

## **‘Maame, You Are a Witch’: An Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Witchcraft in Ghanaian Socio-Religious Life**

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### **Abstract**

This paper is an investigation into the phenomenon of witchcraft among Ghanaians. It approaches it from the perspective of Pentecostal prophetism. It argues that like in primal Akan belief Ghanaian Pentecostals attribute most evil to the activities of witchcraft. Considered as evil forces, witches are believed to possess destructive powers and are elusive in their operations to the ordinary person. Therefore, their activities cannot be ignored if people want to enjoy life to the fullest. This means it is important that believers engage in spiritual activities that help to break their powers over their human victims. This is where deliverance, an ambiguous spiritual activity, comes in.

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

## 1. Introduction

The question this paper will answer is: What are the characteristics, social impact and ways of coping with witchcraft in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism, and to what extent does the Akan primal worldview influence such understanding? As a phenomenon, prophetism continues to characterize Ghanaian socio-religious life. Prophetic services/meetings are reaching a crescendo louder than most other brands of Christianity. What is interesting is that similar phenomena are characterizing many non-Christian religious groups. Prophets, Christians and non-Christians, find the media (radio, television, bill-boards, posters, handbills, and the like) as the best means of advertising their prowess. A characteristic feature of prophetism is the place of witchcraft as causality of evil and suffering. In this paper we will inquire into the phenomenon of witchcraft from contemporary Pentecostal prophetism. Many Ghanaian Pentecostals believe that misfortune is closely connected to the activities of witchcraft, sorcery, bad medicine and activities of other evil entities, which always seek the ill of less powerful people. Many Pentecostal prophetic services are often characterized by witchcraft identification and accusation. The central place witchcraft continues to occupy in the minds of Pentecostals in particular and Ghanaians in general shows that its reality is not considered to be a savage superstition (cf. Bowie 2000:217–218).

## 2. Nature, Possession and Manifestation of Witchcraft

It appears among all the spiritual sources of evil and suffering witchcraft occupies the highest pedestal, though some prophets claim it is the smallest spiritual power. Yet because possessors are humans, it shows the most intimate knowledge of its victims, hence the fear and abhorrence of it. Witchcraft is considered by Ghanaians as an evil spirit

which inhabits and possesses people who carry out evil against people who are spiritually weaker than the possessors (see Onyinah 2012:57). Not being a learned art one cannot choose to understudy it. As the following story shows it is very selfish (Quayesi-Amakye 2013:64–66). A woman lost all her four children. Her mother confessed to be the causal witch because she did not want her sons-in-law to live overseas away from their wives. Witchcraft can be elusive. It is likened to a garment that may be put off and put on at the discretion of the possessor. Smart witches remove their witchcraft when about to enter church / prayer meetings (Elder Johnson Andoh, personal communication, 22 September, 2005).

By its nature and operations witchcraft is seen as a demonic manifestation. Hence, a discussion of it intertwines with demonic activities. It is believed by many Ghanaian Pentecostals that Satan indirectly attacks through his agents or servants, who work out his evil intentions and purposes in human affairs. These agents are evil forces such as witches, magicians, sorcerers, Muslim mystics, occultists, diviners and necromancers. In a world of wickedness one cannot be sure of one's enemies (see Adjei n.d:23–29). Not even one's Christian status insulates one from demonic attacks. In fact, wicked powers show no respect for Christian ministers, but attack them in the performance of their Christian duties (Elder Ati, personal communication, 6 August, 2009).

Witches are alleged to possess transformative power that enables them to assume animal form to attack victims or destroy victims' properties such as farms. Stories about evil spirits reveal them to be cunning. They use innocent and unassuming objects to disguise their schemes. Thus, in the view of some prophets, a nocturnal cockroach nuisance could actually be a demonic ploy to harass a person. Similarly, cobwebs may

become a spiritual network via which evil powers attack their victims. Human life can be susceptible to such craftiness. Lack of vigilance and spiritual alertness makes one prone to such demonic ploys. Hence, one may be demonized, that is come under demonic or witchcraft control through several channels. There are two kinds of such demonization. One is affliction from sicknesses, diseases, business setbacks, marital problems, educational failures, and so on. The other is actual possession by an evil force, whereby one could become a witch or demonic.

It is said that sometimes witches or evil forces intrude into less powerful people via ordinary consumables such as donated or purchased foods, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, water, clothing, and the like. Some people acquire witchcraft, suffer incurable diseases/sicknesses, or have their pregnancy aborted via these means. For example, according to Prophetess Georgina Grant Essilfie (personal communication, 15 September, 2009), a witch client acquired her witchcraft after eating mutton from her mother. Thereafter she began to see herself flying with her mother into witches' meetings. At the prophetess' Zion Prayer, Healing and Evangelistic Centre, Abowinmu, Enyan Denkyira in the Central Region was a photograph of a young boy purported to be a former wizard. He was alleged to be the cause of his parents' business setbacks. He was said to have acquired his witchcraft from food that his maternal grandmother had given him.

Witchcraft (and demonic) attacks may manifest through dreams or physical and visible signs. Among Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetic figures, dreams are embedded with deep meanings about evil forces' activities in people's lives. Often people's sleep can be disturbing. For example, business bankruptcy due to witchcraft machinations may reveal through dreams to the victim (Tabiri 2004: 42-44). Eating flesh, eating on a refuse dump, having breasts sucked by babies, taking a bath

in public, and similar, in one's dreams have spiritual connotations. The first two typify witchcraft initiation; the third cancer transfusion by witches and the fourth shame or disgrace in one's life.

Similarly, dreams about sexual activities connote spiritual marriages and afflictions. Such spiritual marriages are satanic weapons aimed at weakening victims sexually, causing setbacks and marital problems such as sterility, aborted and stunted pregnancies, separation and divorce. Consequently, dreams may offer interpretative tools for understanding uncertainties, mental and emotional confusions and social disconnections (Prior 2007:27). Psychological explanations may not be enough. Some evil incidents may actually be explained psychologically, but if they defy psychological solution then one may conclude they are more of spiritual causality than psychological.

Evidences of demonic works actualise in real life. Consider the following testimonies from Prophetess Georgina Grant Essilfie's ministry at Enyan Abonwinmu. Maggots dropped from a drunkard's ear after he had been prayed for by the prophetess. A brain tumour client woke up to find a *juju* herbal substance that had dropped from her head onto her pillow. Carcasses of two dead crickets dropped from an impotent man's genital organ after exorcism. The man's own father was the cause of his impotency. He had vowed to prevent his son's potency. A photograph showed a lady who was cured of a chronic migraine. After receiving healing, dead soldier ants dropped from her hair. Another photograph showed that a woman gave birth to two stones. Still another woman gave birth to a local vine sponge. There was also the preserved dead fish that dropped from an 11-year-old girl with a chronic heart problem.

Appreciating the operation of witchcraft/demonic forces is crucial. It helps to show their meanness and hatred towards humanity. For

example, cases of demonic marriages amply demonstrate the length to which evil forces will go to control people's lives. In spiritual marriages the human being is compulsorily joined in a unilateral nuptial relation with spirit beings. Often such spirits are believed to be marine spirits or family witches who prevent victims from entering into or/and enjoying natural nuptial relations. Some people end up not marrying at all. Others may suffer marital conflicts and divorces. Still others may suffer childlessness in marriage because they procreate for a malevolent spiritual spouse. In fact, deadly diseases like HIV/AIDS may be suffered, not necessarily because one is promiscuous or physically infected. It is with such understanding that witchcraft is seen as a tool of rendering people unfit for living.

### 3. Witchcraft and Misfits of Life: The Poor and the Sick

An appreciation of the badness of witchcraft for human existence in Pentecostal understanding is incomplete without an evaluation of the 'concept of the poor and the sick'. Therefore, the question is: what are the socioeconomic implications of witchcraft for the Ghanaian person? In Ghanaian Pentecostalism poverty and ill-health possess depreciating and depersonalising effects. They produce insignificance; they create hunger, thirst, non-existence, death and dearth. Poverty deprives people of their desirables (*ohia tua akōnnōdeē*). Poverty literally reduces an adult to the status of a child. And it is poverty which makes the elder serve the younger at the family levels. A poor person is brother to a fool. His / her word is not valuable in the family, community and society. Poverty is madness, but riches invite blood (life)! Whereas often wealthy people are accused of acquiring their wealth/money through medicine money (i.e. through occult means) nobody acquires poverty medicine, so goes a popular secular song. Poverty makes gossips out of

people who cast aspersions on the rich and wealthy, and often envy them without good reason.

Diseases and sicknesses reduce one to a state of dependency, and that may be exploited by one's wicked enemies. The *Akan* say: *Sē obi benya wo a na efiri yadeē* (that means diseases/sicknesses make people susceptible to other people's manipulations and humiliations). The poor and sick accept things indiscriminately. They are vulnerable to the whims and caprices of the strong and powerful. Ill-health and poverty are close kith and kin. They have symbiotic effects on their victims and either can cause death. Hence *Wowō nkwa a na wowō adeē* (to have life is to have wealth). They deprive, bankrupt and impoverish their victims of their wealth, health and personhood. Both poverty and ill-health cause uncertainty, lack of direction, fatalism and defeatism.

However, wealth dominates, affirms, controls and commands respect. It is audacious, powerful, imposing, eloquent, and vociferous. It reshapes, reaffirms and personalises. It commands submission and audience, refines status, produces new identity and elicits fear. The rich and wealthy are adored and are served at their beck and call. Young or old, the wealthy command authority and power. Culturally, Ghanaians celebrate wealth. This cultural attitude underlines why judges, law enforcement agencies, physicians, departmental heads opt to serve the rich rather than the poor. The unbridled craving for wealth, often traceable to the Ghanaian cultural disposition, attaches significance to wealth possession and accumulation. Hence, driven by greed some people resort to all kinds of foul means to amass wealth at all cost. The prevalence of bribery, corruption, occult money and deception that characterize Ghanaian life underscore the narcissistic assumption of evil as a national culture. Thus societal inequity may be understood in the context of the cultural posture towards wealth. In this world of power,

the wealthy are the rulers; the poor have no place! It is with this reasoning that poverty and ill-health are considered distasteful, and therefore prayers are said for the restoration of lost identity and redefinition of life.

The 'concept of the poor and the sick' encompasses the great masses of disadvantaged individuals and communities in Ghana who are manipulated socially, abused physically, oppressed politically, dehumanised economically and despised culturally. By pinpointing 'the poor and the sick' Pentecostals invent a deep concept: a concept that includes all people, since normally people suffer from either or both enemies. 'The poor and the sick' becomes a religio-cultural, socio-economic, and political concept that requires Christological deflation. All such are assured of Christ's willingness to receive and welcome into a better life of abundance, redefinition, restructuring and 'remodification'. Thus, Pentecostals believe that Christ offers the hope for the liberation of all who health-wise and wealth-wise are victimised. The poor and the sick must run to him for their deliverance.

In Ghanaian Pentecostalism 'the poor and the sick' provide satirical appraisal of life. Firstly, sometimes some Pentecostal songs and sermons are satirically couched to elicit conscientious response from the poor and the sick to Jesus' call. They tell how poverty has torn apart and humiliated the poor, and how ill-health has broken down, bruised and incapacitated the sick. Secondly, there is a sympathetic note in some songs and sermons. Sympathy is a deep inner quest and tool of poor and sick people in Ghana. Beggars master the art of sympathy inducement. All kinds of rationalisations, ranging from little homilies, Pentecostal songs and prayer are given to induce donations from potential donors. In this world of 'professional begging' 'God-talk' then plays a very important role. The Ghanaian religious cord must be



touched to 'defraud' the potential giver. Christ's salvation then has to do with deliverance from such debilitating enemies of humankind which create a cheat and a liar in people. Therefore, Pentecostals subtly and unconsciously proclaim that poverty and diseases reduce and undermine the full enjoyment of salvation in Christ. They must be rejected and this is achievable when the power of the controlling spirits is broken.

#### 4. Destroying the Destroyer

The quest for making human beings fit for life means the overturning of the activities of evil forces including witchcraft. So we ask: in what ways do Ghanaian Pentecostals negate the influence and power of witches and demons in victims' lives? Embedded in this negotiation is the idea of warfare. In prophetic services this may be achieved through prophetic declarations/rituals and exorcism/deliverance. Exorcism can be quite muscular and tiresome both to the prophetic persons and the sufferer, who as the residence of the demonic presence will experience excruciating pains all over the body. The entire process is a real show of warfare with powerful spiritual forces. Proponents insist that deliverance is the act of liberating a person from the power, influence and bondage of an evil source through Spirit empowered prayer. Deliverance integrates exorcism which 'usually means casting out a demon from a person who is possessed. Deliverance is usually distinguished from exorcism and means freeing people from the influence or bondage of Satan and demons who are behind afflictions, sufferings, bad habits, curses and failures in life' (Onyinah 2008:219–220).

Consequently, deliverance aims at granting ultimate freedom to the human victim from the influence and control of a demonic force. It achieves this by means of exorcism. Therefore, unless the victim is

freed from the oppressive or possessive evil power deliverance is incomplete. It involves a minister laying his/her hands on the victim, and/or speaking a word of command, and sometimes applying anointing oil or water to evict the evil spirit. The eviction is balanced with an invitation to the Holy Spirit to take over the victim's life after he/she has accepted and committed him/herself to Christ. For success the deliverance minister's prayers must be effective enough to jettison the invading evil spirit. By its very nature and *modus operandi* deliverance sessions are conceived as 'surgery hours' when Christ destroys the destroyers in his people's lives. Victory is believed to be achieved by invoking Jesus' name, pleading his blood and enforcing the power of the Holy Spirit. Candidates display the success of their deliverance by vomiting, coughing, screaming, crying, wailing, shedding tears, galloping, jumping, slithering, falling asleep, collapsing and even appearing to be dead. Thus, deliverance is a real warfare fought on both the spiritual and physical planes. The results thereof manifest physically.

It must be stated that the idea of warfare is actually a reminder that the enjoyment of abundant life demands victory and success in one's endeavours. Consequently, there is no passive living in this world of evil. Indeed, to the Ghanaian Pentecostal Christian the idea of victory suggests at one point an already-won battle, yet it does not in any way mean there is no ongoing battle. Even in situations where people suffer educational backwardness the connection of such a mishap to spiritual causality and the need for negotiating it is often not to be taken for granted. Of course, one cannot rule out the thinness of such interpretation because it sometimes fails to recognize some students' irresponsible attitudes towards their academic work. Nonetheless there are palpable situations of educational setbacks which are due to family disasters or intermittent/or protracted illnesses those students suffer. True, Jesus has already won the battle giving the believer the assurance

that it is a done deal, yet there is warfare in every area of life. The battles of life leave in their trail serious pains, aches, hurts, disappointments, disillusionments, despair, confusion, among others. This is why Ghanaian Pentecostals would like to see in Jesus a once for all-time victory with far-reaching relevance and consequence. And this is the victory they seek to ‘wave for all the nations to see’.

## 5. Primal Cosmological Insertion

Now we ask ourselves: How does the Akan primal religion impact on Ghanaian Pentecostals’ approach to witchcraft? Indeed, the Ghanaian Pentecostal ascription of the causality of evil to witchcraft demonstrates how much the Akan traditional religion continues to impinge on their understanding and practice of Christianity. In fact, the Ghanaian Akan perception that witchcraft offers an explanatory tool for the existence of evil is akin to many claims and practices of Pentecostal common believers (Akrong 2005:12). In both religions the alleged malicious nature of witches makes them to be conceived as wicked satanic agents which must be avoided or eliminated. Their existence is inimical to human wellbeing. Both worldviews postulate that the activities of these forces harm the realization or fulfilment of destiny. Again the belief that witchcraft may be acquired through birth, inheritance, purchase or contact with certain objects is held by both common believers and Akan traditional religionists.

The theory of witchcraft inheritance in Pentecostal prophetism resonates with the Akan understanding of the human person (Busia 1951:1–4). Though the Akan person is matrilineal by inheritance a person is understood in tripartition. Persons inherit their *mogya* (blood) from the mother, the *okra* (*kra*) or soul from *Nyame* (God) and the *ntoro* (*toro/nton*) or spirit from the father. The *mogya* ensures the

maternal bond. The *ntoro*, 'patrilineal spirit' or *sunsum* provides the paternal bond and is under the aegis of a particular *bosom* or deity. It is by this that a person's personality and character are believed to be defined. It is believed to be transmitted through the father's *ho* or semen. The *ho* is translated 'being', 'self' or 'personality'. The child is linked to the father's *ntoro* division or spirit-washing or cleansing group. The *ntoro* as the spiritual heightening of the individual grants him/her spiritual immunity against spiritual attacks. This means that a weak *ntoro* exposes one to the activities of wicked spirits or persons. The *okra* reacts when faced with attacks from witches and evil spirits. In the words of Field:

If the witches steal away a man's 'kra' and cut it up, he becomes mortally sick. If they then relent, reassemble the parts and restore him, he recovers. If, however, they have already eaten, say a leg and hence cannot restore it, he recovers except for a permanently useless leg. If the witches steal only that part of the 'kra' corresponding to the womb or the penis, the victim becomes either barren or impotent (1960:6).

Certain rituals are performed to restore the 'okra' to its proper functioning state when perceived to have been attacked. This ritual known as 'washing the soul' (*okraguare*) is also for the purpose of thanksgiving for success. By this dual parental bond of *mogya* and *ntoro* the Akan becomes a biological-spiritual being. This is the logic behind Pentecostal prophetism's demand for a rupture with ancestral backgrounds (maternal and paternal) to afford divine release and freedom. Nonetheless, this rupture aimed at upward mobility and freedom, potentially disturbs social cohesion and the traditional Ghanaian communalism. Rather than mobilizing individual gifts and resources for social profit and development it becomes parochial individualism and puts strictures on communal freedom, especially among near and distant relatives and associates.

Meanwhile the theological bond is achieved through the possession of the *okra*. The *okra* is received directly from *Nyame* (God) and is the vital force or source of energy, a reservoir of strength and sustenance. Like the *Akamba veva* (Mbiti 1971:130) the *okra* is the undying spark of God in the individual and is linked closely to the *honhom* or breath. Hence, death is seen as the departure of *honhom* or the withdrawal of the soul. While the *okra* causes the breathing the *honhom* manifests the *okra*. Thus, the *okra* is the animation of *Nyame* that vitalizes the person. The *okra* is believed to obtain permission from God to come to the world and it obtains *nkrabea* loosely translated ‘destiny’. Hence, the *okra* is the principle of life, embodiment and transmitter of the individual’s destiny. *Nkrabea* is a predetermined detail of the person’s life on earth, particularly the ‘commission’ a person has to fulfill in life (see Omenyo 2006:29). ‘Through the concept of the *nkrabea* purpose or meaning is given to the individual life’ (Asante 1999:79). This means that the individual has a God-given project in this life; hence, there is no such thing as purposeless or meaningless life.

It is obvious that the Akan interpretation of evil in physical and moral terms that sees physical evil as a resistance to a person’s social achievement and advancement is critical in Pentecostal spirituality (Ackah 1988:10). In other words, there is an insertion of primal cosmology in Pentecostalism. The Akan belief that physical evil hinders a person from realizing his *nkrabea* or destiny is inherent in many Ghanaian Pentecostal believers’ interpretation of evil. Though in Akan religion destiny is fixed prior to birth it may at times be interrupted by evil forces or through one’s own carelessness (Sarpong 1965:4). Pentecostal prophetism maintains that through negatively influencing people’s minds evil forces are able to manipulate/abort victims’ destinies. Pentecostal prophets talk much about the manipulation of destiny by enemies, and so insist on dislodging enemies’ strangleholds

in people's lives. When a Pentecostal prophet declares an enemy intends to stop someone from prospering or succeeding in life he/she invariably is referring to the 'twisting around' of the client's destiny by enemies.

In Africa, the existence of witchcraft is taken for granted. Not even the socio-economic status of people can neutralise this belief (Onyinah 2002:235). Indeed, many misfortunes and disasters that befall people are almost always attributed to witches. The fear of the ubiquity of witchcraft activities underpins the search for and patronage of traditional sources of protection and security among Africans. A research conducted by Field (1960: 110) in a shrine in Ghana revealed that farmers went to the shrines complaining of antelopes, grass-cutters and other pests destroying their farm crops. Witchcraft and bad medicine were the commonest cause of all the agricultural mishaps according to the shrine. Sometimes too, the farmer was told the land or a nearby stream required pacification in the form of *ētō* (mashed yam with oil). The research showed the belief in the potency of traditional priests to circumvent the activities of witches and misfortunes in the victims' lives. This same faith is what patrons of Pentecostal prophetism confer on their prophets.

The reality of witchcraft in Ghana is a disturbing fact considering the unapologetic belief in its destructiveness. Belief in it does not belong to antiquity. Though some may talk about good witchcraft, it is generally held that all witchcraft is evil and diabolic. It cannot be jettisoned as mere superstition of savagery and the result of the Akan people's 'reluctance to engage in mental labour, [because of] a hot climate [that] produces a corresponding inertness of thought and deficient energy of the will' (Ellis 1887:4; Agbeti 1986:166–167). Almost all Ghanaians believe in the existence of witchcraft.

Once a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl, Ama, claimed on the Sparks FM (a local radio station in Dunkwa-on-Offin) that her grandmother, one Akua Dansoaa, gave her witchcraft when she was only eight-years-old. Ama claimed she had taken her brother's intelligence and glory and given it to a male witch who asked her to collect it from her brother. She also alleged to have buried her mother's glory in their family house under a spiritual lock. She claimed to be able to change into an eagle during her nocturnal nefarious activities.

According to Onyinah, witches are believed to possess *ahoboa* or witch-spirit animals by which they carry out their reprehensible antisocial activities against other humans. The witch-spirit animals may be carried in bellies or genital organs or in material objects such as jewellery, girdles and stringed beads (Onyinah 2002:73). According to Hans W Debrunner witches meet on top of big trees. Witches work in secret, and witchcraft is thought to be evil. The traditional belief that there are two types of witchcraft: *bayiboro* or *bayikwasea* and *bayipa* (bad witch and good witch) is not upheld by Pentecostals though. This is because Pentecostals cannot conceive of a good witch who may help family members to succeed, prosper, protect them and even enable their children to excel in their education. For Pentecostals all witchcraft is *bayiboro* or *bayikwasea* which causes setbacks. It is difficult for Pentecostals to think of witchcraft as not possessing evil intent towards even their own children. The belief that witches may disrobe themselves of their witchcraft, or keep their coven pots containing human blood at the bottom of the trees is not peculiar to traditional religion (Debrunner 1961:24–26; Mbiti 1976:167). Neither is the belief that they may hold their meetings in schools, rivers, sea, lakes, and marketplaces and even in church buildings, uncommon to both. For instance, on Wednesday, November 2, 2009, one Elder Amofa in carrying out deliverance among the Mt. Ararat Assembly, COP, Kasoa,

hinted that witches met in the church building, which caused stagnation in the church's growth.

The Ghanaian Pentecostal rejection of poverty and ill-health may be gauged against the Akan cosmological conception of these evils as *mmusuo*. According to the primal worldview *Mmusuo* may result from acts of commission or omission. It appears to be a mystical or spiritual interpersonal force that comes upon or follows a person, family, or a whole village as the result of evil acts by a person or group of persons related to the larger community (Atiemo 1995:21). It is defined by Christaller (1933:22) as mischief, misfortune, disaster, misery, calamity, adversity or a thing that causes mischief. *Mmusuo*, therefore, is a kind of spiritual force that is released in response to a provocation of some spiritual powers due to the misdeed of a person or group of persons. It can also be the result of malicious desire, intent and act of an evildoer who incites the malevolent spiritual forces to harm less powerful persons. Witches and other spiritual entities are often the harbingers of *mmusuo*. In Akan religious cosmology it is a breach between a person and the gods, or between the ancestors and other spiritual entities that results in a person's undoing (Christaller 1933:22). As the forces are released they may cause series of misfortune or death unless special rites called *mmusuyie* are performed to speedily ward off such misfortune. Indeed, there are several explanations proffered for the incidence of *mmusuo*.

Finally, the idea of warfare as an important theme in Ghanaian Pentecostalism may be gauged against the backdrop of the general African approach to life. Among many African peoples' life's battles do not only involve how one deals with alien enemies of physical and impersonal forces such as systemic oppressions and suppressions, but may also assume a spiritual form due to the activities of witchcraft,



occult and magic (Akrong 2003: 40). In such a world even one's parent, spouse, child, friend and family relation is a potential devil. Thus, often when Ghanaians speak of the devil (*abonsam*) they invariably imply the witch or wizard, the sorcerer, the evil person who interferes in one's progress such as a marital rival, a swindler, a slanderer, an unfaithful spouse, a gossip among a host of others. This is why the battles of life are fought also in the areas of health (sickness, premature deaths, stigmatizing and terminal diseases), finances, marriages (barrenness, spousal and child mortality), marginalisation and alienation in relation to the socioeconomic and political strata. Below I draw conclusion from the discussions.

## 6. Conclusion

The paper set out to answer the question: What are the characteristics, social impact and ways of coping with witchcraft in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism and to what extent does the Akan primal worldview influence such understanding? We have described the characteristic nature of witchcraft and identified it as one of the demonic works that plague human existence. We have seen that because of its inimical nature Ghanaians in general abhor it. For the Pentecostal in prophetic circles deliverance and other prophetic rituals are necessities for breaking the hold of demonic control in general and witchcraft in particular. Because witchcraft is evil it leaves its effects on the social and physical dimensions of life, hence the misfits of life. Meanwhile a holistic appreciation of the phenomenon of witchcraft means we take the impingement of the Akan primal religion on the faith of Pentecostals seriously.

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