St. Luke records:

The Holy Ghost said "separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work where into I have called them". And when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away (Acts 6:6, 13:2;).

In harmony with this biblical custom, the S.D.A. ordains

ministers who like the apostles and evangelists of the early church look after the general interest of the Church, and elders and deacons; who like their New Testament prototypes look respectively after the spiritual and temporal interest of the local congregation to which they belong (S.D.A. Church Manual, 1981:90-93).

The ordination service and qualities of the candidates depend on the office for which one is being set a side. We shall therefore consider the ordination of ministers, elders and deacons separately.

(i) Ministers

Before ordination, a careful examination of the candidates is carried out as to their fitness for the work of the church ministry. Generally, candidates ought to be members of the Church who not only lead consistent Christian lives but also are experienced in church work. Customarily, the candidates are married men although single men can be ordained (S.D.A. Encyclopedia 10, 1976:925ff).

Candidates are examined separately in the presence of their spouses. The Manual for Church Ministers gives ten guidelines for examination. In the first place, the evidence of a call to the ministry is tested. The

candidate has to show evidence of having been called. The sacredness and permanence of the call are also considered. These are tested by observing one's dedication and commitment to the mission of the church. Secondly, the personal life of the candidate is examined. One is expected to show stability in spiritual life. Devotion to the beliefs and practices of Adventism are important measures for spiritual stability.

Third, one has to show a basic understanding and acceptance of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith as taught by the S.D.A. Church. These include, the belief in and full acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as divinely inspired; and full acceptance of the spirit of prophecy.

Fourth, one's social life is considered. In this case, the home life is prime. With regard to this, the examiners consider the relationship of the candidate with his spouse and children. This relationship has to be characterized by love for one another and proper communication between members of the family. The devotional life of the family members is also considered. Besides, modesty in dress is important. Fifth, the candidates must have undergone training in personal and public evangelism. He also ought to have a positive attitude towards winning souls for Christ. This is

measured by assessing his past successes in soul winning since entering the ministry.

Sixth, he must be a good leader with proven ability to preach the word of God with clarity and persuasion. He also ought to have experience in visiting the needy and spiritual counselling.

Seventh, the candidate has to be a person who relates well with the congregation and fellow workers. As a church leader, he has to be loyal to the denominational programme. This implies that he ought to have been keeping the congregational prayer times and Sabbath worship.

Eighth, he ought to have good study habits. This is necessary because ministerial work involves studying religious books and magazines consistently. Thus the candidate must be eager to learn and develop his mental capabilities.

Ninth, family finance are considered. Here, the question is not how much the candidate has but his integrity in meeting his financial obligations. His expenditure also ought to be controlled. Finally, he must live according to Christian standards. These standards are reflected in his social conduct. He must portray carefulness especially in dealing with men and women in matters related to sex (cf. Manual for Ministers 1981:5-

20).

The examination is carried out by ordained ministers only and where possible union and conference officials are invited to assist. This implies that women who are the majority in the church do not participate in the examination of candidates. This is due to the fact that the church neither ordains women nor selects them to occupy executive positions in the Union and Conferences.

If a candidate passes the examination, a special service will be conducted in the church. This service elevates one to the office of the minister in the eyes of the people. It also solemnizes the call in the mind of the candidate. Normally, the Sabbath day is the most appropriate for this rite because a majority of the church members will witness the occasion.

The ordination service is one of the most solemn of all services in the church. It is planned in such a way that the rite of ordination is the highlight of the meeting. Normally even the sermon offered on that day is based on the calling and responsibilities of the minister. This service should always leave a deep impression on the church as a whole.

The service is conducted by an ordained minister. All other ordained ministers who are within the

congregation are also invited to the rostrum. Three of them are chosen to take the leading parts of the service, namely, the ordination prayer, the charge, and the welcome. After ordination the minister becomes a member of another class of the ordained ministers. As a minister he is authorised to:

preach the gospel with all the authority and power which Jesus gave to his apostles; to baptize those who repent and forsake their sins; to conduct ordinances of the Lord's house; with proper counsel, to organise S.D.A. Churches and to unite believers in the bonds of holy matrimony, Manual for Ministers 1981:20-21.

Such are the duties of an ordained minister.

(ii) Local Elders and Deacons

Local elders and deacons are elected yearly by the local churches. They are usually ordained in a simple ceremony during the church service on the Sabbath day. An ordained minister must be in charge of the service. He reads appropriate scriptural texts such as I Tim. 3:1-7 for elders and I Tim. 3:8-13 for deacons. The candidates and the minister then kneel down. The minister prays asking God to approve the choice of the church in the election of the candidate, to accept his consecration as

he is set apart to the work entrusted to him, to make him a wise steward, a faithful leader, and a good example to the community. As the minister speaks of consecration and the laying on of hands, he places his hands on the head of the candidate. After the prayer, the minister shakes the candidate's hand and pronounces the blessing.

Once ordained, a local elder does not need to be re-ordained upon re-election or if he is subsequently chosen as a deacon. Likewise, a deacon need not be re-ordained if elected again. However, if he is chosen to be an elder, he must be re-ordained as an elder. This implies that the role of an elder is higher than that of a deacon in the S.D.A. Church. This is why a church elder may take the place of the pastor in his absence. The deacon cannot stand in for the pastor.

Ordination qualifies the local church elder to conduct communion services in the church in which he is an elder. In the absence of an ordained minister, it is customary for the elder to arrange with the conference president or local mission before administering the rite of baptism to those desiring to unite with the Church (S.D.A. Church Manual, 1981:79-80).

For a long time, only men would serve as church elders. However, since the early 1980s the S.D.A. Church

allowed women too to serve as elders. In most cases, women are elected elders in the absence of suitable men. Besides, the women who are elected as elders are not ordained before filling their offices because the S.D.A. Church does not approve of the ordination of women. This implies that unlike their male counterparts, female elders may not take the place of the Church pastor in his absence. This is because many of the duties of the Church pastor can only be performed by ordained persons. This practice, therefore, limits the role of a female elder. In our view, this is one aspect of unequal treatment of women and men in the S.D.A. Church.

4:5:2 Ordination of Women

In Chapter One (1:0), we noted that the General Conference Session in July, 1990 did not approve of the ordination of women. This decision was based on a vote taken by the World Church. As we noted, 1,173 voted against the practice of ordaining women while 377 people voted for the practice. But to most of the S.D.A. in Kenya, the question whether or not to ordain women is very new. In fact, it is the 1990 General Conference Session that drew the attention of many Church members toward this issue.

During the study, we asked our informants why a large part of the World Church voted against ordination of women. We also asked them to give their own views on whether women should be ordained or not. To answer the above questions seventy people were interviewed.

According to the findings, seventy-one per cent maintained that women should not be ordained. Nineteen per cent favoured the practice while ten per cent did not mind whether women were ordained or not. Therefore, the majority of the people we interviewed do not approve of the ordination of women. All informants however, felt that women make up a bigger part of the Church and therefore, they should be encouraged to participate in other church activities apart from the ordained ministry.

A number of reasons were given as to why S.D.A. women in Kenya should not be ordained to serve the Church in various capacities. Among the reasons cited were that "the ministerial office has always been priestly". This view was expressed by Pastor Ombuyi who noted:

Since the Old Testament times ministerial office was priestly. Only men served as priests in the Old Testament. The ministerial office also reflects Christ who was a man (Ombuyi, O.I.16-5-91).

There is however, a great difference between the role of a church minister as it is today and that of the Old Testament priests who offered sacrifices on altars (Newfeld, 1979:1181). Besides, the religion of Israel, that is, Judaism was a man's religion. Women were, therefore, totally excluded from leadership. Even the laws of worship explicitly addressed themselves only to men (Ex. 23:17,34:23; Deut.16:16). Women were also excluded from participation in public cults. This led to the subordination of women as expressed by the Old Testament writers (Otwell, 1977:102,152). The Christian faith, on the other hand did not begin as a man's religion. For Jesus, the religion's main character specially attended to the needs of women and made them wholly human as we noted earlier (4:4; Elsie, 1974:4).

Emphasis of Jesus' maleness has contributed to the refusal of many churches to ordain women as reflected in Pastor Ombuyi's response. Seeing Jesus as a male has also been viewed as oppressive to women. Hence, a distinction must be made between the historical Jesus - the man from Nazareth and the Christ of faith. The universal qualities of the Christ of faith have to be stressed instead of his biological particulars (Brown, 1989:14). Christ must therefore, be seen as the liberator of the oppressed and this has nothing to do with his

maleness. Christ was also committed to liberating women from all social oppression, hence, Jesus is part of the lives of women. The S.D.A. Church should, therefore, follow the examples of Jesus, not by stressing his maleness but by commitment to sustaining and liberating activities on behalf of the oppressed.

Tradition - the way things have always been was cited as another reason why women should not be ordained. One informant who expressed this view was Kiprono who said:

Men have always been doing ministerial work and therefore they should continue. There is no need for any change (Kiprono, O.I.28-5-91).

This is a very unrealistic attitude, for in any social organisation there have to be changes. Slavery for example, was an accepted practice in the church for centuries but it is no longer regarded as a Christian social structure (Gardiner, 1976:20). Hence, if the only reason why women are excluded from ordained ministry is tradition - the way things have always been done, but unsupported by adequate doctrine, a change in the tradition seems imperative.

Several informants felt that women have a lot of family commitments and responsibilities especially when

bringing up children. Hence they will not have enough time to do ministerial work. This response reflects the patriarchal society's view on the role of women.

In the patriarchal culture, the work of rearing children and taking care of the home was solely left to women. In our view however, this is not a convincing reason for excluding women from the church ministerial work especially in the Kenyan society. This is because Kenyan women are no longer confined to the private sphere. The women in paid employment in various public sectors of the Kenyan society have also shown their ability to cope, both with the family commitments and their jobs. This has meant that women work for long hours. It also points out the superb abilities that the women have. This is why the women should be entrusted with ministerial responsibilities.

Another argument put across by the informants against the ordination of women is that ministerial responsibilities are too difficult and too many for women to perform. This was pastor Oendo's observation. He noted:

Women are not strong enough to carry out the responsibilities of ordained ministers (Oendo, O.I.18-5-91).

According to Oendo, women are physically weaker,

therefore, they will not be able to do ministerial work. In our view, the roles of an ordained minister are neither too many nor too difficult for women to perform.

As we showed in chapter two (2:3), Gusi women are responsible for a greater share of the work. Some of their roles are quite strenuous but they manage to accomplish them. Besides, all women cannot be weaker and therefore unfit to do ministerial work. It is just that the patriarchal society views women as second-class human beings who lack qualities that are associated with men (cf. Oakley 1981, Iglitzin and Ross, eds. 1976).

In relation to the duties and responsibilities of an ordained minister, the S.D.A. Church Manual states:

By virtue of his ordination to the ministry, the minister is qualified to function in all church rites and ceremonies. He should instruct the church officers in their duties and plan with them for all lines of church work, and activity... he serves as the Chairman of the Church board, he plans and leads out in all spiritual services of the church such as the Sabbath morning worship, prayer meetings, the communion service and baptismal service (1981:183-184).

In contemporary society, women have shown themselves as intelligent and able to acquire the same academic degrees as men do. They are also capable of great public responsibility and trust and particularly adept at pastoral ministry as shown by the work of female

ministers in other parts of the world (Elsie 1970). This renders Oendo's argument indefensible today.

The refusal by the Church to ordain women is unfair, for it rests on a category - womanhood. Such a denial implies that there is something wrong or incomplete or defiant, not in individual women but in the genus of womanhood (Gardiner, 1976:20). This view contradicts the design of God made explicit in Genesis chapter one, where it is stated that God created man and woman in God's own image and likeness and after which God observed that the created work was all good (Gen. 1:26-27). Any woman therefore, who so desires should have same right of a religious call to ordination which is tested as that of man.

Some informants especially the women felt that ordained ministry is not the only way of serving God. Hence it is just alright if ordained ministry was left to men as it has always been since there are other ways in which women can serve God. In our opinion, this view expresses some sort of despair by the women. That is, since women have not been allowed into the ordained ministry, they have simply identified alternative ways of serving God and have rationalized that there is nothing really wrong with leaving ordained ministry to men. Below are views of some of the women:

...to serve God sufficiently, women do not have to be ordained. Even Ellen G. White was not ordained but her services to the church was remarkable (Oyondi, O.I.17-5-91).

The argument put across by Oyondi can also apply to Adventist men, that is, to serve God effectively, men do not need to be ordained. But the church does not argue this way. Hence there must be something in ordination that the women are being kept out of. In our view, these must be the leadership positions and recognition; for ordination opens up the way to leadership positions in the church's fields and conferences and consequently recognition. This is because the patriarchal society rigidly excludes women from leadership especially in public and professional life and justifies this through the ideology of women's generic inferiority (Ruether, 1976:30).

A similar view as that of Oyondi was expressed by Macharia. She noted:

Women can serve God sufficiently through the work of bringing up children to fear and serve God. Samuel's mother for instance, sufficiently and successfully ministered to God by the way she brought up her son for he grew up knowing and serving God (Macharia, O.I. 23-3-91).

The above view reflects the conditioning which religious women have gone through. As Ruether observed:

The voice that tells women to be silent in church and to be saved by bearing children is simply the reflection of the patriarchal social system in the religious assembly (Gardiner, 1976:30).

When a woman is conditioned, she lacks internal freedom. There is something about this woman which prevents her from doing as she really feels or wants. Through conditioning, patriarchy pervades specific dictates about women such as women should always be ruled by men. It also creates an entire symbolic edifice of reality that reflects the social hierarchy of male dominance and female submission. Richards clearly demonstrates how conditioning works against the women's ambitions and desires. She observed:

A woman who has the clearest possible plans for a career and has the capability to succeed in it may fail because of habits of mind which interfere. Perhaps she cannot avoid feeling that she ought to take care of her dress or feeling guilty if she lets her husband do his fair share of housework, however clearly she may understand the unreasonableness of such feelings. Her ingrained habits of mind prevent the fulfilment of her strongest desires (Richards, 1976:108).

The Church needs to consider any other qualifications apart from gender when selecting candidates for ordination. Such qualifications could include educational background, the spiritual standing of individuals and the ability to do ministerial work.

A lot of talent in women is either lost or remains unused or even unrealized because of the limitations set upon them. Women can do the work of God without being ordained but this reduces the number of those who can share the word of God to only the outspoken. The kind of service they can offer is also limited to basically charitable work. Thus, what women seek in ordination is the power associated with it and the leadership positions it opens up. They also seek the permission, the feeling that they have been assigned specific responsibilities. Ordination helps the minister to engage in further studies and always have something to share with the congregation. It also helps him to be close to the congregation as he listens to their problems and attempts to solve them. The ordained minister has more time and more ways through which to express the gospel message. This is because ministerial work is his sole responsibility unlike the religious women who have a job outside the home - a family solely in their hands, and gospel work. The ability of women need not be under-

estimated at all for God created human beings - both male and female with innate abilities. but the social system has created myths that make women inferior. Their inferior existence has been made to appear to be the order of God's creation rather than being as it is the fallen disorder of injustice created by sinful human beings (Gardiner, 1976:31).

4:5:3. The Effects of Ordination on Decision-making and the Equality of Women and Men in the S.D.A. Church.

Ordination of ministers is not intended to build a religious hierarchy according to the S.D.A. Church. Rather it lays upon the ordained new responsibilities for the performance in which they must continually seek to be endowed with the spirit of God. Ordained ministers are consecrated to a life of devotion to God and of special service to the church and the world. They are set to serve the world church as pastors, preachers of the word and subject to the direction of the church with regard to the type of ministry and place of service. Ordination has, however, affected both decision-making and the equality of men and women in the S.D.A. Church adversely as is shown below.

(i) The equality of women and men

Equality of persons is a concept that has attracted the attention of many women. The concept has also been misunderstood by both women and men in society. Most people for instance, stress the biological differences between women and men. They argue that women and men cannot be equal as they are created differently. Equality, however, does not mean being the same. It entails the freedom given to each and every human being to actualize their given potentials and talents to the maximum without any hindrances.

Women and men in the S.D.A. Church can never be equal unless the Church agrees to look at both with the same eye, that is, look at them as persons but not as females and males. If the church does in truth look at women and men equally, then it should agree to ordain both. Since it does not and since ordination is used by the Church to elect officials and persons of all status and leadership from which women are excluded, then this is clear evidence of discrimination. For instance, a conference president should be an ordained minister (S.D.A. Church Manual 1981:182). This is also true for field or conference union and division executive officials.

The clause that presidents must be ordained ministers has served to close out women from the post of presidency in the S.D.A. Church. As long as the church refuses to ordain women, leadership in the S.D.A. Church will always remain a male domain. Women will have to be contented with a subordinate place. This is perhaps what prompted Luyeho's observation that:

Women are not considered equally for important positions in the S.D.A. Church (Luyeho, O.I. 16-5-91).

Both women and men should be considered equally for various duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges in the S.D.A. Church. If for instance, a man is a conference president this term, a woman should be president the next term. This however, does not imply that presidency be imposed on a woman because the previous president had been a man. Women and men should be considered for the post on their own merit. Presently, womanhood is used to exclude women, hence our observation that the church is unfair to women.

The clause that the president must be an ordained minister has also meant that even men who are less qualified for the posts get it. For instance, it is not always that the ordained minister will be good in handling

finances, but upon his election to the presidency, he somehow has to spearhead the planning and use of the church's finances. This has occasionally led to misappropriation of funds. If the church were to make changes in the present system so that women and men have an equal chance in church work, then the most competent person would be the priority rather than a perhaps less competent person who happens to be a man.

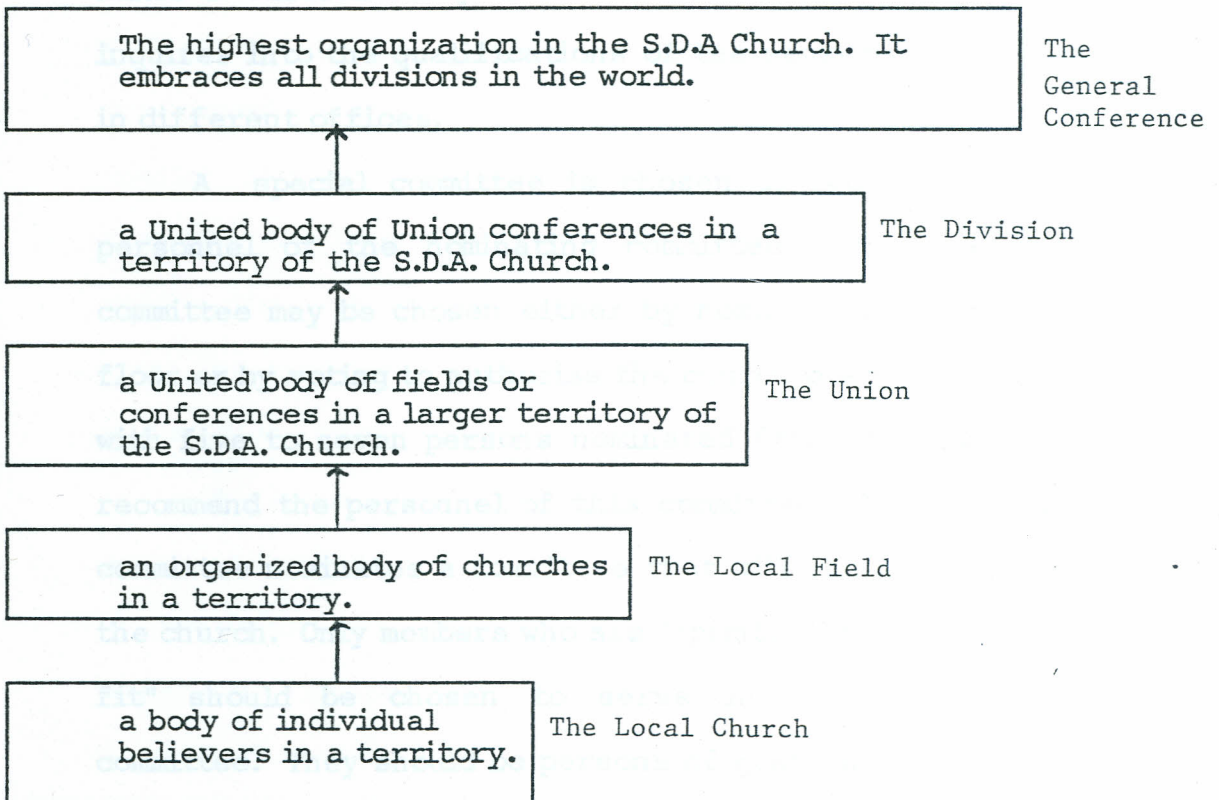
(ii) Effects of Ordination on decision making

Decisions are made at five levels in the S.D.A Church. These are the local church, the local field or conference, the union, the division and the general conference. The General Conference is the highest authority. It is in charge of the administration of the World Church. All the other levels of organisation recognize the General Conference in session as the highest authority under God in the world. Thus, when differences or problems arise in or between organisations, an appeal should be made to the next higher authority until the General Conference is reached. During the interim period, the executive committee constitutes the body with final authority on all questions where a difference in viewpoint may develop.

The executive committee's decision may be revised at a session of the General Conference (S.D.A. Church Manual, 1981:55). Table 2 shows how the S.D.A. Church is organized. It also tells who the members of each of the five levels of organization in the church are.

The structural organisation of the S.D.A. Church.

Table 2



The decisions made by the S.D.A. depend on the level of organization. For instance, the local church which brings together individual believers in a territory will make decisions that will be applicable to that church only.

The commonest decisions that a local church makes is who should occupy particular church offices during a particular term.

In the S.D.A. Church, officers are elected annually through an appointed nominating committee. This committee brings its report to the church which then acts upon the names presented. The nominating committee makes a careful study of the needs of the church and inquires into the qualifications of the members to serve in different offices.

A special committee is chosen to recommend the personnel of the nominating committee. The special committee may be chosen either by nominations from the floor or by voting to authorize the church board together with five to seven persons nominated from the floor to recommend the personnel of this committee. The special committee nominates a committee that will be voted on by the church. Only members who are "spiritually and morally fit" should be chosen to serve in the nominating committee. They should be persons of good judgement and above all, have the welfare and prosperity of the church at heart.

In the S.D.A. churches within the four locations of our study, the majority of the members in the committees for 1989 were men. Some churches especially in Gusii had

no woman in the committees. The chairpersons of the committees in all the churches were men. This would imply that there are very few or no women who are morally and spiritually fit and who have good judgement in the churches. This however, is not the case, for a majority of the church members are women. Out of this big number of women, there must be many who satisfy the conditions mentioned but because they are women, they are not nominated into any committee. Hence, the structure of the church is so male-dominated that women are almost totally excluded from these important decision-making committees. Some churches nominate one or two women amid a crowd of men, so that the church can argue that even the women were represented. Usually, such women end up being overshadowed by the men.

The local church nominates representatives to the local conference. In the East African region, the local conferences and the union are a totally male domain. Women are excluded from these important sessions. This implies that the problems of S.D.A. women are hardly referred to and their views are not heard. A clear illustration of this was given by Pastor Baya of the East African Union. During one of the union sessions, he reported that the Dorcas society members had rejected a uniform that had been designed by the General

Conference of Adventists. All the Dorcas societies in the world were expected to wear this uniform. The Dorcas society members within the East African region however preferred an older uniform they had been wearing. When this problem was tabled for discussion none of the men was able to say why the women had rejected the uniform in preference for the older one. Since there was no woman present, the matter was brushed aside until the views of the women were sought (Baya, O.I.26-3-91).

As long as the conference and the union close out women, their views will remain unheard and their problems unsolved. This is not fair because the Church is made up of women and men. Both genders should be equally represented at all levels of decision-making in the S.D.A. Church.

The picture is not any different at the General Conference sessions. According to Manduku, only a few women attended the 1990 session. Most of them sat and listened as man after man presented papers and chaired discussions. The S.D.A. women therefore, cannot be said to be part of the decision-making machinery in their church. This is mainly because the Church has made ordination such an important requirement for participation in high ranking sessions. In our view, the Church should consider ways of ensuring that women and

men participate fairly in all church affairs.

The foregoing discussion clearly shows that the place and role of Adventist women is subordinate to that of Adventist men. We have also stated that the patriarchal society has greatly influenced what women do and how they are regarded by the people in society. Thus, there must be a change in the social organization of the patriarchal society and consequently a change in the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church. The patriarchal society such as the Gusii described in chapter two may be obliged to have a positive attitude towards women. This will lead to a positive assessment of the abilities of women and therefore equality of women and men in the church and society.

White and the culture of the world. The place of women should be the same as that of men in ordination practice. The women should have a say in decision-making in the church. The church's decision should be based on the needs of women from decision-making and not on the needs of men in the Church.

The present chapter considers the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church. To achieve this objective, the present chapter is divided into the following sub-sections:

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 THE PLACE AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE S.D.A. CHURCH

In chapter four, we discussed the factors influencing the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church. We noted that the missionaries influenced the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church by the example they showed and their teaching since the establishment of the Church in Kenya.

The S.D.A. Church has also selected some references from the Bible that support the subordination of women. We also noted that the teaching of Ellen G. White and the culture of the Abagusii indicate that the place of women should be the home. We also discussed the ordination practice, its effect on the role of women and decision-making in the S.D.A. Church. We showed that the church's decision not to ordain women has excluded them from decision-making and senior leadership positions in the Church.

The present chapter describes and analyses the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya. To achieve this objective, the present chapter is divided into the following sub-sections

- (i) The designated roles of women.
- (ii) Interpretation of women's roles in the S.D.A. Church.
- (iii) How the S.D.A. women perceive their roles in the church.
- (iv) The roles of S.D.A. women in Gusii as compared to the roles of S.D.A. women in Nairobi.

5:1 The Designated Roles of Women

The roles described in this section are those that are mostly or entirely performed by women. The S.D.A. Church views these as feminine roles and will always assign them to women. In the S.D.A. Church, women mainly serve as deaconesses, members of the Dorcas society, Sabbath school teachers and as ushers. They also clean and decorate the church building. Each of these roles are described below.

(i) The Deaconess

The deaconess is a woman whose duties are stipulated by the S.D.A. Church as : caring for the sick and the needy, preparing bread and wine for the Lord's supper, arranging the communion table and covering it

with linen. It is also her duty to see that the table linen, towels, basins and any other items used in the celebration of ordinances are laundered and carefully set aside for future use. The deaconess also assists at the baptismal services. She particularly assists female novices to select suitable garments for baptism and cover them with towels as they come out of the water after immersion.

The number of deaconesses in a church depends on the total population of the church. In highly populated churches, a board of deaconesses is formed with a chairperson and a secretary (S.D.A. Encyclopedia 10,1976:376). Deaconesses are elected to office and serve for a period of one year. Those elected must be morally upright, industrious, hard working, kind and hospitable. These women are also expected to have leadership qualities, to be dedicated to the Adventist faith and to dress modestly (Macharia, O.I. 23-3-91). With regard to election and duties of deaconesses, the S.D.A. Church has adopted the practice of the early Christian Church (Rom. 16:1-20).

Deaconesses are not ordained since the S.D.A. Church has not found any record in the Bible where such women were ordained (S.D.A. Church Manual, 1981:94). The deacons must, however, be ordained before filling the

office. This is a discriminatory practice, for in our view, the only reason why the deaconesses are not ordained is that they are women, otherwise their roles and those of the deacons are both significant. (S.D.A. Church Manual 1981:91-94). A brief comparison of the roles of deacons and deaconesses reinforces this view.

The roles of deacons are stipulated as caring for the church building and property, welcoming members and visitors as they enter the church for worship and assisting them to find seats, and visiting members in their homes. Deaconesses also take care of the church property and building since it is them that clean up the building, the linen and the utensils that are used in the church in various occasions. They also welcome members and visitors as they enter the church for worship. In fact, ushering of visitors is one of the roles that most church members felt was better performed by women as we shall see in section (5:1: [v]).

Deacons assist in the celebrations of various church ordinances. For instances, during baptismal services, they care for the male candidates before and after baptism for decency reasons. Deaconesses too assist in the baptismal services as we had noted earlier. In this case, gender influences the roles of deacons and deaconesses because deacons are expected to take care

of male novices while deaconesses take care of the female novices.

Finally, both deacons and deaconesses are charged with the responsibility of caring for the sick and poor and aiding the unfortunate. Practically however, these responsibilities have been left to S.D.A. women, hence our observation that work of charity and mercy in the S.D.A. Church is mostly left to women ([5:1:ii]). Thus, since the roles of deacons and deaconesses are significant, the S.D.A. Church needs to ordain deaconesses too. The failure to ordain women, to acknowledge publicly their leadership role, appears reminiscent of the lack of public recognition of women's testimony in culture and gives evidence of a form of discrimination. Ordaining deacons elevates their office over and above that of deaconesses in the eyes of the congregation. This is due to the fact that deacons are specially set apart for their responsibilities while deaconesses are not. It is therefore, no wonder that deaconesses are placed under the leadership of the head deacon (S.D.A. Encyclopedia 10,1976:379).

(ii) The Dorcas Society

The work and name of the Dorcas Society in the S.D.A. Church was inspired by the role of Tabitha or Dorcas who is mentioned in the Book of Acts of the Apostles, (9:36). She was a widow who spent her time doing the work of charity and mercy. She made garments which she distributed to those in need. Therefore, like Tabitha, members of the Dorcas Society attend to those in need either spiritually or mentariially regardless of gender, creed, race or ethnic group. The Dorcas Society is made up of women of the S.D.A. faith. Membership is open to all S.D.A. women who then devote their time and talents to gathering and preparing food, clothing and other supplies for the poor and the needy. They also visit and pray for the sick either in hospitals or in their homes. Whenever necessary, the Dorcas Society members also visit particular families to evangelize and educate them on matters related to health and diet.

The materials and funds used by this society are voluntarily donated by its members and the Church. The S.D.A. Church also sets aside a fraction of its finances for any project which the Dorcas Society members deem suitable. It is, however, due to the initiative and hard work of its members that the society's duties are

accomplished (Maru, 0.1.14-3-91).

Majority of S.D.A. women tend to offer their services as members of the Dorcas Society. The services they offer are very important but they are limited to the work of charity and mercy. Some of these women are talented evangelists but they cannot use their talent adequately. This is because the chances of female evangelization are pretty limited. This is as a result of the fact that the S.D.A. Church in Kenya does not ordain women nor does it train a significant number of female theologians as we noted in chapter three (3.3.2). Consequently, the church does not assign women evangelical duties. Hence, whenever women preach, it is because of their own free will. They are not obliged to evangelize no matter how fruitful their efforts may be.

The S.D.A. Church as a whole is charged with the responsibility of helping the poor and the needy in society. In our view, therefore, the roles performed by members of the Dorcas Society should be done by the whole Church. This will ensure that both women and men are dedicated to the service of the betterment of the community.

The Dorcas Society is placed under the leadership of female officials. There is a president, a vice-president, a secretary and a treasurer. In most cases,

the role of a secretary and that of a treasurer are performed by one person. All these officials are elected during the regular church elections and they serve for a period of one year just like other elected church officers.

(iii) Sabbath School Teachers

The Sabbath school is also referred to as "the church at study". Every Saturday morning, the Church dedicates some time to the systematic study of the word of God. Every member of the Church including the youth, ministers, church officers, laymen and laywomen are expected to attend these studies. The main features of the Sabbath school are listening to missionary reports and a study of the Sabbath school lesson. The former involves reading various missions' progress reports. These are records of missionary work such as evangelism and medical ministry that have been done in other parts of the world by particular persons. These reports are read to the congregations in order to encourage those who are present to help in enhancing Adventist missionary work either materially or by evangelical campaigns. The latter refers to a systematic study of the Sabbath school lesson. These lessons are studied

daily and then discussed by the Sabbath school groups with the help of the Sabbath school teachers. (For effective management and teaching of the Sabbath school lessons, the church members are divided into various ages and sometimes gender groups).

A superintendent is in charge of the Sabbath school. He or she is normally elected into the office and serves for a period of one year. The superintendent's duties are planning for the smooth and effective operation of the school, administration of all the divisions of the Sabbath school, organizing the Sabbath school teachers' meetings and promoting the mission programmes. S.D.A. women are very active during this period of the worship programme. In some S.D.A. congregations women work as superintendents or assistant superintendent. Most of the Sabbath school teachers are women. Women are particularly in charge of children's classes. In fact, in all the churches we visited during the study, women were in charge of the cradle-roll class. This class comprises children between two and four years of age. The reason given for this was that women are good at handling children and that due to their biological make-up they are better placed in handling children (Luyeho, O.I. 16-5-91).

Feminists do not, however, see any relationship

between the biological makeup of women and the roles they are assigned by the patriarchal society and the church. As Oakley observed:

... it is wide range of cultural pressures... Not biological, psychological or economic fate that determine the female role... It is socialization in a man's world which offers the lessons that girls learn (Oakley, 1981:100).

Thus, the patriarchal society and the church have assigned women the responsibility of caring for children and have created myths about the nature of women to justify this role allocation. The women too, have come to see this as their exclusive role due to socialization in a man's world, for as we noted in chapter two, (2:2), gender roles are learned. Thus, Gusii boys and girls are socialized into their respective roles in society from a very early age. They also learn (by doing), their future roles as adults in the Gusii Society.

(iv) Cleaning and decorating the church building

Women clean up and decorate most of the churches. The kind of cleaning largely depends on the type of building. For instance in cases where the buildings are permanent and the floors are cemented, women mop the floors. Where the buildings are not permanent, women

smear the buildings with clay. In Nairobi however, the situation is different. The Nairobi Central Church has employed a man who cleans and arranges the seats in the Church. Our inquiry on why women are charged with roles mentioned above yielded such responses as:

the society has influenced the culture

states "those are women's duties"

ignored "They and women will do it"

will "women are good at them"

clearly assigns him this responsibility

Man: But if it is women's duty to clean the churches, then the Nairobi Central Church could have hired a woman to do the work. In our view, this Church has employed a man to clean the Church, not because there was no woman who was suitable for the job but because this is a paid employment. The man who cleans up the Nairobi Central Church is paid for the services he renders while the women in a majority of the churches offer their services free. This is not surprising because in patriarchal societies, women's work is often described as caring work. It is labour that promotes the welfare of others rather than the welfare and development of the worker herself (Cowered, 1983: 221-252). On these grounds, women can and are expected to offer free services while men are paid for similar services.

Despite the fact that deacons are charged with the cleaning of the church, it is women who usually do the work. This is mainly because in the patriarchal society, responsibilities related to the private sphere such as cleaning were done by women (Elshtain, 1981:3-11). Hence, the society has influenced the role of women to the extent that any contrary instruction is bound to be ignored. Thus, the deacon will not clean the church, he will expect a woman to do it even though the church manual clearly assigns him this responsibility (S.D.A. Church Manual, 1981 :91).

(v) Ushers of visitors

Ushers usually stand at the church entrance (s) to greet and welcome those coming for the Sabbath worship. They also show visitors where to sit and at the end of the worship service, they ensure that the congregation leaves the church in an orderly manner. Women are the best choice for this role because they enjoy themselves as they perform it. Besides, they are capable of welcoming visitors with a smile (Misiani, O.I.15-4-91). The female ushers in many churches shook the hands of the in-coming worshippers and uttered welcoming words. Their male counter-parts showed them where to sit. In some

cases, only female ushers could be seen in action. Thus although most of the S.D.A. churches we visited had male and female ushers, it is the latter who actively performed this role.

5.2 Interpretation of women's role in the S.D.A. Church

The patriarchal society plays a big part in defining the roles of women and men. As we had mentioned earlier, the Church is influenced greatly by the life in the society. Hence, the role of women in the patriarchal society such as Gusii is clearly reflected in the church. In this society, women were and still are eliminated from public life and domesticated under male leadership. In Gusii for instance, women were confined to the home and their roles were within the homes. Men on the other hand were not expected to be at home during day time or to take up any roles within the home. All their roles were performed outside the home as we noted in chapter two (2:2:[i]).

The church's division of roles among the genders is also influenced by this arrangement. Table 3 which shows the roles of women at home and in the church strengthens this view.

Table 3

Roles of Gusii women at home and in church

Roles of women in a Gusii home	Roles of women in the S.D.A. Church
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking care of children 2. Washing the family linen and utensils 3. Cooking the family meals. 4. Ensuring that the family has enough clothing. 5. Entertaining guests and ensuring that they have enough to eat and drink. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching children's sabbath school class 2. Washing linen and utensils used by the congregation in the celebration of ordinances such as baptism and Holy communion. 3. Preparing bread and wine for the Holy communion. 4. As the Dorcas society, women make and collect clothing and give them to the poor. 5. Ushering of visitors and providing them with food.

S.D.A.women take part in roles that can be described as supportive, that is, the work they do is aimed at supporting the main functions of the Church. For instance, women welcome visitors so that the pastor can preach to them. They prepare bread and wine for the Holy

Communion so that the pastor can bless it and serve the congregation. Women also teach children's classes and when they are old enough, the pastor baptizes them. All these are duties that women can perform if they were allowed to.

The roles performed by S.D.A. women are normally viewed as less important by the church members as compared to those performed by men. For example, during the Sabbath worship, women play active role in the Sabbath school. The majority of our informants felt that the Sabbath school is not the main part of the worship service. Therefore, they can afford to miss the Sabbath school but they always try to attend the divine service which the congregations regard as the central part of the worship service. The divine service is almost entirely conducted by men. Women are at times included among those leading worship. However, they are most often excluded from the main aspects of worship, like preaching which carries the highest status and which calls for most attention from the people. What makes the divine service very important is the sermon which is delivered.

In our view, all parts of the worship service are very enriching. The church members, however, prefer the

divine service because it is normally conducted by ordained ministers. The word of God which the congregation listens to then is referred to as "the food for God's flock" or "the bread of life". In describing this sermon, the S.D.A. Church Manual states:

...then comes the most important part of the worship hour - the spiritual feeding of the flock of God. Blessed results to the glory of God always follow when a congregation is truly fed and feels that God has truly visited them...the minister who brings the message, that is, breaks the bread of life should fully sense the sacredness of this work (1981:113).

It has been the tradition of the S.D.A. Church in Kenya that this sermon is given by men. According to pastor Muraya, his congregation likes it that way. On special occasions like the Dorcas Sabbath when women give the sermon, the congregation grumbles showing their dissatisfaction (O.I. 21-3-93). The divine service has become a man's realm, for over the ages men have fed the congregation with spiritual food. Women are, therefore, expected to keep off this section of the worship service. The value attached to all the roles women perform is less than that attached to men's roles. As Richards observed, it is hard to place any value on most of the traditional feminine roles (Richards, 1976:200).

Housework for instance, can be done by all women without going for any formal training. This is also true for a majority of the roles women perform in the S.D.A. Church. A good example is the work done by the members of the Dorcas Society. They make simple clothing and collect other supplies for the poor and the needy. They also evangelize although they have not been specially trained and set apart by the rite of ordination. This is unlike the role of a pastor or an ordained minister who has to go through theological training and is specially set apart for his work by the rite of ordination.

Women's roles are repetitive and will in most cases pass unnoticed. For instance, women clean and decorate the Church for each Sabbath worship but their efforts are hardly acknowledged. Although the S.D.A. Church normally praises those who have done some appreciable work at the time reserved for announcements, in none of the churches we visited were women praised for thoroughly cleaning the church and decorating it. In our view, such good work deserves appreciation from the church as a whole.

Women perform roles for which there is no remuneration. All the roles described in chapter five (5:1), are free services. Union, conference, and division officials who are paid for their services are men. The

ministers and church pastors are also men. These officers are also entitled to allowances such as house allowances and children's education allowance.

Finally S.D.A. women are ever serving as deputies. Hardly are women elected to senior leadership positions unless they are going to be in charge of other women and children. This is clear from the lists of church officers that we obtained from various churches. In all cases, the leader of the diaconate (deacons and deaconesses), was the head deacon. In most cases, the Sabbath school superintendent was a man while his deputy was a woman. This was the trend in most of the church offices apart from the Dorcas Society and the cradle-roll class where women's leadership was obvious.

5:3 How S.D.A. Women Perceive Their Roles in The Church.

In this section an attempt is made to show how women view their roles in the church. S.D.A. women in the four locations of our study did not argue against the roles assigned to them by the church. They have accepted their roles and in most cases perform them satisfactorily. Hence, S.D.A women have accepted their subordinate role in the Church. In this study, we argue that S.D.A. women have been subjugated for so long that they are not even

aware of it. They have over the ages come to regard their subordinate position in the church as one ordained by God, that is, the way things should be. This argument is based on our findings in the course of our study.

While conducting the fieldwork, we noticed that the majority of S.D.A. women are content with the way things are. Most of them would not suggest any changes with regard to the place and role of women in the church. Hence, there are no changes that the majority look forward to. The few who thought that women have a right to higher ranks also felt that change was impossible since things have been the way they are for so long.

The informants cited several reasons why women are subordinated in the church. In the first place, they argued that since the Old Testament time, leadership in religious matters has been priestly. Since all the priests were men, they see no reason why this trend should change. As far as Judaism was concerned, women were subordinate and inferior to men. In fact women were allowed into the temple premises only as far as the court-of-women. They did not count at all for the quorum of ten necessary for a synagogue service to be held. Thus, women on their own would never hold an official service (cf. Evans, 1983:35-36).

This trend, however, does not continue to the New Testament times. Jesus' attitude towards women when considered in comparison with the place of women in Judaism presents a contrast. Jesus healed women, allowed them to touch and even follow him. His attitude was startlingly new, He was able to mix freely and naturally with women of all sorts (cf. Lk.8:1-3, Jn.12:1-28, Lk. 10:38-42). Hence, in the New Testament the attitude towards women had changed from what it was in the Old Testament. As a result, women do not have to be subordinated because of the trend in Judaism for this clearly changed at the time of Jesus.

Second, some female informants argued that men command respect and have authority unlike women. Thus, if women are selected for leadership positions they may be looked down upon. These women clearly had a negative attitude towards the ability and image as women. In our view, this is a result of a negative image of women presented to people by the patriarchal society. These women have internalised this negative image and as a result they lack respect for themselves and other women. Their attitude towards women is oppressive in the sense that they expect nothing good to come from them. Consequently, these women always work for the downfall of other women (cf. Freire, 1976:11).

Third, women view themselves as the weaker sex who

should always be led. This is not necessarily true for as we noted in chapter two, (2:3), Gusi women work throughout the day and everyday and the work they do is not light. Weakness is however, generally attributed to all women by the patriarchal society. The Roman Catholic church fathers such as Tertullian also propagated the idea that women are weak. This is clearly brought out by Rogers who noted:

The early church fathers admonished women to be subservient and content with their subordinate station in life. Women had no spiritual authority and were ordered to be subject to their husbands in everything. The major Christian writers from the first through to the eighth centuries added legitimacy and authority to patriarchal practices of the day as they stressed the mental frailty of the women (1966:15).

The women in the third category therefore repeated what had been told by the church and the society. Their self images should be appraised so that they can view their abilities and those of other women more positively.

Finally, the informants argued that women are very tempting. In this case if they became leaders they may lead many to sin. This view is also shared by Jewish and Christian religions. In these religions, it is argued that woman (Eve) was solely responsible for the fall of man (Adam). These religions also propagate the view that

women, the descendants of Eve, are a danger to men (Wanjala, 1986:15). In our society today, however, men are often responsible for the downfall of women in society. A good example is that of young girls who drop out of schools due to premarital pregnancies. Most of these girls are lured to premarital sex (which is a sin) by rich men who give them money and other gifts. When they get pregnant, the men almost always abandon them (cf. Obbo, 1980:159; Riria, 1983:16).

The S.D.A. women have contributed a lot in endorsing the unjust situation in their church. This is because they believe the way things are can hardly change. It is God's design and it works to their advantage, that is, it enables them to serve God with humility. In conclusion, S.D.A. women do not consider themselves as being capable of doing what men can do. The women therefore do not consider themselves as good enough to do ministerial work. Thus, women had better participate in the subsidiary roles they have always taken part in for their ability and nature do not favour them to do otherwise. S.D.A. women have in this case accepted the discriminatory practices in this Church and they prefer to be submissive to the male-dominated church leadership.

5:4 The Roles of S.D.A. Women in Gusii as Compared to The Roles of S.D.A. Women in Nairobi.

The discussion in this section focuses primarily on the similarities and differences between the role of women in Gusii as opposed to the role of women in Nairobi. This comparison was necessitated by our assumption in chapter one (1:2:1) that the roles women play in the S.D.A. Church in Gusii differ significantly from those played by those in Nairobi. Our study, however, yielded different results as shown below.

Essentially, there was no significant difference in the roles of women in these two locations of our study. In both Gusii and Nairobi, women participated in the roles which the Church refers to as "feminine roles". These roles are described in chapter five (5:1). The difference however, lay in the level of participation. That is, women in Nairobi participated more in their roles than those in Gusii. Nairobi women perform their roles with a lot of vigour and enthusiasm. For instance, the Dorcas societies in the churches we visited in Nairobi were very active and well-organized.

Due to their enthusiasm and readiness to work, these societies have achieved a lot. A good example is the New Life Church Dorcas Society. In 1990, they were

able to collect and make enough clothing, food and money which enabled them to go and evangelize to the Maasai of Kajiado District (Maru, O.I.14-391). This was not the case in most of the churches in Gusii where there was a clear lack of interest in their roles in the same said societies.

Within Nairobi and Gusii, there were individual women who readily participated in other roles apart from the traditionally feminine ones. Examples include Luyeho, Ghettuba, Oyondi, Nyamache, and Manduku. Luyeho had occasionally preached in her church (O.I. 16-5-91). Manduku, Oyondi, and Nyamache were members of the church board in Kisii Central Church. Ghettuba was the church clerk for the New Life Church in Nairobi. Thus, it is not the location of the church (whether rural or urban) that made the difference, rather it was the level of conscientization that the various women had reached. This was as a result of education, the type of occupation, participation in secular women liberation movements - especially Forum '85, association with missionaries from the West, and travelling outside Africa.

Luyeho for instance, has been a tutor at Kamagambo Teacher's College for the last eleven years. She has been associating with White missionaries who have been working in Kamagambo for all these years. White women especially those from North America participate greatly

in church affairs because in their home country women have a chance on church leadership. Association with these missionaries may have greatly influenced her outlook on church roles. Hence, she participates in various levels in the church's hierarchy. This must have prompted her observation on church roles. She said:

The S.D.A. Church does not consider women and men equally for important roles. Women will be selected when there is totally no man who can serve in some of the positions (O.I.16-5-91).

This implies that it is not always that the church selects the most qualified person for given offices. Gender bars the women so that men, some of whom may be incompetent take up some offices. In our view, the use of gender as a criterion can therefore exclude the choice of the most competent individual were that person found to be a women.

Ghettuba is an accountant for an international organisation based in Nairobi. Her job has enabled her to meet and associate with many people at an international level. This has boosted her self-perception. As a result, she becomes quite militant when being subordinated, especially in the secular world. But as far as church work is concerned, she says:

The work of the lord requires humility and being subordinate in the church has enabled me to serve God humbly (O.I.24-3-91).

Manduku is a nurse by profession. She works in a nursing home she jointly owns with her husband. She attended the July 1990 General Conference of Adventists in U.S.A. Hence, she saw what women from other parts of the world especially North America did and heard what they said. They presented papers and some were trained pastors. Manduku took part in the discussion on whether women should be ordained or not. As a result of this experience, she argues;

Women are more in the church and therefore, they need a chance to serve God in higher ranks. Selection of persons into church offices should depend on ones willingness to serve God and spiritual standing, not gender (Manduku, O.I.17-5-91).

Women liberation movements especially the Forum '85 has played a part in boosting the women's self-perception. Mrs. Oyondi who participated as a delegate from Gusii is able to perceive some discriminatory practices of the church. She sees women and men as people ordained by God to serve equally. Hence, women should be given equal chances to serve God in higher

ranks. If S.D.A. women were considered fully, they would be able to perform various roles in the church, even those that are traditionally masculine. This is because they will be able to perceive tradition differently and, will develop better self-images. Women's perception of their roles depends on where they are in the process of conscientization. According to Nasimuyu, the formal process of conscientization has six steps or levels. In the first place, one has to be aware of ones dignity and worth and that of others. In relation to this step, S.D.A. women ought to see themselves as capable of serving God in various ways and that they are worthy of respect. They should also see themselves as having been created in the image and likeness of God and therefore equal partners in the service of God with men at all levels.

The second level is the awakening of critical judgement. At this step people begin to analyse what they are taught or told about life and themselves. As a result, they do not believe all that they have been told. The third step is the demythification of myths. One has to realise that myths have the power to enslave persons. Examples of such myths are that women are weaker and that male-dominated leadership is God's design of how the society and the church should be structured. These

myths have to be broken in order to get to the reality of issues.

Fourth, the process of conscientization is centred on love and dialogue. At this stage, there has to be a dialogue between the oppressor and the oppressed. Through love and respect, each has to listen to what the other has to say. Hence, the S.D.A. women should confront the Church leadership and hold discussions concerning their place and the role in the Church.

Fifth, the process has to be prophetic. At this stage all that dehumanizes people should be renounced. The discriminatory practices and attitudes which make women be subordinate have to be renounced.

The final stage is commitment to transforming others. This involves entering into solidarity with the oppressed with an aim of making changes. The S.D.A. women have to come together to pray and identify the changes they want at this stage. Consequently, they should lay strategies of attaining what they want (Nasimiya, 1990: Unpublished Manuscript, Freire, 1972:20-44).

The women we interviewed during the study can be said to have reached various levels of the process of conscientization hence their differing outlook on issues. A majority of these women have not been able to get to the first step of the process of conscientization. Hence,

they see women as weak, dirty and cowards who cannot do ministerial work. (Women are seen as dirty - ritually unclean due to the flow of blood during menstruation and child-birth). The women in this category are therefore not aware of their own dignity and worth and that of other women. They do not question any of the church's practices for they still believe all that they have been told about themselves. They have also internalised the oppression and thus support the oppressive system.

There were a number of women who may be said to have reached the third level. This is because they are aware of their own dignity and worth and that of others. They have realised that the S.D.A. Church subordinates women. They know that women too can serve God in various capacities, but they have not entered into a dialogue with the oppressor (the Church), nor are they working towards any transformation. These women have therefore accepted the oppressive situation as it is.

In chapter one (1:0), we mentioned that the American Society voted for the ordination of women but that their vote was vetoed by that of the rest of the world church. If this society was placed on the ladder of conscientization, they will be almost at the top. The situation in the world church where women are discriminated is a challenge to the Americans to pursue

solidarity and assist their sisters in the conscientization necessary to deal effectively with that oppression.

The American society has to try and help the world churches to perceive and criticize the discriminatory practices that they hold. The women especially may have to put greater effort in this for it is their lot that is oppressed. This is because of the conviction in liberation theology that if an oppressed group or person work for their emancipation they will always succeed (cf. Freire, 1972:127; Gutierrez, 1973:113). As the S.D.A. women in the world church, they can confront the discriminatory structure of the Church. In this way, they may achieve their aim, that is, an S.D.A. Church where both men and women are equally regarded.

5:5:0 Conclusion

This study has sought to examine the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church in Kenya by analysing the dynamics of the patriarchal culture of both the Gusii society and the S.D.A. Church.

The method adopted for this study has been both analytical and descriptive. It is analytical in the sense that an analysis of oral and documentary evidence has

been used to support the central argument that S.D.A. women have been relegated to subordinate position as a God-given place and they have perpetuated that image themselves. In order to participate effectively in the church and other spheres of life S.D.A. women need to view themselves and their abilities more positively and then to work towards transforming the attitudes held by the members of the Church.

This study is descriptive because an attempt is made to describe the Gusii society and the S.D.A. Church. For instance, in chapter two we noted that Gusii women are oppressed and that their status is much lower than that of men. This argument is clearly supported by a description of the role of women in the socio-political setup of the Gusii society and the socialization of women and men into their respective roles in society.

A number of issues have been raised in this study. In the first place, the origin of the subordination of women has been traced to the patriarchal social system. The social structures that are operative in patriarchal societies were set up and propounded by men for their own advantage. Hence, since Gusii is both patriarchal and patrilocal in organisation, the place and role of women is defined by men. The social and political forces have made it impossible for women to have any leadership or

decision-making roles. Consequently, women occupy a subordinate place and are socialized to accept their second class place.

Second, we noted that the Adventist missionaries introduced education for both male and female converts. But while the major aim of the school enterprise was to evangelize and train evangelists, female converts were taught to be good Christian wives and mothers (chapter three). As a result of this role differentiation, Adventist women could only play roles that were related to their roles in the home and in the church (chapter four, 4:1).

Finally, we noted that the S.D.A. Church in Kenya is strongly influenced by the life in patriarchal society. Hence, the roles the church has assigned to women have a close equivalent to some feminine roles in the patriarchal society. Due to this society's influence, the abilities of women are belittled and their efforts devalued. Consequently, the S.D.A. Church in Kenya is sceptical about ordaining a woman as a church minister as we have shown in chapter four (4:5:3). This has limited the roles of Adventist women to only the works of charity and mercy.

Our analysis of the structural organization of the S.D.A. Church revealed that the church is oppressive to

women. This is because leadership and decision-making in the church are male-dominated. Male executives at various levels of the Church's structural organisation make the decisions that affect women, men and children. In view of this, we conclude that the S.D.A. Church in Gusii has neither improved the position of women nor changed their roles in the society.

In the course of our study, a number of hypotheses were put to test and conclusions reached. The first assumption was that the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church are subordinate to those of men because the church has selected biblical texts that support their cultural practices and biases with regard to the place and role of women. In view of this, our study revealed that the culture of the Abagusii has clearly defined the place and role of women (chapter two). The Abagusii also devalue all the roles that are labelled feminine so as to elevate the status of men in society. St. Paul's letters were also frequently quoted with regard to the place and role of women in the church. It was clear that most of our informants would be quite satisfied if women kept silent in the Church and had their heads covered during worship (1 Cor. 11:2-16, 14:34-36). The Gusii society also expected women to be silent and to obey orders.

Our second assumption was that women in the S.D.A. Church are theoretically viewed as equal to men but this is not reflected in practice. Our analysis of the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church confirmed this. The informants repeatedly said that women and men are equal because they are made in the image and likeness of God. No evidence accumulated to justify that allegation. Going by our definition of equality in Chapter four (4:5), we expected a fair division of the rights, duties, responsibilities and privileges between women and men in the Church. This kind of division does not exist because the church has limited the roles of women in the church.

The third assumption was that the roles played by Adventist women in Gusii differ significantly from those played by S.D.A. women in Nairobi. This hypothesis was disapproved during the study. The difference lay in the level of participation, that is, women in Nairobi participated more in their roles than those in Gusii. We concluded that the location (whether rural or urban), does not matter when it comes to the role of women. It is the level of conscientization of specific women that matters. This is why there were a few women both in Gusii and Nairobi who performed roles that were hardly assigned to or performed by women. In these locations, there were also many other women who had poor self-images. These

women spent their time criticizing themselves and other women. This leads to the fourth hypothesis which states that women in the S.D.A. Church have internalized their subordinate place and roles and as a result, are ready to disqualify any woman who question, their position. We noted that women are against each other and even against themselves. This is because they are not aware of their own dignity and worth (chapter four 5:3). These women have accepted their subordinate place and role in the Church as God's will. This implies that they are unaware of the social, political and religious forces in play in their society. It should be remembered that the whole process of liberation requires one to make a critical analysis of his or her own situation. It is as a result of an oppressive system of the church however, that women have kept silent in the Church.

Lastly, we noted that other factors which influence the place and role of women in the S.D.A. Church are, the teachings of Ellen G. White and the missionaries who have been serving the S.D.A. Church in Kenya since its establishment in 1906. We noted that the Church always refers to the writings of Ellen G. White before making any decision. Due to her socialization in a patriarchal society, Ellen G. White's teachings place women in the private sphere of the home. Her message is therefore

inhibitive to other women. The missionaries had differing influence on the role of women in the Church. This was due to the changes that took place in society at different times.

In conclusion, this study has been an attempt to contribute to the universal struggle for the liberation of women from male oppression. It is also aimed at putting into record observations and experiences of women in the S.D.A. Church with an aim of showing their place and role. It is not an exhaustive study. It is hoped that the areas that have not been covered will be tackled by other scholars and researchers.

5:5:1 Suggestions for further study

This has been a survey on the place and role of women in S.D.A. Church. The study was done in two main locations-Nairobi and Gusii. We also visited Gendia mission in South Nyanza and Baraton University in Nandi District. There are several issues that were not covered in this study because there was need to limit ourselves to the scope and the stated problem. Further investigation may therefore be done on the following issues:

the Church. They stand a better chance

1. The role of S.D.A. women in education, health and agriculture.
2. Ways of conscientizing both women and men in the S.D.A. Church so that the Church can liberate itself from all forms of oppression.
3. The effect of traditional beliefs and practices on the place of women both in the society and in the Church in all ethnic communities to which Adventism has spread.

5:5:2 Recommendations with regard to gender roles in the S.D.A. Church

1. The S.D.A. Church needs to train more female theologians and employ them to serve the Church as pastors. Both male and female pastors need to be ordained to serve the Church in various capacities. This will ensure that both women and men play equal roles in the Church.
2. Women who form the bulk of the congregation need to be included more in the decision-making organs of the Church. They stand a better chance of knowing,

identifying and understanding their own needs. They, therefore, need to speak for themselves.

3. The S.D.A. Church needs to treat women and men equally. Instead of considering gender before selecting or electing officers, abilities, education qualifications and spiritual standing of individuals should be taken into account.
4. The S.D.A. needs to involve more women in preaching.
5. The Dorcas Society performs a noble task. But they are faced with financial limitations. The Church should support their activities more effectively.
6. The S.D.A. Church needs to offer awareness education for all its members.

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KEY INFORMANTS

Name	Date of interview	Place of interview
1. Abel Nyakundi	5-5-91	Kiogoro
2. Andrew Herold	15-5-91	Kamagambo
3. Anna Nyamache (Mrs.)	18-5-91	Kisii
4. Ang'ienda (pastor)	15-5-91	Kamagambo
5. Aska Mbotera (Mrs.)	14-5-91	Nyamonena
6. Ating'a (Mrs.)	24-3-91	Nairobi
7. Baya (Pastor)	26-3-91	Nairobi
8. Beatrice Ghattuba (Mrs.)	24-3-91	Nairobi
9. Bwana (Mr.)	16-3-91	Nairobi
10. Dorina Mosi (Mrs.)	18-5-91	Gendia
11. Dorothy Holm (Mrs.)	28-5-91	Baraton
12. Elijah O. Olweny (Mr.)	18-5-91	Gendia
13. Elizaphan Oendo (pastor)	21-5-91	Tabaka
14. Eunice Matiang'i (Mrs.)	16-5-91	Kamagambo
15. Jane Auma Otondi (Ms.)	14-4-91	Nairobi
16. Manduku k(Mrs.)	17-5-91	Kisii
17. Maru (Mrs.)	14-5-91	Nairobi
18. Mary Getui (Mrs.)	23-3-91	Nairobi
19. Misiani S. (pastor)	15-4-91	Nairobi
20. Mititi (pastor)	17-5-91	Kisii

21. Muraya Ebrahim (pastor)	21-3-91	Nairobi
22. Martha Ong'uti (Mrs.)	16-5-91	Kamagambo
23. Nancy Macharia (Mrs.)	23-3-91	Nairobi
24. Nathan ogeto (pastor)	15-5-91	Kamagambo
25. Nyatika C.N. (Mrs.)	16-5-91	Kamagambo
26. Nyamwanda (pastor)	15-3-91	Nairobi
27. Ombuyi (pastor)	16-4-91	Kisii
28. Ombati Nyatagi (Mr.)	6-5-91	Gakero
29. Omulo (pastor)	24-3-93	Nairobi
30. Osborne (pastor)	23-5-91	Baraton
31. Oyondi (Mrs.)	17-5-91	Kisii
32. Pauline Mose (Mrs.)	14-5-91	Nairobi
33. Rahabu Luyeho (Mrs.)	16-5-91	Kamagambo
34. Ricketts (pastor)	23-3-91	Nairobi
35. Yabesh Magacha (Mr.)	10-5-91	Egetuki
36. Yaola Mike Wafula (Mr.)	16-5-91	Kamagambo

SAMPLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS .

A. Personal Details

- Name:
- Age:
- Occupation:
- highest level of education attained:
(highest class/course attended)

B. Questions on the role of women in the S.D.A Church.

1. Enumerate the roles of women in the S.D.A. Church
2. Enumerate the roles of men in the S.D.A. Church
3. In your opinion, are the gender roles fairly distributed? Give reasons for your answer.
4. In your opinion, should the women be ordained as ministers? Explain.
5. Are women capable of performing the roles of ordained ministers? Give reasons for your answer.
6. What does equality between women and men mean?
7. How should this equality be manifested in the S.D.A. Church.

C. Questions on the role of women during the sababath worship

8. What are the main duties of women during the Sabbath worship?
9. Are there any duties that are reserved for either male or female members? Why?

10. How are people selected to take up roles during the Sabbath worship?
11. In your opinion is the method of selection fair? Give reasons for your answer.
12. Are there any changes you would suggest as far as the division of roles during Sabbath worship is concerned?
13. How are members of the Dorcas Society and the Deaconesses selected.
14. List the qualities considered.
15. What are the main duties of Deaconesses?
16. What are the roles of the Dorcas society Members?
17. Do you think the roles listed for questions 15 and 16 should be performed entirely by women? Explain.
18. What changes would you suggest with regard to the roles mentioned in questions 15, 16 and 17?

E. Questions on decision making in the S.D.A. Church.

19. What decisions are made in:

- (i) a local church
- (ii) a local field, or conference
- (iii) a union
- (iv) a division
- (v) The General Conference in session.

20. Are Women part of the decision-making machinery in all these levels of organization? Explain.

21. Are there women who are employed to work in the local church? If there, are explain what type of work they do.

22. Do women work in the local fields and Conferences?

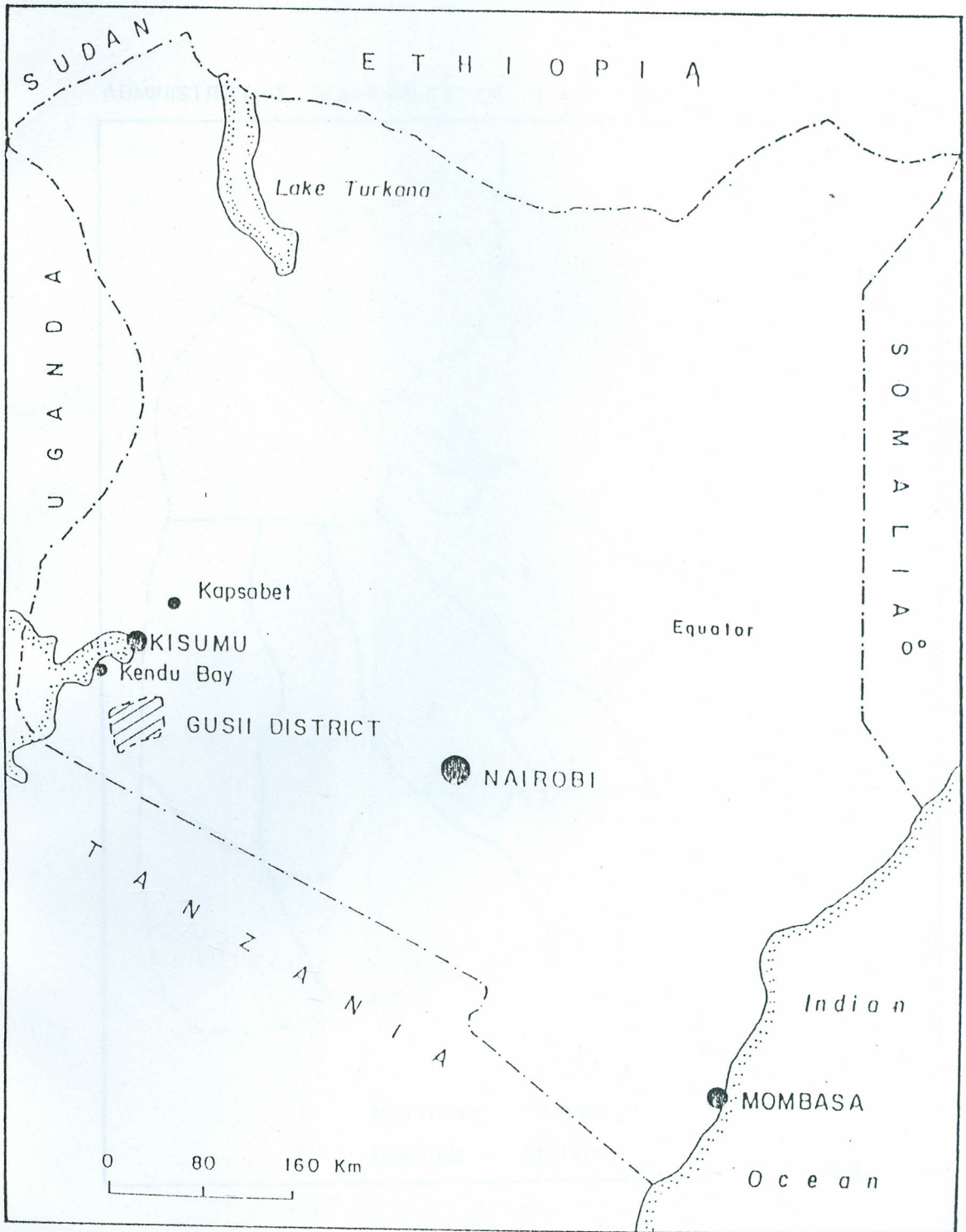
- What are their jobs
- If there are none, explain why

23. Can a woman be a director of a Field or Conference in the S.D.A. Church? Explain why

24. What changes would you suggest so far as decision-making in the S.D.A. Church is concerned.

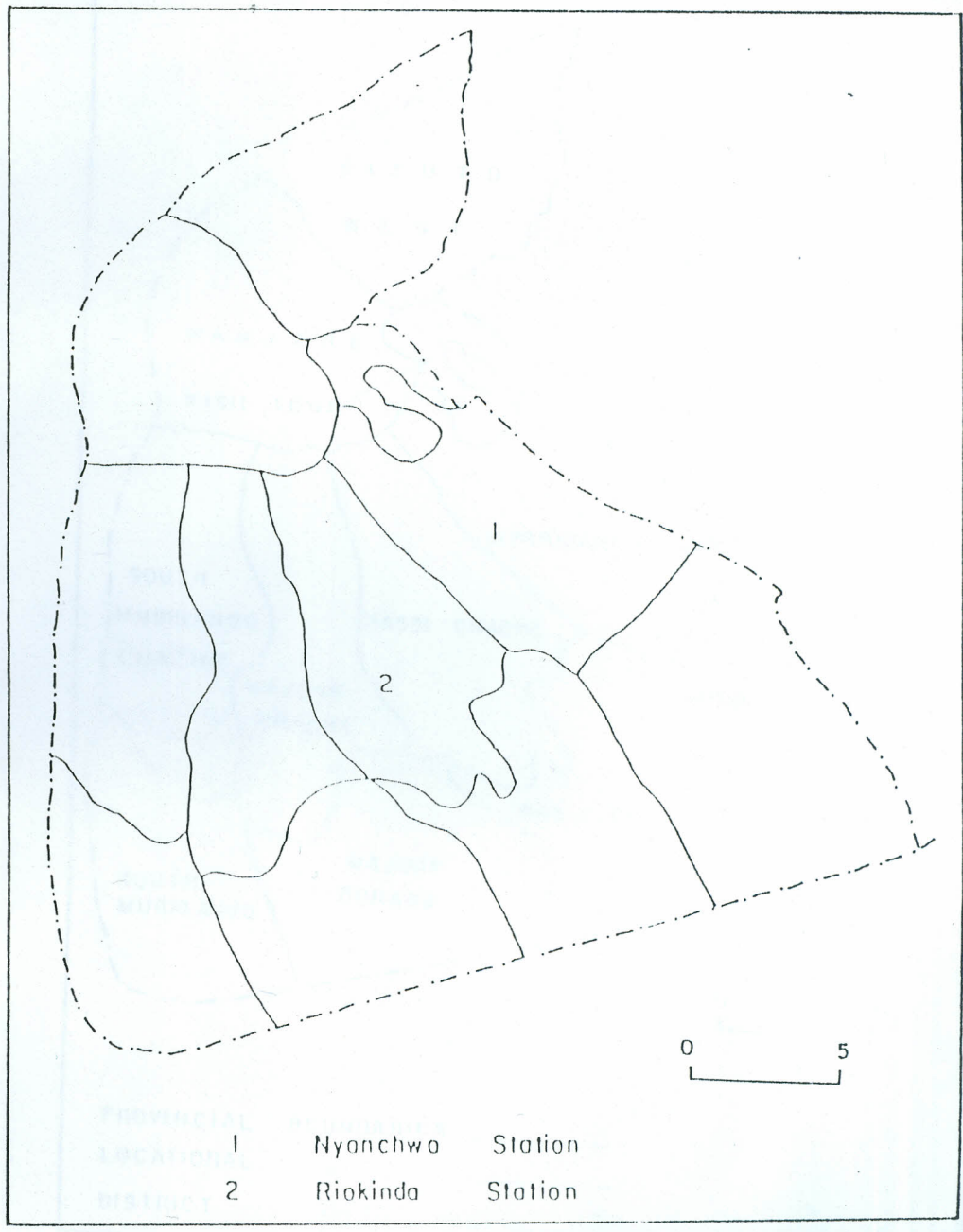
MAP 1

LOCATIONAL MAP OF GUSII, NAIROBI, KENDU BAY AND KAPSABET



MAP 2

ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES OF S.D.A. CHURCH GUSII DISTRICT



MAP 3

GUSII DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES

