

WITCHCRAFT IN AFRICA: MALIGNANT OR DEVELOPMENTAL?

BY

Iniobong Daniel Umotong Ph.D

ABSTRACT

Most African communities have this very strong conviction that witches possess powers and knowledge beyond the ordinary ability of any finite being, the reality of its existence in almost every African society is as real as the day break. Just like any other infallible truth in African communities, witchcraft seems to take the central stage in every phenomenon as they are the first line accused in any negative happenings. The concept of witchcraft, their elements and the responding effects on the African societal psyche has in one way or the other affected economic, social, political, moral, axiological and mental growth of Africans today. In most African societies especially the southern part of Nigeria and precisely the Annang nation of the South South geopolitical zone, the general consensus is that witches and wizards are full of malignant powers. The belief in the reality of witchcraft is so deep rooted in our society that every mishap, economic, political, social and even physical is attributed to witchcraft manipulations. Considering the volume of existing works on witchcraft and the over-whelming condemnation of it as a result of fantasy, illusion, religious or cultural bias, this work becomes imperative in order to explore the activities of witchcraft not only as mischief makers but also as agent of development if properly understood, applied and practiced in its right perspective without bias. Here, their activities are considered using the available philosophical tools of analysis, positively applied in order to demystify witchcraft as an African reality away from the misconception of it as merely mystic.

Key Words: Witchcraft, Development, Malignant, Africa.

INTRODUCTION

In most African traditional societies, witchcraft is part of the realities acceptable as a supernatural phenomenon that is inseparable with human nature. Everywhere in the globe, evil occurrence is believed to be backed by forces beyond the human comprehension and these in most cases are believed to be manipulations by the witches. Witchcraft is intrinsically neither morally good nor bad. The supernatural activities of witches are according to their perceived effect, divided into good or bad, black or white, protective or destructive operations. Traditional and modern African leaders sometimes surround themselves with protective “witch doctors” and are themselves thought to be endowed with supernatural powers. They are aligned with the evil forces and use theirs to harm or gain undue advantage over others. The distinction between good and bad supernatural powers are relative and depend on how it conforms or differ from the value system of such community.

There are different kinds of witchcraft in traditional African societies and these are classified according to the sources for which they were acquired and the purpose to which they are applied. Ojong and Eyo (Uduigwomen 2009:155) identified the following types of witchcrafts.

- i. **White Witchcraft:** In this category are the witches generally applied in such a way that enhances lives as they foretell dangers ahead or used in curative purposes especially ailment that defiles known curative measures that calls for supernatural application of medication.
- ii. **Black Witchcraft:** This type operates in the reverse of the white witchcraft. It seeks not the enhancement of welfare but the multiplication of illnesses or misfortune. It seeks the destruction and exploitation of humanity. Hence, it treats humanity as a means to an evil end. They takes pleasure in human sufferings especially of their perceived enemies
- iii. **Crab Witchcraft:** The crab in most African societies is seem as a creative witch. They are experts in charms. The natural crab, irrespective of its characteristic; slow movement and exo-bony physiology, is able to prey on faster creatures because it possesses craftiness. This nature is also replicated by the witches belonging to this category.
- iv. **Day Light Witchcraft:** This class of witchcraft in simple terms is practiced in broad daylight and it is done in the human flesh without any recourse to some form of disguise; taking the form of any creature of choice – bird, animal or spirit.
- v. **Money Making Witchcraft:** Indeed, this class of witchcraft is highly dreaded because it has to do with human sacrifice which is geared towards money making directly or through business fortunes. A lot of business men are guilty of this due to the poor business environment in Nigeria most business people sought other means of breaking forth in their chosen area of business.
- vi. **Porcupine Witchcraft:** This is named after a specie of rodent with sharp spikes that is raised whenever danger is sensed. Porcupine witches are regarded as great diviners with the possession of great charms. There is hardly any good diviner without this capacity. Most of them operate as friends or close family members while causing misfortune to their relatives.
- vii. **Eye Witchcraft:** This kind of witchcraft is common amongst the non-initiates of the cult, the unwilling members or those not too conscious of their initiation. They are blinded to the activities in the realm of witches. One who is in possession of this class of witchcraft can attend any meeting held by witches. Most of them are not conscious of their witchcraft status.

HISTORICAL SURVEY

Witchcraft is rooted in most African primitive societies, fear and ignorance plays major role in its growth, development and spread. It plays strategic role in social engineering of the traditional communities as it is deployed to explain major phenomenon such as; bad harvests, illnesses; especially the strange ones, Mysterious deaths and environmental degradation, it acted as a socio-psychological and moral constraint. In most African communities, According to Offiong (1983) witchcraft is a belief in the possession of some mystical powers by which evil or harm can be done to someone. Witches are generally believed to be the forces behind every misfortune, therefore, to be

identified as a witch spells doom. It may attract death sentence for the accused, who may in most cases be burned alive, stoned to death, or in rare instances face banishment from the community, this is contrary to the western world believe in the operation of the witches, in Europe, witches are granted privileges and right and they are believed to be an alternative religion to Islam and Christianity therefore are not hunted or ostracized, this is believed to have contributed to their scientific discoveries as they deployed extra wisdom beyond ordinary in their quest to attend scientific breakthroughs.

In some African communities, the notion of witchcraft consist in a belief that the spirit of living humans can be sent on errands to wreak havoc on other individuals. It is usually believed that witches can communicate with the dead or with supernatural beings and entities. Witches and wizards are seen as intermediaries that can serve diverse purposes. Okeja, (2011) argues that African witchcraft plays a very different social role than in Europe. Much of what witchcraft represent in Africa has been susceptible to misunderstanding and confusion. African notion of witchcraft is different from European conception, while Africans are bent on its negative application Europe sees both sides and harnessed their potentials in the positive dimension. It is believed that the modern cell phones are purely scientific discoveries where miles away one can communicate with audio and video, this not too far from what witches has been doing over the years from antiquity, with their basin, water, mirror or such other elements and instruments they can communicate with others, distance notwithstanding, if this has been the practice over the years why then are their methods relegated as unscientific. As cell phones takes time to manufacture and it requires understanding of its operational manual to be able to use it effectively, so it is with the activities of the witches in communication with their members. When two or more people acquire phone and only those with functional phones and knowledge of how it operated can communicate with one another, so it is with witchcraft operations, they know the elements needed and the frequency to tune in, in order to get signals and the connection with another of their kind irrespective of distance. If this had been the practice over the years from antiquity, why then are Africans so backward in developing these discoveries for general good? This can be attributed to the negative views attached to the practice and the inability to polish their activities to meet the modern reforms.

A lot of Africans also believe that witchcraft is also the science of the Africans and that if fully utilized its benefit can be used to endow our race. Scientifically the existence of witchcraft or magical powers are generally believed to lack credence and to be unsupported by standard scientific proofs, although individual witchcraft practice and the observable effects may be open to scientific explanation or explain via mentalism and psychology (Dickie 2006: 33). Witches need no scientific theory or formula to make their voodoo practice effective, if two miniature entities are bound together and any known human name is mentioned and calamity as pronounced happen to those mentioned do we need scientific proof to make it effective? If this is possible then one can as well use the same method to guarantee success in any area of human endeavour: business, academics, agriculture etc

It is penitent to state that today in Africa, there are many who believed that science and technology are the western “witchcraft” of the white man. According to African studies of witchcraft, contemporary ideas of witchcraft provide an idiom for expressing individualism, innovation, and human agency that are much a part of modern life. During the period of rapid globalization and incorporation within the post-colonial state, idea of witchcraft was deployed by African as their framework of interpretation. As interpretive constructs, they also help to shape the political world and they are therefore powerful force that can both help to maintain or transform social and political landscape.

COMPARATIVE STUDY

In the mind of many Africans, witchcraft is a form of technology. Ottuh (2015) in a lecture asserts that “witchcraft is a craft” if craft is technology driven then it is safe to say witchcraft is a form of technology, with this assertion one need no formal scientific principle to accept witchcraft as a form of science. The science of witchcraft is independent of the natural scientific principles and should be seen from its unique perspective.

The Annang conception of witchcraft is similar to that of the Azande (Evans Pritchard, 1937), except that the Annang do not believe in the "inherent quality" of witchcraft. Both the Azande and the Annang believe that witches perform no rites, cast no spells, and possess no medicines; they view it as purely a psychic act. Like the Annang, the Nupe of Bida in northern Nigeria believe witchcraft is not hereditary but must be acquired from a person who already has it (Umotong 2012: Oral Interview). It is interesting to note that while the Nupe say that witches are mostly women, the Annang see witches as being mostly men, but both agree that women are the most dangerous witches (Nadel, 1954: 52).

Like the Azande, the Annang believe that every witch has a physical substance, witchcraft, existing in his other body that allows the soul to engage in errands to harm their fellow beings. The Azande conceive of the witchcraft substance as a "round, hairy ball with teeth" which is passed on from parent to child, with all the sons of a male witch and all the daughters of a female witch being witches (Evans-Pritchard 1937). Since witchcraft substance is organic, the Azande believe its existence can be determined through a post-mortem examination. While the Annang believe that witches have witchcraft substance, wherein lie their mysterious powers, they do not believe that it can be inherited. Every witch must get the substance from an established witch by physically swallowing the substance. The witchcraft substance of the Annang is a special concoction embodying red, white, and black thread, along with needles and other ingredients which the witch-to-be swallows. There are local variations in the substance. Taking the substance opens eyes, so to speak, and enables the person to move about mysteriously and perform many of the things that witches are believed to accomplish.

The Annang, like the Azande and the Mende of Sierra Leone, believe in the physicality of the substance in the stomach, but only renowned traditional doctors or spiritualists can use some supernatural powers to bring it out. They give the witch a substance that neutralizes the witchcraft substance in the stomach and forces the witch to

vomit it out. Occasionally, at the death of a known witch, the children may ask a traditional doctor or spiritualist to remove the substance by cutting the stomach open. It is not everybody who can see this, since certain supernatural powers have to be used on the substance to make it visible to the uninitiated. The Tiv also believe in the existence of the substance (called *tsav*), which they say grows on the hearts of humans as well as in some animals. It is said to look like the liver, and it may be rounded or notched at the edges. This substance is believed to be red, black, or white, and it can be good or bad (Parrinder, 1963: 136). The good and bad witchcraft are similar to the Annang black and white counterpart to which we shall turn later. Witches, with the help of the substance, can change themselves into animals and birds such as dogs, cats (particularly black ones), and owls, and give off a glowing light like fireflies. This belief is quite similar to that of the Akan peoples of Ghana and Ivory Coast (Parrinder, 1963: 135).

Witches leave their physical bodies during sleep. They can even change into rats and eat up the crops, and can spread diseases among people. They can suck the blood of their victims, thereby making the person look dry or suffer some form of known and unknown medical condition. The Annang believe that witches meet in companies at night while their mortal or physical bodies remain on their bed. They travel to the assembly by flying in their planes, or by canoes or bicycles. They can change into owls and fly to the assembly; or into cats, frogs, or dogs and change into human beings at the assembly. They meet at a particular spot where their victims are said to be transformed. They are hierarchically arranged—some witches are more powerful than others. One's power depends on the ability of the individual to locate an established witch who can provide the most potent power. Having become a witch, an individual knows who has the most powerful substance and can acquire it in addition to that he or she already has. Starting as a novice, a witch aspires to a higher position over the years. The highest rank consists of those who have been in the practice for a considerable number of years and have bewitched very many people. It is from this rank that the president of the chapter comes (each village constitutes a chapter, with the clan chapter as the supreme body). The headship of the witch society is the exclusive right of males, but the most experienced female witch is the recognized leader of all female witches and is referred to as *Eka Iban*. Women leaders in *Ibibio* churches are known by the same title. Among the *Nupe*, on the other hand, a woman is the acknowledged head witch (Nadel 1976: 195).

The second rank consists of witches who have established themselves in the art and will in due course move into the top-most rank. The third rank consists of the novices. Finally comes the fourth rank, consisting of those who are not conscious of their status as witches. They were initiated without consent either by friends who are already there or parent or relatives who feel they can only protect theirs by initiating them. They do bewitch people and also attend witch meetings, but they are not fully aware of their activities.

The Annang identify two kinds of witchcraft—Black (*Anweewen*) and White (*Afia*). The purpose of Black witchcraft is to commit evil, while the white is to cure ailments and possibly find solution to social calamities. The ones who engage in destructive and diabolical acts, such as bewitching and killing their victims, bewitching

their victims' money or even changing into rats and eating up the victims' crops and other forms of destructive activities are the black witches. They can do almost any evil,

On the other hand, the White witchcraft are harmless they are basically those with powers and ability to cure ailments. Although they attend witches' meetings, they do not practice the ceremonial cannibalism as the Black witches. They believed that being a witch gave them status within the community, because witches are feared and non-witches avoid conflict with them. This is probably one of the reasons people confess to their involvement.

Some of the known witches in Annang communities justifies their reason for initiation to include:

- i Domestic tension
- ii. Jealousy
- ii. Ego, power and influence
- iii. Injustice

Domestic tension is so natural in any close knit community. For this, be-witching was always reported mostly among relatives and neighbours. It was assumed that a stranger might hardly bewitched another stranger should there be a dispute between neighbours or relatives, one party intended to get rid of the other by means of mystical forces. Should something goes wrong following a dispute and quarrelling, every one immediately suspected it was caused by the other party through witchcraft and evil/magic. At times people wished to get rid of others to inherit their properties or wealth, took revenge for the wrongs done, showed or displayed their power ridiculed or brought to disrepute such peoples in the communities.

In the primitive traditional Nigerian society, people invented witchcraft to explain human experiences of pain, suffering and sorrow. These inventions were sometimes the fruits of many long experiences of life throughout the centuries. Since human beings, were curious, they satisfied people's search for explanation and solution to their problems. In modern Nigeria societies, the practices are still valid for many people in both the urban and the rural societies. People in desperation often appeal through rituals, to calm the unseen witches to have a lease of live.

People become witches in several different ways. People may decide to become witches because of their natural tendency to do evil. They are envious or jealous, or may have had some conflict with their relatives or some other persons within the family or community and want to hurt them or other enemies. Enemies can be co-wives, brothers, or sisters, a former husband of a man's wife, somebody with whom a man became involved in a land case, or somebody who took away a girlfriend. In fact, the enemy can be anyone, including one's mother or father, and vice versa. A person can turn into a witch because he suspects another person who is in a state of enmity with him is about to bewitch him, or that the person is a witch and the only way he can prevent being bewitched is to become a witch himself. One can become a Black witch accidentally. One way is through seeking to acquire White witchcraft but instead got the Black type. Another way, as one interviewee from a village not affected by the 1978-79 witch purge noted about several people in his and other neighboring villages who were Black witches

without their being aware of it, was that the persons who prepared the witchcraft substance made a mistake. The result was that instead of being White witches the initiates are Black witches.

Furthermore, since the substance was improperly concocted, these witches do not really know what they are, even though they attend witch meetings and also give their people to be killed and eaten. There is a third accidental way of becoming a witch in which the witch did not seek to become one. He or she may have approached a traditional doctor who was also a witch to provide some medicine or other assistance that will ward off witchcraft. One might then end up at a meeting of witches where he or she partakes in symbolic cannibalism. Once this happens the initiate must also bring a victim, whose soul is mysteriously transferred into an animal and then slaughtered, cooked, and eaten. A fourth way is through gift. In such a case the giver out of love gives someone the witchcraft substance to make him or her powerful so that no other person can bewitch or harm the recipient. The person who receives this gift may be unaware of it at the time but with certainty will one day find himself or herself in a meeting with other witches and begin to act as they do. On the other hand, an individual may receive the substance out of hatred. In this case the proper concoctions are not given to him or her; the compounds are not complete so that his eyes are not properly opened. He is a very clumsy witch, lacks the proper power, does not eat at the table with other witches and behaves very much like a scavenger. During the witch purge exercise and interviews with witches from areas not affected by the purge, it was admitted that this kind of witchcraft is a form of punishment by the witch who gave the person the substance. Established witches say that the dresses of such scavenger-like witches are used in wiping their hands after eating during their meetings. Further, such witches are very dangerous, according to the other witches, because the powerful and clever witches command them to bring their children and other relatives to be killed and eaten.

They are not aware that they are witches except that they dream about being involved in all kinds of witch activities. In fact, during the witch eradication purge the other witches recommended to the communities not to punish or fine such persons because they were not responsible for their actions. Although not themselves witches, since they have not swallowed the substance, drummers, dancers, singers, and other such people are commandeered by witches to entertain their assemblies. Through supernatural means such people are brought to entertain witches without being conscious of their role except for dreaming about their activities. During the witch purge many spectators who were drummers and dancers confirmed that they had been engaging in long, drawn-out dreams of how they were entertaining people they did not know.

The Annang believe that even in death a witch continues in his art until the substance is removed. Those who voluntarily want to give up the practice go to traditional doctors who prepare for them certain medicines which they drink in order to force out the substance. During interviews the respondents confirmed without exception that they had heard about or personally know of certain people who brought out the substance after being treated by a traditional doctor or spiritualist. One interviewee said that he witnessed a relative bring out an egg which, when broken, contained needles, red, white, and black

thread, and a host of other things. Another interviewee also said that he had personally witnessed the removal of the substance from the stomach of a dead witch who had told his children and other close relatives that they all had been earmarked for extinction. The only way to avoid this was to invite a traditional doctor at the death of the man to cut open his stomach and remove the substance, which turned out to be two live snakes (one of which was a python), bundles of black, red, and white thread, and other such items. Another interviewee, who was selected because he was close to an uncle believed to be a witch, said he had refused accepting the substance from his uncle before the latter died. He narrated the story of how, after the uncle's death, other relatives began to die in mysterious circumstances. According to the young man, an oracle was consulted and it was revealed that the dead uncle was the one killing those people—that he was still active as a witch even in death. The only remedy was the exhumation and burning of the skull. The young man said he participated in the exercise, and that it required superior supernatural powers before the attending traditional doctor could get out the skull. The right side of the head was still alive while all the other parts had decayed—the man had been buried for more than three years. The head was burned and from then on the family of the witch was at peace. Similar stories were repeated numerous times by those interviewed. The implication here is that even if all the living witches were to be eliminated, witchcraft would still exist—practiced by the dead.

INITIATION

Research finding shows that in Annang where there is widespread of witchcraft activities, it is widely believed that witchcraft may be inherited or acquired through diverse medium.

The most common medium of initiation are:

1. Inborn witchcraft: this occurs when the person who is a witch functions without being aware of it or having control over it. This happens when it transmitted by the mother to the child when she is pregnant and about to deliver a baby. The mother initiates the child by eating infested food from the coven. It could also be done immediately after delivery, and this aspect work with breastfeeding the baby, and the baby automatically becomes a witch.
2. Inherited witchcraft: the belief here is, a witchcraft is hereditary. Many Africans think that most witches are women, infact 'witch' is feminine gendered word. The male is referred to as wizard on the contrary, most sorcerers are men. In the hereditary one, “The mother witch” passes down her witchcraft to her daughter. It can also be the father or any relative who is a member or a witch. This is based on the tradition that the aging father, mother or relatives must pass this witchcraft to his or her favourite child before his or her death in order to ensure continuity. It is normally done in a way that the child is totally not aware of what is happening.
3. Acquired witchcraft: witchcraft may be acquired through voluntary initiation into the occult organization. This means the witchcraft may be brought through payment of money and provision of the necessary items of initiation and the initiation take place at the witchcraft arena (*AnwaIfot*). During the initiation, the new members takes up a new believed that the power of witchcraft can be directly obtained from the demon through the initiative of the individual who aligns herself/himself with

demons. A person may be initiated through public or communal gathering. And this is done through witchcraft infested meat and palm wine. That is why immediately one deeps his or her hand into the same plate of palm oil and eats, he or she automatically becomes a witch. Hence, it is strictly forbidden to bite and dip for other people to eat.

A person can as well be initiated by willingly consenting to be a witch, by meeting a renounced herbalist who necessary must be a witch. It is possible the same people are initiated through dreams by their love ones dead or alive by transporting the person to their coven, and offer the person their meat. Acceptance of whatever food or drink that is offered there is an indication of complete acceptance of membership.

ATTRIBUTES OF WITCHCRAFT

Witchcraft has a number of attributes common to them irrespective of their cultural background or their area of operation.

- i. **Social Subversion:** The first attributes is social subversion. Witches are enemies of society and are dedicated to the undermining of social structure and values. Their activities are in most cases anti-social as their operations are beyond the ordinary realm.
- ii. **They are Nocturnal:** Witches are also preferentially nocturnal, in a class of evil nocturnal creatures. Night may be a metaphor for the nature of their behavior – dark, evil, occult, or demonic and mystical as distinct from sorcery, a “day” activity. Witches can transform themselves into other human forms or into the forms of specific animals, or they can become invisible.
- iii. **Possession of Non-Human Counterparts:** Witches have an animal or spirit counterpart, called a “familiar” in the language of English witch-hunting that is sometimes regarded as a pet. The familiar may accompany the witch on its nocturnal journey, or the witch can project its power into the familiar, which goes out on the mission of evil itself. In European and New England witchcraft the familiar, frequently are “IMP” or demon sent by Satan, empowered the witch (See Steve, 1996:1228). Among Nigerians the pet can be a cat, fire-flies, lizard or millipedes.
- iv. **Ability to Fly:** Witches are said to fly, often at terrific speeds sometimes it is the power that flies, in any form or invisibly, leaving the body of its host engaged in routine activities or the power carries the witch bodily in flight. The witch flies directly to its target and works its evil which may be enhanced by the use of magical objects or portions. Beliefs in the use of methods of sorcery by the witch may partially account in the confusion in terminology.
- v. **Spreading Disease:** Is believed to be the most common activity of witches; either an epidemic or a sickness that afflicts just one person in a group may be evidence of the activity of witches. This belief is prevalent among the people of South Southern Nigeria, according to research findings (Ekanem, 2002). A slow, waiting disease is sure evidence. People belief that HIV/AIDs is caused by witches and therefore a first task of AIDs workers in some parts, African today is to assure people that HIV is not spread by witchcraft. Sometimes, the assurance does not have the desired effect.

- vi. **Community Life:** A community of witches is believed to meet together periodically to plot evil and develop new methods. They are also believed to engage in various grave – robbing, bloody or orgiastic rites. Orgiastic rites are the so-called 'witches Sabbath' of European history, named for the Jewish holy day as Jews were the first group to be persecuted as witches. Witches steal (the soil) of people, preferably children, and carry them off to the Sabbath. Witches engage in whatever forms of sexual behavior are forbidden or deemed aberrant by society. Universally, witches commit incest; often they engage in pedophilia, homosexuality, or bestiality.
- vii. **Engagement in Rituals:** Witches are believed to engage in absence “ritual murder”, killing their victims in horrible, often very bloody, fashion. This is the essence of the so-called “blood libel” levied by a group against another throughout history. Witches are also believed to practice cannibalism and vampirism. At the sabbat witches eat the flesh and drink the blood of their victims or individual witches may eat (the life force of) the victims of their nocturnal attacks, or drink their blood, often over a series of attacks, causing progressive debilitation of the victim. They are said to drink urine in order to wash down the human waste that they eat.
- viii. **Association with Death:** Witches are universally associated with death, in any of three ways:
 - a. Myths may state that the original witchcraft power was bestowed in a Faustian contract by the god of the death.
 - b. Exhuming bodies from graves and cannibalizing them or using corpse material for their medicines.
 - c. Witches cause death. Indeed, in some societies all deaths are believed to be caused by witchcraft.

EVALUATION

All said and done about the reality of witchcraft yet there are still those who deny their existence, they maintained that witchcraft neither designates something tangible or observable nor does it refer to something that has an independent existence either in the sense of being actual or true, therefore they conclude that it is an illusion. This of course does not rule out the possibility of witchcraft having a metaphysical reality. Furthermore there has not been any doubt that Annangs believe in witchcraft i.e., to them it has what Max Marwick calls a threatening reality, so much as that they project it to the level of reality as 'actual' or true. This wrong projection; the lack of ability to separate the objects of the ordinary world of experience from those of the world of thought, is what western authors often refer to when they call witchcraft belief 'a fallacy' (Sophie Oluwole 1992: 5) this then is the position of those who say witchcraft is unreal, that there is nothing like witches.

With their enormous supernatural powers as real as it is seen to be prevalent in and around our communities it is pertinent for research to be conducted on how to harness these enormous powers to solve our health, social and agricultural challenges scientifically. It can be used in the medical field to find cure to some of these presumed incurable ailments such as AIDS, Ebola fever, Corona Virus and the yet to be discovered ailments as was the

case in the traditional society. Mere consultations with the gods provided solution to influenza of the old global epidemic. It is a high time we accord witches the pride of place to improve and contribute positively to the growth of the society. It should not be all woes on witchcrafts, its positive aspect can be harnessed for social good.

If magical powers can be used to identify a criminal in the process known as *Ukang* or used in finding lost items through mirror incantation, then it can also be deployed in modern day society policing. The close circuit television of the witches which has proven effective over the years in identifying culprit at the scene of crime can be improved upon. While the western technology uses camera and satellites to view the environment and phenomenon in order to master or predict phenomenon, the witches uses mirror and or water in a white basin yet they achieve greater purpose of not only seeing the immediate happenings but also the ability to see into the future as well as the past that leads to the phenomenon at hand, these are display of higher technology through the power of witchcraft that can be developed for greater efficiency than the present mischievous application. From all indications and experience, it is obvious that African believe in witchcraft is both malignant and developmental but the malignant tendencies seems to outweigh its developmental strides. It is the believe of this work that more can consciously be done deliberately to explore exhaustively the abundant developmental possibilities of witchcraft powers in Africa, all that is required is encouragement and documentation for follow up research and improvement.

Iniobong Daniel Umotong Ph.D

Department of Philosophy
Akwa Ibom State University

drumotong@gmail.com

iniobongumotong@aksu.edu.ng.

+234 8023291397

WORKS CITED

- Anthony, Uviekovo (2011) *An african context of the belief in witchcraft and magic in rational magic*. Enugu: Fisher Imprints.
- Buckland, Raymond. (2002) *The Witch Book' the Encyclopedia of Witchcraft, Wida, and Neo-Paganism*. Detriot: Visible ink.
- Dickie, Matthew(2006) *Magic and magicians in the greco-roman world*. London: London Knowledge Press
- Durkheim, Emile (1915) *The elementary forms of the religious life, a study in religious sociology*, London: New York: G. A. Allen & Unwin; Macmillan
- E. O. Ojong, and Emmanuel Eyo (2009) 'An exposition of the concept of witchcraft in African thought system' in Prof. Andrew F. Uduigwomen *From footmarks to landmarks on african philosophy second edition*, Calabar: Jochrisam Publishers.
- Ekanem, John (2019) *Witchcraft, sorcery and healing in African*, Akwa Ibom State University Press.
- Gow, Andrew & Lara Apps (2003) *Male witches in early modern Europe*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Kelly, Aidan (1991) *Crafting the Art of Magic: a history of modern witchcraft*, Minnesofa: Llewellyn Publications,
- Margot, A. Adler (2005) *Drawing down the Moon: Witches druids, Goddess-worshippers, and other Paganism in American today*, Boston: Beacon Press,
- Mbiti, John (1969) *African Religions and Philosophy*, London: Heinemann Press.
- Megasa, Laurent (2005) *African Religion: the moral traditions of abundant life*, New York: Orbis Book.
- Messenger, John (1960) *Reinterpretations of Christian and indigenous belief in a Nigerian nativist church*, American Anthropologist, Vol. 62, No.2
- Norman, Cohn (2000) *Europe's inner demons*. London: Drone Books.
- Nwakaeze-Ogugua, Ikechukwu and Oduah, Clara (2015) 'Witches: Existence, Belief and Rationality', *Interdisciplinary Journal of Africa & Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Offiong, Daniel (1991) *Witchcraft, sorcery magic and social order among the ibibio of Nigeria*, Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing.
- Ojong, felix & Eyo, Emmanuel (2009) 'An Expose of the Concept of Witchcraft in African thought System', Uduigwowen Andrew: (ed) *From footmarks to landmarks on African philosophy*. Calabar: Obaroh & Ogbinaka Publishers Ltd.
- Oluwole, Sophie (1992) *Witchcraft reincarnation and the god-head*, Lagos: Excel Publisher.

- Ottuh, Peter (2005) *Metaphysical issues in religion*, Delta State University, Abraka.
- Parrinder Patrick, Steven Mclean *et al* (2005) *The time machin*, London: Penguin Books.
- Pritchard, Evans and Eva Gillies (1976) *Witchcraft, oracles and magic among the Azande*, London: Oxford University Press.
- Savage, E. (2004) *Magic and divination in Southern Africa*. South Africa: Ashagate Press.
- Ukpabio, Helen (2019) *Unveiling the mysteries of witchcraft*, Nigeria: Young Humanists International.
- Umoh, Dominic (2009) 'Why I Do Not Believe in Witchcraft', *Journal of Complementary Reflections: Studies in Asouzu*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Umotong, Iniobong (2014) 'African notion of reincarnation: the illusive perspective', *Ifiok Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies Vol. 1. Number 1*.
- Umotong, Daniel Bassey (2012) *Oral Interview, Nigeria: Ibio Nnung Achat*
- Witzan. (2015) 'The Activities of Witches and Wizard which before now', *Facebook*, www.facebook.com/witzan. Accessed 23rd June, 2019.

3 The paper is recommended for publication