

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**LET THE PROPHET SPEAK: A STUDY ON TRENDS IN
PENTECOSTAL PROPHECY WITH PARTICULAR
REFERENCE TO THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST AND SOME
NEO-PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN GHANA**

JOSEPH QUAYESI-AMAKYE

2009

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PROPHETISM WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE CHURCH OF
PENTECOST AND SOME NEO-PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN GHANA

BY

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Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Coast in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Religious Studies.

JULY, 2009

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:.....Date:

Name: Joseph Quayesi-Amakye

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature:..... Date:.....

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Co-Supervisor's Signature:.....Date:.....

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine some trends currently present in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism in order to open up the prophetic ‘problem’ for further scholarly probe. The study employs the purposive sampling of participatory method of qualitative research methodology. The instruments used in data collection and analysis include in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, questionnaire administration, and participatory-observation. The Church of Pentecost (CoP) constitutes the main case for the study; however, we also include prophetism in neo-Pentecostal churches in our discussions.

The study traces the historical antecedents of the prophetic phenomenon in Ghana and shows its recurrence in Ghanaian Christianity. It identifies four types of prophets in CoP, namely, Prophetesiers, Singing Prophets, Grassroots Prophets and Institutionalised Prophets. Grassroots Prophetism together with prophetism in New Prophetic Churches (NPCs) in neo-Pentecostalism constitutes Peripheral prophetism which forms the main thrust of the work.

Peripheral prophetism demonstrates how the dialectic of Ghanaian Pentecostals’ biblical understanding and the Akan religio-cultural worldview informs their quest for meaning in this life. It also reveals how the supernatural causal *other* undergirds Ghanaian Pentecostals’ understanding of evil and suffering. In negotiating the *other* Pentecostal prophets propose Christological

subversions via ritualistic symbolisms. Amidst the challenge it poses to us Pentecostal prophetism offers hope to Ghanaian Christianity due to its ability to respond to soteriological and pastoral needs. In all the study challenges Ghanaian Pentecostals to re-examine their spirituality in order to make their faith meaningful to the Ghanaian public life.

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DEDICATION

To my family and all Ghanaian Pentecostal pastors, prophets, churches, ministries and believers who keep alive the Pentecostal fire in Ghana.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AG	Assemblies of God
AICs African Churches	African Initiated Churches. Also known as Independent or Indigenous or Instituted
AP	Apostolic Church of Ghana
CAC	Christ Apostolic Church
CAFM	Christian Action Faith Ministries
CMs	Charismatic Ministries
CoP	Church of Pentecost
FGBMF	Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship
GPC	Ghana Pentecostal Council
ICGC	International Central Gospel Church
MDCC	Musama Disco Christo Church
NT	New Testament
NPCs	New Prophetic Churches

OT

Old Testament

VBCI

Victory Bible Church International

WA

Women Aglow fellowship

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the last days, God said,
I will pour out my Spirit upon all people,
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
Your young men will see visions,
And your old men will dream dreams.
In those days I will pour out my Spirit
Upon all my servants, men and women alike,
And they will prophesy (Acts 2: 17-18; cf. Joel 2:28-29).
(Life Application Study Bible: New Living Translation)

Underscoring the continual relevance, importance and all-compassing nature of prophecy in the church Griffiths (1986) points out that “prophecy is the most commonly referred to of all the gifts. It comes in no less than seven lists.....” (p.50). In reference to the scripture text above he notes:

Peter is saying that Joel’s prophecy is now fulfilled. Notice that Peter has added the words ‘and they will prophesy’ not found in Joel, thus implying that the gift will be common among

Christians, fulfilling the hopes of the Old Testament that ‘all God’s people should prophesy’ (Num. 11: 29) (Griffiths 1986, Pp.50, 51).

In Ghana ripples of prophetism have always characterized Christianity since the turn of the twentieth century. Yet this phenomenon is not restricted to the Ghanaian scene alone. In fact, it has been part of African Christianity ever since the faith was reintroduced into the continent by Western missionaries. Africa was the first non-Palestinian centre that received Christian witness after that historic descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. The remnants of the church on the continent date back to the fourth century in what has come to be known as the Coptic Church in Egypt and the Orthodox Church of Ethiopia (Cairns 1967; cf. Sanneh 1983).

Today, prophetic ministries have become more or less a ‘normal’ religious phenomenon in Ghana. We find ‘prophets’ in both Classical Pentecostal churches such as the Church of Pentecost (CoP) and neo-Pentecostal churches such as the Global Revival Ministries and the International Central Gospel Church. Yet Pentecostal prophetism still remains an ‘unexplored’ field that calls for serious scholarly investigation.

Prophetism poses a challenge and yet offers hope to Christianity due to its ability to respond to soteriological and pastoral needs amidst its ‘unexplained’ nature and ‘unconventional’ operations. Indeed, many are they who find problems with the ethos and theology of contemporary Pentecostal prophets. Prophets are

often accused of being pecuniary-motivated in their cause. Yet despite the criticisms, that include media reports, the phenomenon is becoming more and more appealing to many Ghanaians, Christians and non-Christians alike. One thing is clear. We do not have to pretend to be unconcerned with issues on prophetism; neither should we think we can eradicate it simply because we have problems with it. As Onyinah (2004a) has noted the early Christian missionaries failed when they attempted to erase prophetism in both its traditional and 'Christian' editions from their converts. Thus the 'prophetic problem' is an age-old one. This is why a dispassionate discussion on it is timely.

We may state here that there are apparent similarities that both biblical prophetism and Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism share. Whereas the emphasis in Pentecostal prophetism may differ somewhat from OT prophetism the former tends to share similar trends with the latter. For in both cases there is ample evidence to show that the prophets sought or seek to provide solutions to the problems of their people in particular situations and periods of their history.

We also wish to indicate that in responding to the material/physical and social needs of adherents Pentecostal prophets unintentionally tend to exploit the existing Akan religio-cultural worldview. To better appreciate what really goes on in Pentecostal prophetic circles one needs to analyse the group and individual psychology of both clients and prophets.

Statement of the Problem

A study on Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism demands an examination of its discernible trends that leads to the systematisation, analysis, formulation and evaluation of Ghanaian Pentecostal conception and practice of prophetism as dialectics of Biblical and Akan religio-cultural beliefs in response to the Ghanaian quest for meaning.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to examine trends that currently prevail in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism that reveal the various ways Ghanaian Pentecostals conceive and make relevant the prophetic phenomenon to the Ghanaian religiocultural and economic life.

Research Question

What discernible trends in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism enable us to systematise, analyse, formulate and evaluate how Ghanaian Pentecostals conceive prophetism as a recurring phenomenon in Ghanaian Christianity that reveals dialectics of biblical prophetism and the Akan religio-cultural worldview in response to the Ghanaian quest for meaning?

Sub-Questions

Consequently, the following sub-questions derive from the question above. Each sub-question will be dealt with in one chapter:

1. What are the historical antecedents of contemporary prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity?
2. What traits characterize the reemergence of Christian prophetism in Ghana?
3. Are there junctions and disjunctions between Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism and Old Testament prophetism?
4. What role did prophecy play in the historical development of the CoP?
5. What are the ways Classical Pentecostal churches such as the CoP conceive prophetism?
6. What critical issues arise from Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism?

Hypothesis

The synthesis of Pentecostal biblical understanding and the Akan religio-cultural belief in the supernatural causes of problems will continue to dictate the character of Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism.

Relation to Broader field

The research topic is related to the fields of Pentecostal Theology and Church History.

Methodology

In studying the theological beliefs of a Ghanaian Pentecostal church such as CoP a multi-dimensional approach is very useful and helpful. This study employs the qualitative research methodology rather than quantitative approach since:

The task of qualitative research is to be explicit about-to make visible-the lived (immediate, unconceptualised) meanings of an event [] for particular individuals and then across individuals. We may then examine these meanings for what they say of experience in general, or about some particular aspect of experience (Fisher & Wertz 2002, p. 277).

Similarly, Swinton and Mowat (2006) acknowledge the open-endedness of qualitative research as empirical, political, sociological, pastoral, gender-oriented and narrative-based that makes it difficult to tie it down and define. My employment of multi-definitive approaches emanates from the fact that:

Qualitative research involves the utilisation of a variety of methods and approaches which enable the researcher to explore the social world in an attempt to access and understand the unique ways that individuals and communities inhabit it. It assumes that human beings are by definition 'interpretive creatures', that the ways in which we make sense of the world and our experiences within it involve a constant process of interpretation and meaning-seeking. Qualitative research assumes that the world is not simply 'out there' waiting to be discovered. Rather, it recognises 'the world' as the

locus of complex interpretive processes within which human beings struggle to make sense of their experiences including their experiences of God. Identifying and developing understanding of these meanings is the primary task of qualitative research (Swinton & Mowat 2006, Pp. 29-30).

Data Collection:

To obtain a fair understanding on the topic this study looks at the concept of prophetism within the CoP as a representative case of Classical Pentecostalism. Within CoP different levels or types of prophetism may be identified, namely the gift of prophecy, prophetic singing, grassroots prophetism and institutionalised prophetism. These are delineated in the study to show how different levels of understanding and perceptions on prophetism prevail in that church and other Ghanaian Pentecostal churches.

Meanwhile Grassroots prophetism constitutes the main thrust of our study. To achieve this we observed the ministry of Elder Samuel Johnson Andoh of Down Town Prayer Revival Centre in the Kasoa North District as our case study. And since Grassroots prophetism has a lot of affinity with neo-Pentecostal prophetism the ministries of ten of such churches in the Accra West Area were observed to help obtain a composite view on the topic.

The designation Accra West is CoP's administrative division that roughly starts from Dansoman through Kaneshie/Mallam/Kwashieman to Kasoa. The choice of this catchment area is reasonable because it is a nerve centre of religious

activities with the bustling presence of CoP prayer centres and New Prophetic Churches (NPCs). I however appreciate how a limitation like this restricts one to ‘unintentionally’ treat the topic as an Accra one. Within this geographical space exist five CoP prayer centres and many NPCs among which are the ten churches observed. The prayer centres include the Down Town Prayer Revival Centre, Kasoa; Agyenkwa Prayer and Revival Centre, Kasoa; Salvation Prayer Revival Centre, Mallam; Ablekuma Prayer Revival Centre and Paradise Spiritual, Revival and Healing Centre, Odorkor.

The ten NPCs are Conquerors Chapel International, Family Bible Church, Living Christ Church International, Heaven Gate Ministries International and Efa-Tha Prayer Centre, Paradise Way Chapel, Watered Garden, Word Victory Church International, King Jesus Evangelistic Ministries, Forward Ever Evangelical World Outreach and Great Light Worship Centre.

The NPCs that were covered in the study were mainly the emerging prophetic ministries/churches because these are the ones which are still in the process of developing and ‘refining’ their theology and practices. Together with CoP’s prayer centres, they provided the ‘undiluted’ raw material for assessing the goings-on in peripheral Pentecostal Christianity in Ghana today. This selection was purposive because it facilitated my collection of data through my visits to the leaders of the churches/groups as well as my participation in many of their prophetic activities.

The rationale for this sample size derives from our research methodology which is the participatory research of the qualitative methodology. In participatory research of the qualitative methodology the goal of sampling is not for representation. It is valuable in terms of the participants in the data collection, analysis and dissemination and the potential of using the findings meaningfully. It allows different sampling techniques such as the opportunistic, theoretical and purposive. The first consists of people available and is a reality in time-limited and resource-tight study. The second builds data in progression by choosing interviewees at a number of different points in the data collection period. The third, the purposive, is the sampling method used in this study. This is because in purposive sampling “subjects are selected because of some trait or characteristic” and also the method “gains its power and informative potential from the way in which it selects particular cases which hold the potential to yield specific forms of information relevant to the project” (Swinton & Mowat 2006, p. 234). Again, in purposive sampling participants are chosen with specific explicitness and with the clear view of their ability to answer the research questions.

Methods/Instruments

1. **Empirical methods:** I used a variety of techniques namely, interviews, questionnaire administration, focus group discussions, participatory observation, testimonies, radio sermons, cassette recordings of sermons,

billboard and poster inscriptions, crusade programmes, night vigil prayers and revival meetings of CoP and ten NPCs in the country.

Sometimes the interviews informally took the form of personal discussions in offices, public transport, church services or the lecture halls of my university and bible schools. Questionnaires were administered to some of the leaders and the 'literate' members of the churches who had had some formal education up to the university level. The rationale was that they were capable of completing the questionnaires with little or no assistance. However interviews were conducted mostly with the leaderships of the churches or groups. The interviews were dispassionate and aimed at eliciting vital and authentic information as far as possible from the heads, leaders and key practitioners in the movement. I also attended a number of church services, crusades, prayer meetings and prophetic services of the groups. By this method it was possible for me to approach leaders of the groups for instant information of some occurrences or in-depth elucidation of portions of sermons, etc. during their meetings. It also enabled me to have a personal feel of what went into the activities of the groups. Furthermore, it afforded me the opportunity to interview ordinary church members or patrons on their insights, experiences and views on the sermons, activities and practices during the meetings.

2. **Phenomenological method:** I sought to integrate various aspects of the Pentecostal religious phenomenon in Ghana. These aspects were the Akan

traditional religio-cultural worldview, Pentecostals' understanding and interpretation of the Bible, inherited Christian tradition, and the Ghanaian socioeconomic contexts and religious experiences of Pentecostals.

3. **Systematic theological method:** By this method I analyzed the basic Christological insights in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetic songs, sermons and practices.
4. **Comparative method:** By this method I compared aspects of CoP's (Ghanaian Pentecostals') understanding of prophetism with the Akan religio-cultural understanding on the existential needs of Ghanaians. Also, I compared the Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetic understandings with central biblical notions on the matter.
5. **Evaluative method:** By this method I sought to assess how Ghanaian Pentecostals contextualize their understandings of human suffering and evil in the practice of the Christian faith. I also sought to examine the relevance of such contextualization to the Ghanaian public life.
6. **Secondary data sources:** The study has made extensive use of documentary sources and available literature on the topic. These include books on African Traditional Religion, Missions, Liberation Theologies, Pentecostal/Charismatic Theology, Church History, Biblical Theologies, and other relevant books as well as journals and newspapers.

Significance of the Study

This research on Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism is significant because it is one of the pioneering works on the Ghanaian Pentecostal understanding of prophetism. The information collected and analyzed in this study will add to the existing literature on theological studies, particularly, of the emerging theologies of the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches in Africa. Ghanaian Pentecostals will also gain from the research since it will afford them the opportunity to reexamine their beliefs, practices, theology and stance on the prophetic gift. But more significant is the fact that the research would offer tools for understanding and appreciating Pentecostal prophetism and provide a greater opening for further scholarly research on the topic.

Scope of the Study

In this study it is conceded that prophetism has been associated with the religious lives of Ghanaians. It is not our desire to do an in-depth analysis on the *Sunsum Sòre* known as African Independent (Initiated/Indigenous) Churches (AICs) since much work has already been done on them. We only make references to them where relevant to the present study. The major thrust of this present study lies within the activities of contemporary Pentecostal prophetism. We also seek to make specific examples of CoP and neo-Pentecostal prophetic ministries for the study. Hence the scope of the study covers such background information as:

- i. The religio-cultural context that informs Ghanaian religious attitudes and which underlie the Ghanaian quest for meaning in this life.
- ii. A historical analysis of the rise of prophetism in Ghana. It takes as its point of departure the arrival of the 'Black Elijah of West Africa', Prophet William Wadé Harris from Liberia, which resulted in the rise of the *Sunsum Sòre* (Spiritual churches).
- iii. An examination of the prophetic movement in contemporary Ghana as obtains in CoP's prayer centres and ten NPCs of neo-Pentecostalism within the Accra West area. Indeed, CoP's prayer centres and neo-Pentecostal prophetic ministries or churches in Ghana are numerous. Even in Accra alone they are quite many. It would therefore be impractical to consider every one of them; hence, the research focuses on the ten selected churches in the catchment area as indicated above.

Literature Review

There are a number of works written on the Pentecostal movement in Ghana. Ghanaian church historians refer particularly to Baëta's *Prophetism In Ghana: A Study of Some 'Spiritual' Churches* (1962) in treating the Pentecostal phenomenon in the country.

In his observation of the 'Spiritual Churches' Baëta notes that these churches succeeded due to their adopting less formal, more lively forms of worship with the use of native music and instruments, an approach which was nearer to African ethos contrary to the dulling and disinteresting character of the Western mission churches. Similarly, they arose as a sympathetic response to native or local problem with the authority of the parent churches in spiritual matters. More importantly, Baëta asserts, the rise and development of the Spiritual Churches help to offer clues to a study on the relation of our Ghanaian Christianity to culture, and throw up a number of clues to the whole problem of adaptation and syncretism in the world mission of the church. Another significant observation he makes is the fact that the Spiritual Churches represented a departure from the old traditional resources of supernatural succour for help from the God of the Christian message, a situation similar to the African's abandonment of the incompetent deity for a more potent one (Baëta 1962; cf. Mbiti 1975).

Indeed, Baëta's work provides very insightful knowledge on the nature and practices of prophetism that obtains in the AICs of Ghana. Such information is useful to our present study on Pentecostal prophetism since there are a number of discernible similarities in both strands of the Spirit movement in Ghana. However, this present study differs from Baëta's because its focus is the examination of trends discernible particularly in contemporary Pentecostal prophetism in Ghana with particular reference to the CoP which, like the NPCs, did not form part of Baëta's work.

Meanwhile, almost all the works written on Ghanaian Pentecostalism scantily touch on prophetism since it does not form the crux of the authors' discussions. In this light Larbi traces the impact of the Akan worldview and primal understanding that informs Pentecostal Christianity in the country. In *Pentecostalism: Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (2001) he shows how Pentecostal Christianity offered an alternative religious response to the Ghanaian religio-cultural and spiritual aspirations that Western Christian missionaries failed to meet.

Dealing extensively with the ministries of Pentecostalist Prayer Camps in Ghana Larbi shows how they respond to the socio-religious needs of Ghanaians. His discussion of the prophetic/evangelistic/deliverance ministries of Prayer Camp leaders aims at undergirding his:

[T]hesis that the search of the Pentecostals for salvation or abundant life manifests a continuity with the Akan traditional religious aspirations: a search for salvation in which health, prosperity, dignity, fertility, security, vitality, and equilibrium within the cosmos are dominant (Larbi 2001, p. xii).

In this seminal work Larbi (2001) shows understanding of the cosmological conflict that Ghanaian Christians faced, a conflict of allegiance to the Christian God on one hand or the 'gods of the fathers' on the other (cf. Imasogie 1995). This was because the Christian God seemed to be indifferent to their existential needs and problems. Larbi (2001) acknowledges the continuity and discontinuity between Ghanaian Pentecostal Christianity and the Akan traditional religious cosmological

understandings. In both cases there is a search for a “cosmological balance of power” that is made possible through the provision of a supernatural succour outside the believer (Larbi 2001, p. 426). But Pentecostalism is successful where traditional religion fails in that it presents a *victor Christus* who has redeemed the believer and placed him/her far above the satanic hordes that seek to intimidate and vanquish his/her life.

With the CoP, Peter Anim’s Christ Apostolic Church and the International Central Gospel Church as his cases of study, Larbi attempts to show the emphases of Classical and neo Pentecostal theologies in Ghana. Pentecostal theology, he points out, is basically distilled through their songs, prayers, testimonies and preaching. Larbi’s work, useful as it is, does not however capture fully the prophetic phenomenon in Ghanaian Pentecostalism.

In his book *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (2005) Asamoah-Gyadu discusses the emergence, impact and growth of Pentecostal Christianity in Ghana. He identifies three major strands in Ghanaian Pentecostalism namely: the *Sunsum Sòre* (AICs), Classical Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism. Pentecostalism, he argues, “represents the most concrete evidence of the phenomenal expansion of Christianity in African countries like Ghana”, a “response to the staid denominationalism of historic mission Christianity” (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005, p. ix).

He focuses rather on the single-congregation churches of the *Sunsum Sòre* and Charismatic Ministries (CMs). Even so it is the CMs that receive his greatest

attention. Among the CMs, he indicates that salvation is conceived in terms of transformation and empowerment, healing and deliverance, prosperity, and restoration of spiritual gifts. All these are by-products of the Spirit's anointing in believers' lives. Anointing here must be interpreted as resonating traditional religion and the *Sunsum Sorè* since it:

[F]its into the traditional perception of religion as a source of power of religious functionaries as people who must be effective in delivering such power for solving life's debilitating problems. [Furthermore] the fact that some CMs seem critical of the *Sunsum Sorè* usage of healing aids and substances, but now occasionally stray into those areas underscores the crucial role that religion plays in the African worldview as a source of power (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005, p. 158).

Also Opoku Onyinah's PhD thesis *Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost* (2002), apart from tracing the earlier prophetic presence in the *Sunsum Sòre*, has a chapter dedicated to lay prophets/prophetesses in the CoP. He shows how the church handled the problem of prophets in its midst. But he also analyses the role of that ministry in the overall functionality of the church to the extent that it served as the criterion for determining the entry into the ordained ministry. He treats the topic in relation to what he calls 'Witchdemonology' (Onyinah 2002a). 'Witchdemonology' is a term Onyinah has

coined in reference to the Ghanaian Pentecostal perception of witchcraft as a demonic force that demands Christian exorcism.

Firstly, this chapter of Onyinah concentrates on the emergence of lay prophetism in that church. Secondly, he seeks to show how leaders of the prayer centres/camps tried to respond to the emerging theology of 'witchdemonology'. These believed they had been empowered to confront demonic presence and activities in people's lives. However, Onyinah's goal here is not so much about discussing Pentecostal prophetism per se. Indeed, as a reflection of the unhappy experiences of his church he calls on the Christian church to put in place structures that can contain the new wine (prophetism) in its old wineskin (beliefs, practices) to avert possible schisms and secession.

In *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalising African Economy* (2004) Gifford looks at the activities and impact of what he calls Ghana's 'new churches'. These are the CMs. He analyses them firstly within the Ghanaian socioeconomic and political contexts during the Rawlings' era (1982-2000) of self-seeking leadership. His aim in writing the book is two-fold: to establish the religious vision of this kind of Christianity and to argue that these churches thrive on the economic plight of the majority of Ghanaians by presenting themselves as offerers of spiritual panacea to the Ghanaian material lack. For example, their:

[S]tress on victory is constitutive and indispensable, and provides the real appeal to this Christianity. This contextualised Christianity claims that it has the answer to the marginalization

of Ghanaians, and can remedy the lack, the poverty, the desperation; it will change you from a nobody into a somebody (Gifford 2004, p. 195).

He also seeks “to engage in the debate on the socio-political role of this Christianity” (Gifford 2004, p. iv). This implies relating “these churches to Ghana’s attempts to join the world economic system” (Gifford 2004, Pp. vi, 196). But he is quick to acknowledge that “there is no simple link between a religion and its public effects” (Gifford 2004, p. 196). He points out that his study on Ghana’s new Christianity has not convinced him that this new Christianity leads naturally to many of the benefits (such as a new work ethic) sometimes suggested. However, these churches instill motivation or self-belief. Consequently, he concludes, “If Ghana is to join the modern world economy the greatest need is the development of transparent and accountable structures, systems, procedures and institutions to regulate all aspects of society” (Gifford 2004, p. 197).

Gifford’s work is quite elaborate and has dealt with many pertinent issues prevalent in charismatic Christianity in Ghana today. He identifies what he calls rituals involving “instruments of destiny” (Gifford 2004, p. 60). He also notes that as part of the success/victory theology of these churches is the denial of negative realities such as death and suffering. These churches’ negative attitude towards these realities puts them in defensive state when the reality of their existence dawns on them (Gifford 2004). Moreover Gifford (2004) connects the ““deliverance

phenomenon” (p. 85) of the CMs to the Ghanaian pre-Christian religion.

Consequently, he contends that the phenomenon’s basic idea is:

[T]hat a Christian’s progress and advance can be blocked by demons who maintain some power over him, despite his having come to Christ. The Christian may have no idea of the cause of the hindrance, and it may not be through any fault of his own that he is under the sway of a particular demon (Gifford 2004, Pp. 85-6).

A significant issue he raises is the centrality of the prophet’s person in the activities of prophetic ministries in Ghana. This leads to vertical rather than horizontal relationships in such religious communities (Gifford 2004). It must be appreciated that Gifford approaches Ghana’s Pentecostalism from a sociological perspective that analyses and interprets the movement from a global developmental approach. This makes him employ historical/cultural tools in analyzing the movement which is a religious one.

Unlike Gifford however, this present thesis does not seek to explain why the ‘new churches’ grow in Ghana or show how they relate “to Ghana’s attempt to join the world economic system” (Gifford 2004, Pp. vi, 196). Our focus here is mainly to examine the prophetic ministry in Ghanaian Pentecostalism today. Another area that Gifford’s work does not capture but which serves as the main thrust of this work is how prophetism is perceived in the CoP.

All the above mentioned writers have amply uncovered various areas of Ghanaian Pentecostalism. We find that in their attempt they have touched on the prophetic phenomenon within the general spectrum of Pentecostalism without making it their main focus. This study, however:

- i. discusses the activities of present day Pentecostal prophets;
- ii. endeavours to identify types of prophetism within Pentecostalism;
- iii. challenges Pentecostals to relate their faith and practices more to the Ghanaian socio-economic and political situations.

Organization

This study is divided into eight separate chapters. Chapter one which is also the Introduction deals with the description of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of study, the research questions, the hypothesis, the methodology, significance and scope of study, literature review, the content of the study and terminologies and definition of terms. Chapter two traces the presence of early prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity since Prophet William Wadé Harris' ministry on the west coast of the Gold Coast. Chapter three discusses the phenomenal impact of the reemergence of prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity today.

Chapter four examines the possible relationship between biblical prophetism and Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism. It takes notice of their various points of intersection and departure, and their relevance to their different contexts. Chapter

five is a historical account on the CoP. The historical outline seeks to show the role of prophetism in that church since its inception.

Chapter six discusses prophetism as it obtains in the CoP. Here there is an attempt to delineate types of the phenomenon in that church. Also there is a narrative account on Elder Andoh's prayer centre at Kasoa which provides insight into the activities of 'grassroots' prophetism in that church. The chapter also seeks to show how prophecy provides tools for liturgy, charismatic empowerment, decision-making and polity in the CoP. Chapter seven is a critical analysis of the activities and practices of Pentecostal prophets in contemporary Ghana. It raises concern about some ethical issues that demand dispassionate address by Ghanaian Pentecostals with the hope that that good gift from the Lord becomes beneficial and not a byword to the church. Chapter eight provides concluding reflections on the prophetic presence in Ghanaian Christianity. It also seeks to offer some pragmatic suggestions that can help make Pentecostal prophetism relevant to the Ghanaian socio-cultural, politico-economic and religious contexts for a holistic liberation of the Ghanaian person and nation.

Terminologies and Definition of Terms

This work uses terms that the writer thinks may be more reflective of the contemporary Ghanaian Christian scene. In this work the churches that originated from the nineteenth century European missionary enterprises are collectively designated **Western mission churches, mainline churches** or **historic churches**.

They include the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the Methodist Church among others.

The term **Pentecostalism** is used to designate that strand of Christianity that stresses the continual presence and activeness of the Holy Spirit in the church's life throughout the ages. Pentecostals believe that the Spirit's active presence becomes most evident through the believer's reception and experience of Spirit Baptism. Such experience, it is believed by Pentecostals generally must be accompanied with **speaking in tongues or glossolalia**.

Pentecostal belief of glossolalia stems from their interpretation of the Upper Room experience of the early church (Acts 2) when the Holy Spirit fell upon the first Disciples of Christ on the day of Pentecost. This experience for Pentecostals is paradigmatic for subsequent Spirit outpourings on all Christ's disciples.

The term **Classical Pentecostalism** refers to the earlier Pentecostal movement in the country that is traceable to the work of Apostle Peter Newman Anim. Anim's work eventually led to the evolution of three major churches, Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), the Apostolic Church (AC) and the Church of Pentecost (CoP). These churches together with the American Assemblies of God (AG) and some smaller groups constitute Classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana. Classical Pentecostals have a strong moral ethos and more defined organizational structures. They are more eschatological in theology and show more concern about the

imminent return of Christ. These are churches whose founders are no longer alive to dictate the polity of their churches.

Neo-Pentecostalism is used here in a more restricted sense to mean the strand of Pentecostalism evident in the charismatic churches/ministries that emerged between the late 1970s and early 1980s. These are ‘revolt’ churches that were started by young Christians who either felt discontent with their ‘parent’ churches or believed they had received a ‘new revelation’ for the revitalization of the church. These churches include Christian Action Faith Ministries (CAFM), International Central Gospel Church (ICGC), and Victory Bible Church International (VBCI) among many others.

Both strands of Pentecostalism together with the AICs constitute what is referred to here as the **Spirit movement**. The term is used here in recognition of the ‘eruption’ of the activeness of the Holy Spirit that resulted in a ‘movement’ towards a desire for more of God among Ghanaian Christians since the turn of the twentieth century.

Prophetism is a religious phenomenon that involves an individual being supernaturally endowed with extra-sensory capabilities that enables him/her to perform supernatural functions. It involves the supernatural ability to gain spiritual insight of spiritual matters and the use of the knowledge thus gained in the realm of humans. In prophetism the individual, thus equipped, is extra-sensitive to the operations, will, intentions and directions of the possessing supernatural power or force.

In Biblical thought prophetism defines God's activeness in history through his concern, purpose and participation in human affairs. Prophetism therefore gives meaning to history. Israel's prophets were seen as Yahweh's messengers or spokesmen whose language was often characterized by "Thus says the Lord". In **Pentecostal prophetism** the supernatural power or force is the Holy Spirit whose direction, guidance, will, intentions and purpose operate vocally, intuitively and visually (by dreams and closed or open visions) through the chosen human instrument. In our present study then we refer to **Pentecostal prophetism** as that phenomenon in the Pentecostal church that claims to reveal the mind of God to his people in their existential needs of here and now. This prophetism seeks to speak to situations *now* rather than in some eschatological future. It has as its focus the material and physical concerns of clients/seekers. God's activeness in history, according to Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism, is achieved through the mediation of a 'man or woman of God'. This divine spokesperson discloses God's mind on clients' problems and concerns, and also offers therapeutic solutions to them.

The **Pentecostal prophet** then is a Christian whom the Holy Spirit enables to gain spiritual insight into spiritual mysteries. Such an individual could either be a male or female, old or young. The prophet is an individual supernaturally equipped to communicate the mind, will, intentions of God as well as forewarn and offer guidance and/or directions to individuals or the church. The goal is to offer supernatural comfort, encouragement, guidance and assistance to individuals or a church. In Pentecostalist understanding the prophet in addition to the gift of

prophecy may possess either or both the gifts of **words of wisdom and knowledge** as well as **discerning of spirits**.

Words of knowledge and wisdom are considered as revelational gifts while prophecy (with the associated gift of diverse tongues) is seen as a vocal gift. By vocal gift Pentecostals mean a gift that operates by the use of the mouth. In Pentecostalist understanding a word of knowledge is a supernatural knowledge received intuitively, or via dreams or visions about a past or present situation concerning an individual, group or affair. Word of wisdom on the other hand is the supernatural ability to offer appropriate guidance or help based on the knowledge supernaturally received. It thus looks into the future. The gift of discerning of spirits is the supernatural ability to determine the spiritual source of a problem, an activity and operations of individuals and spiritual functionaries especially in a religious gathering. Whereas a dream is received in sleep a vision may be received with the eyes opened. In that sense it is called an **open vision**. When a vision comes in a trance form or as if the individual is in a dozing state it is considered as a **closed vision**. The prophet's revelational abilities are believed to be heightened by means of persistent prayers and fasting. A Pentecostal prophet may also possess other supernatural gifts of faith, healing and working of miracles to augment his/her characteristic gifts aforementioned.

The term **Grassroots prophetism** is used to indicate the ministries of CoP lay leaders who function as prophets. These are the ones that people going through difficulties in their lives resort to for supernatural help and intervention. They are

thus designated '**Grassroots prophets**'. These do not belong to the class of official prophets in the ordained pastoral ministry of the church. Yet they are the ones who are in constant touch with the ordinary mundane affairs of the suffering masses, hence their designation as Grassroots prophets.

The term **NPCs** (New Prophetic Churches) refers primarily to the prophet-led newer churches within the CMs that emerged from the early 1990s. The prophets of these churches or ministries tend to share a lot of common traits as our investigations showed. In this thesis prophetism in these churches or ministries is thus referred to as **NPC prophetism**. It refers strictly to the prophetism most significant among these emerging prophetic ministries or churches since the period mentioned above. Though there may be evidences of the presence of this kind of prophetism among some older CMs, the term is used strictly here to refer to those emerging newer churches such as Atsu Manasseh's Watered Garden, Isaac Antoh's Conquerors Chapel International, to mention just a few. These churches/ministries replicate more or less characteristic traits of the AICs of yesteryears, and yet they operate under the ambit of the Ghanaian charismatic movement. Hence when we refer to them as **NPCs** it is because they have revived, albeit, in a more 'elitist' form some of the practices of the older prophetic churches or AICs.

We introduce the term **Peripheral Prophetism** as a generic term for both grassroots prophetism in CoP and NPC prophetism. The practitioners of this contemporary prophetism are Pentecostals yet their operations tend to 'fall outside' the general Pentecostal conception of the phenomenon. This is even so when we

consider Pentecostals do not seem to reach a consensus on the validity or otherwise of the phenomenon. Hence the phenomenon seems to lie on the periphery of Pentecostal officialdom.

CHAPTER TWO

EARLY PROPHETISM IN GHANAIAIAN CHRISTIANITY

Indisputably, Pentecostal prophetism witnessed in Ghana today has its historical antecedents in earlier versions of the phenomenon in the country's Christianity. It is to appreciate this assertion that this chapter seeks to answer the question: What are the historical antecedents of contemporary prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity? In attempting to answer this question I look at early prophetic ripples in Ghana and consequently showcase the activities of some earlier prophets in Ghanaian Christianity. They include the Prophets William Wadé Harris, Samson Oppong and Joseph William Egyanka Appiah. I pursue this through conversations with earlier works done on the rise and development of the Spirit movement, particularly the activities and ministries of the *Sunsum Sòre* in Ghanaian church history.

Early Prophetic Ripples in Ghana

Both Asamoah-Gyadu (2000) and Larbi (2001) identify some prophetic figures as the precursors of Ghanaian Pentecostalism. The two scholars agree that these prophets were characterized by the charisma they received from God in their encounter with the Holy Spirit. Similarly, Torvestad (1990) asserts that the

charismatic powers of such leaders were transmitted to sub-leaders who had healing and prophesying abilities themselves. These leaders proclaimed an all-powerful Christ to the people. Thus through their activities the then Gold Coast witnessed a strong and powerful prophetic and spiritual revival. These prophetic ministries had no foreign contact but were purely indigenous.

Two things come out clearly in Ghanaian independent church history. Either the protagonists of the movement were rejected and/or branded as impostors by their mainline church fellowships or felt compelled to leave them to initiate a new work. Thus Baëta shows that Joseph Egyanka Appiah was compelled to abandon the Methodist Church as a teacher-catechist to initiate his own church, the Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC), and build his 'holy city', Musano as a city for the faithful (Baëta 1962).

Three out of the numerous prophets and prophetesses who pioneered and/or maintained AICs in Ghana were Prophets William Wadé Harris, John Swatson and Sampson Oppong. These have enjoyed some amount of scholarly research into their ministries in recent times. Larbi's study *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (2001), has dealt extensively on them. Apart from these Baëta's work *Prophetism in Ghana* (1962) also covered the ministries of such prophets as Jehu Appiah and Kwame Nkansah among others. In what follows we will look at the ministries of Prophets Harris, Oppong and Appiah.

Early Prophetic Figures in Ghana

The Prophet William Wadé Harris

One man whose name emerges prominently in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism is the Prophet William Wadé Harris, a Grebo from Liberia. His evangelistic activities along the west coast of the Gold Coast gave rise to one of the earliest AICs in the country, *The Church of the Twelve Apostles*. This church was founded by two of his disciples, John Nackabah and Grace Tani, a former fetish priestess. This church derives its name from Harris' practice of appointing 'twelve apostles' in each village to oversee the needs of the flock (Asamoah-Gyadu 1994).

In his analysis of Harris' prophetic ministry David A. Shank (1994) shows that Harris understood himself as the 'Elijah', the 'big prophet' who

could threaten with fire, and....gives evidence of his own self-identification as the great eschatological prophet who was to come before the end---the day of the Lord when the Sun of righteousness was to arise with healing in his wings (Mal. 4:2) (p. 143).

Harris' self-understanding as that of Elijah is best captured in his statement to the colonial administrator Corbière in 1914 in Ivory Coast: "I am the prophet like Elijah to destroy the fetishes" (Shank 1994, p. 140). Indeed, Harris saw himself as the 'last prophet' to precede the coming of the day of the Lord. For Harris, this

final Elijah typology was a fulfillment of the role of the prophet “like unto Moses” (Shank 1994, p. 147).

But Harris had had a counterpart in the person of Garrick Sokari Braide who called himself ‘Elijah II’. Braide was born in about 1884 and was from Obonoma, New Calabar, Niger Delta of Eastern Nigeria (Shank 1994). The only probable connection the two men had was through the collaborative work between Harris and Braide’s ‘ordained’ disciple the Rev. S. S. McCarthy (Shank 1994). Though Harris accepted Braide as the Elijah II he perceived himself as the greatest of the prophets of his time. Thus Harris understood himself as ‘Elijah I’ of the assembly of prophets of God who God was sending from the four corners of the earth (Shank 1994).

Prophet Harris received his call in 1911 while in a Liberian prison for participating in a protest against what the indigenous Liberians considered as repressive policies of the Americo-Liberian government against them. He is alleged to have claimed an encounter with angel Gabriel while in prison. Gabriel commissioned him to be the prophet of the Most High in the manner of the Old Testament prophets. In subsequent trance-visitations he encountered such great OT prophets as Moses and Elijah and thus placed his call and mission of fetish destruction at par with them (Hildebrandt 1987).

Prophet Harris preached a simple message that emphasised the Bible’s divine inspiration and ever-abiding relevance. His monotheistic zeal meant a condemnation of cultic objects such as amulets and charms of the idolatrous old

religion of his audience and an intense hatred for witchcraft (Opoku 1990). For him salvation was achieved through repentance of sins and confession of faith in Christ's atonement. He did not establish a church but rather encouraged his converts to join the established missionary churches. It is said that he trekked through the Nzemah area of today's Western Region of Ghana with a wooden cross in hand and a cup of water for baptizing his converts. He wore a long flowing white gown with a sash around his waist.

Through his evangelistic efforts the historic churches won more converts than they had ever done in the area. Indeed, by all indications he may be considered as the forerunner or precursor of Pentecostalism in Ghana. His success was reminiscent of NT apostolic power encounter with evil forces as he sought to make the Gospel contemporary and relevant through the manifestations of spiritual gifts such as healings and exorcisms. Thus his prophetic/evangelistic ministry brought about a renewal in Gold Coast Christianity. Converts sought immediate water baptism from Harris believing it as a sufficient protection against evil forces. It is estimated that between 60,000 and 100,000 people were converted through his ministry (Hildebrandt 1987).

Harris, it must be noted, was a good "contextualiser" of the Christian gospel. For instance, he invoked God's blessing upon herbal preparations consecrated by fetish priests before allowing converts to apply them to their ailments. Similarly, he did not oppose the Christianisation of traditional songs in praise of God. By this action he was in the company of William Booth and the

Salvation Army who Christianised popular music of his time with Christian lyrics in praise of God (Taylor 1963). Thus, through contextualization he was able to make the Christian faith more attractive to the natives who perceived it as a white man's religion that promoted a 'white' God.

The Prophet Sampson Oppong

The Prophet Samson Oppong, unlike Harris, was a native of the country who demonstrated God's power among his own people. Oppong worked among the Asante where his ministry catalyzed the Methodist missionary effort there. The Methodist Church had for a long time not been successful in penetrating Asante with the Christian evangelion until Oppong arrived. Through his power evangelism the Methodist Church had 20,000 converts within two years (Larbi 2001). This was at a time when the people had such distrust for Methodist Christianity.

Oppong was an illiterate fetish priest who had a dramatic encounter with God. His encounter demanded burning his fetishes and becoming a preacher of the Gospel of Christ. In flowing white gown and with a wooden cross in his hand, and wearing a crown of flowers on his head he went about preaching repentance from sin and idolatry, and a turning to the true God. Because of his penchant for destroying fetishes he was nicknamed *Sèbètutu* (destroyer of charms) (Atiemo 1994). The Presbyterian Church was suspicious of his conversion and so he had to turn to the Methodists who accepted his ministry and thus benefited from it

greatly. As a result the Methodists were able to increase and open new congregations in today's Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Regions.

The impact of his evangelistic efforts caused the District Synod to change their plans so that in 1924 they opened the Wesleyan Training College in Kumasi rather than in the colony. Unfortunately, in later years Oppong fell out of favour with the Methodist Church which compelled him to retire and live at his native village where he carried out his evangelistic outreaches in neighbouring villages. He died in 1965 (Larbi 2001).

The Prophet Joseph William Egyanka Appiah

Joseph William Egyanka Appiah who later became Jemisemiham Jehu-Appiah, Akaboha I, was born in 1893 to Methodist parents at Abura Edumfa in today's Central Region of Ghana. Appiah owed much of his spiritual formation to one prophet Samuel Nyankson, a catechist in the Methodist Church, who cured the sick and also performed mighty miracles. Later Appiah, according to Baëta (1962), claimed a three-time angelic coronation in a trance when he fasted. This angelic coronation of Appiah as a prophet-king provides a backdrop to interpreting the 'monarchical-prophethood' practised by Appiah's church. Appiah was known to have performed numerous healings and miracles through fasting and prayer.

On 19th October 1923 Appiah and some sympathisers left the Methodist Church to form a new religious group which they called *Egyidifu Kuw* (Faith

Society). Earlier the Reverend Gaddiel Acquah, the then circuit minister of the Methodist Church at Gomoa Dunkwa, had ordered Appiah to stop all his 'occult practices' completely and promptly. According to the minister Appiah's spiritual activities contravened Methodists' beliefs and practices (Baëta 1962). But since naturally Appiah could not obey the injunction he was dismissed from the church. Eventually, in May 1925 Appiah's *Egyidzifu Kuw* metamorphosed into the Musama Disco Christo Church (said to mean the Army of the Cross of Christ Church), a name whose origin is claimed to be heavenly (Baëta 1962; cf. Opoku 1990).

Akaboaha's ministry did not only touch on the lives of ordinary people. In fact, Appiah was more than a religious leader; he was also involved in the politics of the country. Though a spiritual head of a church he was also an active member of the Aborigines' Rights Protection Society, a Gold Coast nationalist movement. Moreover, he offered spiritual support to Kwame Nkrumah's political career (Pobee 1988; cf. Addo 1999). From all indications Appiah did not draw a line between the secular and the sacred. The political inclinations and agenda of Appiah were vigorously pursued by his successors. It is no wonder then that one of his descendants became a Deputy Regional Minister under the National Democratic Congress government of Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings. In this regard then, Appiah's ministry places him among the Zionist figures that arose in South Africa whose conception of the liberation of Africa was unrestricted to only the spiritual salvation of the individual but also his socio-political and cultural freedoms.

Conclusion

I have attempted in this chapter to answer the question: What are the historical antecedents of contemporary prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity? Evidence on the ground suggests the Ghanaian religious quest for meaning in this life gave rise of the Spirit movement characteristic in the earlier AICs that emerged. These churches were founded by native Africans who had personal pneumatic experiences and who went about preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost. The prophetic ministries of some catalysed missionary activities in the country. However not all of them enjoyed the goodwill of their own church fellowships. This reaction from their church fellowships resulted in the prophets' ostracism, rejection or induced secession. With the rise of these prophetic ministries in the country God, as it were, was announcing to his church of the inauguration of a new era of spiritual renewal. Though the resultant churches from the activities of some of these prophets are now becoming peripheral in the country's Christianity, yet today's spiritual renewal owes much to these prophets' obedience and surrender to the Holy Spirit. Again, the ministry of a prophet like Appiah offers a religio-political paradigm for charting a meaningful prophetic ministry in Ghanaian Pentecostal Christianity today. In the proceeding chapter I will seek to discuss the reemergence of prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity.

CHAPTER THREE

THE REEMERGENCE OF PROPHETISM IN GHANAIAN CHRISTIANITY

In the foregoing chapter we traced the historical presence of prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity. I also promised to discuss the reemergence of the phenomenon in this present chapter. In line with that this chapter aims at responding to the question: What traits characterize the reemergence of Christian prophetism in Ghana? Consequently, the chapter retraces Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism, delineates discernible phases in the phenomenon over the years, presents a discussion on gender equation in the Church's corporate mission, and finally probes into whether NPC Prophetism is a continuity or discontinuity of AIC Prophetism.

Retracing Ghanaian Pentecostal Prophetism

As has been shown in the foregoing chapter prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity is traceable to the AICs, the precursors of modern Pentecostalism, the latter continuing and perhaps improving on the former's weaknesses and lapses. These strands in the Spirit movement operate on the premise that whatever works

supernaturally in the church is of God irrespective of how it is achieved. But Pentecostalist pragmatism can be problematic sometimes.

This kind of pragmatism posed a major challenge in the 1950s to James McKeown, the Irish missionary-founder of the CoP, when prophetism emerged in his organisation subsequent to the Latter Rain movement's visit to that church. This has been amply shown by Onyiah (2002a). The Latter Rain Evangelical Association was a North American revivalist Pentecostal group. The group led by one Dr. Thomas Wyatt visited the Apostolic Church in the Gold Coast and Nigeria in February 1953. The group's visit brought great revival to the Gold Coast church. Not long after converts such as Brother Lawson emerged as prophet-healers in the church.

Phases of Ghanaian Christian Prophetism

In this section we trace what we identify as the five phases of Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism. A phase is used here to denote the various stages of prophetic manifestations in Ghanaian Christianity. It is our contention here that the current prophetic manifestations in the country may well be described as the fifth phase of that phenomenon.

The first phase of Christian prophetism in Ghana occurred in the era of the AICs. The AICs were characterised with a strong prophetic ministry. Founders/leaders in these churches prophesied, saw visions and offered spiritual directions to their clients who came to them in search of spiritual relief from diseases, sicknesses, etc. This first phase of prophetism was followed by the

emergence of Classical Pentecostalism of which Apostle Peter Anim is credited with its origination.

Pentecostalism was characterised with its own brand of prophetism especially in the 1950s. Notable among the prophets were Brother Lawson and Prophet John Mensah. Both men used to be in McKeown's organisation until they seceded to form their respective churches. Brother Lawson's prophet/healing group came to be known as the Divine Healer's Church while John Mensah formed the Church of Christ (Spiritual Movement). This prophetism is identifiably the second phase of Christian prophetism in Ghana.

In his Ph.D thesis *Evangelical Para-Church Movement in Ghanaian Christianity: (1950 to Early 1990s)* Samuel Adubofour (1994) discusses the Inter-Hall Christian Fellowship of the (Kwame Nkrumah) University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. In this work he shows how Pentecostal prophetism gained prominence in the Inter-Hall Christian Fellowship in the 1970s. One of the protagonists, Kwabena Adu Baah is reported to have stated that "'prophecy' was the excitement of the day" (Adubofour 1994, p. 183). Because of the extremities of campus prophetism of the UST, Adubofour alleges the Inter-Hall Christian Fellowship "attracted reactions which range from derogatory remarks to outright condemnation" (Adubofour 1994, p. 187). This phase of prophetism though experienced basically at the tertiary level may be deemed to be the third phase of Christian prophetism in the land.

The fourth phase of prophetism is traceable to the denominational prayer centres/camps in the CoP, among others, which became quite more phenomenal in the early 1980s. Gifford (2004) maintains they filled the gaps in the faith gospel of the CMs and asserts they have since 1985 subsided significantly, with the soteriological shift being now tilted towards the prophetic ministries of the CMs. A problem with Gifford's claim is that he failed to see these centres, as Onyinah (2002a) has shown, as places that basically catered for CoP rather than Charismatic members' existential needs. They were actually spiritual insulators against the members' 'straying' into the AICs' healing gardens. Among the CMs it may be said that the emergent deliverance ministries provided the supernatural explanations for failings of the faith gospel claims. Again, evidence on the ground, however, proves his assertion partially incorrect. These centres still enjoy high patronage as a visit to Elder Okyere's Salvation Prayer Centre or Elder Dan's Paradise Spiritual, Revival and Healing Centre, both in Accra, or Elder Andoh's Down Town Prayer Revival Centre at Kasoa will show. Moreover leaders of these centres actually qualify as prophets though their approach may differ from the prophets of the prophetic ministries in neo-Pentecostalism.

These Prayer Camps/Centres offer alternative soteriological recourse for members of CoP who would otherwise resort to the *Sunsum Sorè*. According to Onyinah (2002a) these camps/centres arose in response to the witchdemonology of the 1980s and '90s. They serve(d) as 'safe havens' for a great majority of troubled and perplexed Ghanaians who resort(ed) to them for a special time of prayers in the

expectation of receiving answers from God to their numerous existential needs and problems.

According to Sampong (2000) the first prayer centre established in evangelical/Pentecostal circles is associated with the CoP. However, it is uncertain which preceded the other, whether the Okanta Camp near Suhum or Maame Dede's Prayer Camp at Kade, both in the Eastern Region of Ghana. As he points out the current growth and proliferation of these centres is perceived by many as a positive sign of engendering Christian evangelisation and revival in the country (Sampong 2000). Both Larbi (2001) and Onyinah (2002a) see the prayer camps/centres as places where people resort to with various needs for supernatural succour via prayer and fasting. Also both agree that the activities at these centres gravitate around a key personality who is a prophet/prophetess or evangelist.

Though their initial existence dates back to the 1940s it was not until the 1980s that the prayer centres became prominent in the religious life of many Ghanaians. Onyinah (2002a,) therefore sees them as "revived prayer camp(s)" in the CoP (p. 253). Again he associates their activities with those of the Deliverance Teams, Prayer Warriors and Prayer Towers set up by Para-church groups and other churches to cater for the 'urgent' needs of their followers (Onyinah 2002a). Their patrons cut across the socio-religious divide: political personalities, the rich, the poor, Christians and non-Christians such as Muslims and traditional religionists. This was actually the case during our visit to Elder Andoh's Down Town Prayer

Revival Centre on September 29, 2005 where we found some Muslim clients who testified to the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The fifth phase of prophetism we identify began with the emergence of independent prophetic figures in the early 1990s. This was when a new crop of young Pentecostals arrived on the ecclesiastical scene. Among these were Prophets Elisha Salifu Amoako and Owusu-Bempah. Significantly, it was just when the prayer centres in CoP numbered eight (by October 1993), and had begun assuming a nationwide popularity that the prophetic ministries in neo-Pentecostalism were also beginning to emerge on a large scale (Larbi 2001). The prophets/prophetesses of these prayer centres share a lot in common with the prophets within neo-Pentecostal Christianity today. While it is true that the former predate the latter their activities today are concurrent.

Today, it is not uncommon to hear of ‘prophet such and such’ organizing a ‘prophetic’ service or to hear a ‘prophet’ speak on the airwaves. For instance, there was this poster that advertised a 14-day revival (prayer and fasting) programme of a church which called itself Heavenly Members Church International, to be held at Mataheko Mars (Accra) under the theme ‘God’s Pencil has no Eraser’. It encouraged seekers to ‘come and meet dynamic men of God’. The host of this programme was one Rev. Prophet Frank Anim who provided his contact phone numbers as well, a characteristic of these modern day prophets. Other prophets were going to be in attendance.

A significant feature of these prophetic services is the prophets' belief in the omniscience of God and their own role in the supernatural delivery. For example, one Prophet Benjamin Akonnor's Kingdom Word Chapel International presented "a 4 Day Prophetic Direction to know your future" with the invitation "Come and God will show you where you have to go". This prophetic scene is not restricted to Ghanaian prophets alone. Even Nigerian 'prophets' take advantage of it as 'A 5-Day Holy Ghost Revival' service of Kingdom of Fire Chapel International, Accra, a church run by a Nigerian pastor Rev. Benjamin C. Elechi, presented fellow Nigerians to 'reap' into the Ghanaian prophetic harvest.

Gender Equation in the Church's Corporate Mission: African Women and Prophetism

This section seeks to show the significant role that Ghanaian women have over the years played in the country's Christianity, especially in prophetism. Ghanaian women have been known to stand side by side with their male counterparts in Christian ministry. For example, it was one of McKeown's women, Afua Kuma, whose adoration of Jesus the Christ has provided the ingredient for *grassroots theology*, as the works of Bediako (1998; 2000), a foremost Ghanaian missiologists show. Again, women like Christiana Obo will not be forgotten in the annals of James McKeown's church. This woman made personal sacrifices by offering her precious jewels for sale to provide financial support to Pastor McKeown's ministry at its infant stages.

Actually, Mrs. Christiana Obo's supportive role in McKeown's ministry echoed Lucan account of women's contribution in Jesus' ministry (Luke 8:1-3). Luke's account shows how women like Mary of Magdala, Joanna and others supported Jesus' ministry from their own financial and material resources. These were women who had benefited from Jesus' healing and deliverance ministry and had decided to follow and support him from their own resources. Their appreciation and recognition of the significance of Jesus' ministry reached its climactic point when they visited his tomb-side on the resurrection morning. Significantly this was when their men folks were hiding under tables (Luke 24: 1ff)! The supportive ministry of such women leaves a model for the corporate mission of the church.

The church's mission demands that those who risk their lives at the frontline of evangelisation must be supported financially and materially by those who stay behind to do their personal businesses. Not all of us can abandon our jobs and the comforts of our homes to go into missions in response to the Lord's Great Commission to the church (Matt. 28:18-20). But surely all believers can participate in missions in kind. This then is the logic behind the CoP's mission drive since the time of Pastor James McKeown.

With all probability, however, it looks like prophetism is one ministry that Ghanaian women seem to fully realise their Christian ministry. This was the situation in the days of the AICs and it is equally so today. Today it is not uncommon to find women appearing on prophetic and evangelistic programmes

of churches. Some are themselves prophetesses. For example, the poster of the Temple of Jerusalem Bible Ministry International presented ‘A 7-Day Consuming Fire Revival’. It had as its theme ‘Power of Shaking’ (Acts 16:26; 4:31; 12:10). Seekers were encouraged to ‘come and have liberty with your family in Jesus name, Amen’ on Monday 31st-6th November 2005 at the Temple auditorium, Sahara Down, Dansoman (Accra). Its hostess: Prophetess Mrs. Bernice Ohene was the General Overseer of the church. Underneath the poster was the statement: The Bible says where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2nd Cor. 3:17). This and many other women like Ruth Ayiku, the wife of the branch pastor of the Global Revival Ministries at Mataheko, Accra, seem to give vent to feminist agitation that the church’s ordained ministry can no longer continue to be a men’s preserve. After all our observations show females form the greater bulk of participants at Pentecostal prophetic meetings.

The significant impact of women in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism comes out clearly in how the CoP demonstrated its recognition of two of its ‘prophetess-healers’. During the church’s 36th General Council Meeting at the Pentecost University College, Sowutuom, in Accra (May 11-14, 2006) both Auntie Grace Mensah and Maame Sarah had citations read for them. Moreover, the church’s General Secretary, Apostle Alfred Kodua also presented gifts to them. Auntie Grace is the founder and prophetess of the Abura Edumfa Bethlehem Prayer Revival Centre while Maame Sarah is of the Goka Prayer Centre. What was clear in the citations was the church’s satisfaction of their

humility, submission and availability to be used by God to bring salvation to many through their healing/prophetic ministries.

The problem is that though CoP benefits immensely from the ministerial gifts of the women yet it does not have a place for them in its ordained ministry. No woman is called into CoP's ordained ministries of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor/teacher. In fact, the highest a woman can attain in this church is a deaconess or/and a women's leader of its Women's Movement. Even women founders and leaders of prayer centres are officially called deaconesses. When we consider that the church thrives greatly on both the spiritual and material support of the women then one is left to think that there is a high demand of 'gender justice' in its pastoral recruitment.

The presence of females in the current prophetic ministry of Ghanaian Pentecostalism resonates the somewhat gender ideology of the *Sunsum Sorè* (Asamoah-Gyadu 2000). It provides a sign of hope and a recipe for African feminist agitation against the marginalisation of women in the sacramental ministry of the Christian church (Okure 1982). For instance, Alalade (1998) observes that any God-talk without women is incomplete for "without women there can be no gospel" (p. 11). And that is why Tappa (1998) identifies the Christological task as the working out of the full humanity of the reality of the Christ-event for humanity. She further argues that with the Christ-event there is a rupture in sexual barriers of all times. Thus, modern Pentecostals like their forebears, the AICs, set a stage for a liberating human wholeness.

Prophetism in New Prophetic Churches: A Continuity or Discontinuity of

Prophetism in the AICs?

Today, prophetism has become very prominent in Ghanaian Christianity because of the 'quick' solution it offers to its adherents/seekers. Many of these ministries or churches are initiated by semi-literates with virtually no Bible School education. These churches are purely of indigenous initiative and do not have any Western or non-Ghanaian connection, influence or origination. However, their leaders take great delight in undertaking foreign trips, particularly to the West; and many of these semi-literate or/illiterate prophets are beginning to conduct church services in English.

These churches present a revived or perhaps a refined form of the older AICs. For instance, their employment of ritualistic materials/acts is reminiscent of the AICs of yesteryears. Examples of such acts are the application of 'anointing oil', foot washing, altar-raising, possession-walking, atmospheric-prophetism and gate-breaking/building. Others are the use of blessed substances like 'koko' (a maize gruel eaten in Ghana) and whipping the devil with cane. Others still are shooting spiritual arrows and bombs against spiritual forces, hand clapping; causality diagnosis of diseases or calamities/problems, etc. These new churches' use of ritualistic formulae and acts explains why we regard them as NPCs in this study.

Though there seems to be a continual proliferation of these NPCs which would suggest their continual popularity yet evidence on the ground seems to indicate that many Ghanaians are beginning to question the genuineness of their

leaders. It is reasonable to think that the problem that the phenomenon seems to pose in the religious scene occasioned the conveyance of the 1st National Prophetic Leadership Conference, held at the Prayer Cathedral of the Christian Action Faith Ministries, in Accra from Sunday to Thursday (June 4-8, 2006). Actually this was not the first of such prophetic conferences to be held in the country. Indeed, way back in 1998 Rev. William Obeng-Darko organised a prophetic conference in Kumasi. The convener of the present programme, Bishop James Saah, the Resident Bishop of the host church, made it clear in his opening address that the conference was “not an inquisition or censorship on anybody”, but was intended “to offer mentorship”. Notwithstanding his assurance one could surmise that underneath all the flowery speeches the organisers felt there was something seriously wrong with the phenomenon.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have attempted to respond to the question: What traits characterize the reemergence of Christian prophetism in Ghana? We have tried to show that prophetism has been part of Ghanaian Christianity appearing in various phases of the Ghanaian Pentecostal experience. We also noted the significant challenge the phenomenon poses to the gender imbalance in the church’s sacramental ministry. Also the contemporary Pentecostal prophetism shares some, albeit subdued, resemblances with the AICs. The phenomenon is a mixed-blessing to the church. This cannot be captured better than Apostle Ntumy’s submission

during the above mentioned “1st National Prophetic Leadership Conference”, that the prophetic gift is a gift from God to the church. Yet like any other gift it can be used or abused. However the fact that something can be abused and misused does not imply it is not good. In the following chapter we will seek to examine how Pentecostal prophetism crosses or departs from biblical prophetism.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPHETIC MINISTRY: A CONSIDERATION OF GHANAIAAN PENTECOSTAL PROPHETISM IN THE LIGHT OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETISM

In the foregoing chapter we attempted to show how prophetism reappeared in the Ghanaian Christianity. I also indicated that I would compare and contrast Pentecostal prophetism with biblical prophetism in this present chapter. Hence, this chapter seeks to respond to the question: Are there junctions and disjunctions between Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism and Old Testament prophetism? Consequently, this chapter seeks to examine the possible relationship between OT prophetism and Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism. It takes notice of their various points of departure and their relevance to their different contexts.

The Role of Prophets in Israel

At this stage we wish to indicate that prophetism is what provides the Old Testament religion with its divine imperatives and social interpretations. This means it is the writings and actions of the OT prophets which provide the basis for understanding God's righteous standards for his covenant people Israel. Through

the prophets Yahweh made his will and demands known to Israel as his covenant people. Israel became the people of Yahweh at Mt. Sinai when Yahweh 'cut' a covenant with them.

In that covenant Israel as the subject was required to adhere to the terms that Yahweh, her suzerain dictated. When Israel failed to be loyal to the terms of the covenant Yahweh raised prophets to bring the people back into his kind of relationship, a relationship of socio-religious and political implications. Anderson (1975) notes: "...the prophet speaking under the influence of Yahweh's Spirit was able to interpret the meaning of events and to proclaim the will of God in concrete terms" (p. 231). Thus these prophets challenged the people to right living by demanding from them a religion that translated into the socio-political and economic dimensions of life.

It was a normal practice of OT prophets to consult God often to hear from or speak for him in the trying situations of the people. But due to their unique position in God's relationship with his people, a culture of consultation with the prophet emerged for the purposes of knowing God's mind and will. The importance of the prophet in Israel's life is brought to the fore when we consider that God delivered his people from Egypt through a prophet, Moses (Hosea 12:13; Psalm 105: 26; Numbers 33:1, 2). Moses enjoyed a special place among God's prophets because God spoke with him face to face (Ex. 33: 11). This Moses admonished Israel that God would raise for them a prophet like himself, a prophecy which is acknowledged to be messianic in purpose (Deut. 18: 15; cf. Acts 3:22-26).

Moreover, lack of prophetic ministry in Israel was understood as a time of spiritual famine since it was the prophet who held the key to divine knowledge, insight and will for the people (Amos 8: 11-13).

But prophetism in the OT receives an extension in the NT through the ministries of such prophets as Ezekiel and Joel. The latter spoke specifically of the distant future when God's Spirit would be poured upon all people. Consequently, there would be the bestowal of gifts of prophecy, dreams and visions to inaugurate the Day of the Lord (Joel 2:28ff.). It is with this understanding that Luke interprets the phenomenon in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost when he quotes Peter's message and links it to the eschatological outpouring of the Spirit. As Onyinah (2004a) insists:

That Pentecost marks the beginning of the new covenant has not been a problem for biblical scholars, but what has been a problem is the quintessence of the outpouring and its significance for the New Testament saint....[Indeed,] many scholars, including Lampe, Schweizer, Stronstad and Menzies, have insisted that the Pentecostal Spirit in Acts is the Spirit of Prophecy prophesied by Joel (p. 11).

Pentecostal Prophetism and the Ghanaian Quest for Reality

Broadly speaking prophetism exists in African traditional religions where it operates through mediums, priests and diviners. Whereas priests/priestesses and mediums may provide information orally under spirit possession, diviners are able

to foretell events by means of their divining skills and objects. However, what non-Christian prophetism provides is rejected by Christianity as pagan and satanic.

In Ghana, just like in many parts of Africa, many Christians and non-Christians desire to acquire information in response to their existential needs such as wealth, health, business, progress, education, marriage, promotion, foreign travels, etc. With their traditional African religiosity they turn to people with powerful spiritual connection to elicit such relevant information. But society is fast changing; it is becoming more and more 'Christianised' and 'civilised'. Hence, many of such people find it 'unwholesome' to visit the traditional sources for the requisite information. They therefore prefer going to Christian prophets. Consequently, it is not surprising to meet even Muslims and other non-Christian believers in Pentecostalist prophetic services. For instance, during our visit to Elder Andoh's Down Town Prayer Centre at Kasoa on September 29, 2005, there were Muslim seekers among the new visitors who were asked to introduce themselves to the congregation. Yet because of their particular *modus operandi* contemporary Pentecostal prophetism has elicited a lot of suspicions and doubts among followers, both Christians and non-Christians (Onyinah 2002b).

Continuity and Discontinuity of OT and Pentecostal Prophetisms

Napier (2005) has observed that in the Old Testament the prophet characteristically addressed the life and problems of his own community. The prophet's word may involve (as it sometimes did) a process of extrapolation from the present scene.

This implies divine commitment to the future is proclaimed in divine judgment or in redemption, or in both. Or it may go back into history to forcefully bring past events into the present with incisive relevance. Of significant importance is the fact that any such reference to the past or the future is directly related to, or contingent upon, the present and it is intended primarily for the contemporary community. It is important to note that in the OT what are of utmost essence are the terms of the prophet's own existence and his own immediate historical environment. Indeed:

The prophet has no abstract word. What he passionately believes to be the revelation of Yahweh he *sees* in historical event and *understands* from the Word of Yahweh. There is no prophecy without history and no understanding of the prophetic message apart from the history that calls it forth (Napier 2005).

Both OT and Pentecostal prophetisms amply employ and utilise the religio-cultural and socioeconomic understandings of their receptor groups that emanate from their respective worldviews. Notwithstanding, the former tends to have more of socioeconomic and political undertones than the latter. Their points of departure lie in the prophetic attitudes towards the roots of audiences' problems.

Though the OT does not present us with a problem-free kind of prophetism we realise that true prophets of Yahweh, difficult as it was, had a basic aim. The true prophets of Yahweh aimed at challenging the people to be loyal to their God. Their messages thus aroused reverential fear in the people towards God and his

covenantal relation with them. This is because disobedience to Yahweh and his law meant misfortune for the people (Zuck 1991).

In much of Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism, on the other hand, there is ‘a subdued return’ to the ‘old gods and beliefs’ of the people, or perhaps a Christianised *Sankòfa*. This *Sankòfa*, though, is not to be understood in the same sense as the inculturationists’. As Pentecostals the prophets fundamentally and generally advocate for a rupture with the African pre-Christian past and tradition (Meyer 1998). Notwithstanding the African belief in the supernatural and superstition are effectively capitalised upon in achieving the prophetic goal. This results in the presentation and promotion of a *victor Christus* with saving power of far reaching scope and consequence. This conquering Christ neutralises the malevolent spirits and forces that intimidated believers prior to their Christian conversion. This Pentecostal effort at adaptability of the Christian evangelion is succinctly noted by Harvey Cox thus:

‘[I]ts power to combine, its aptitude for adopting language, the music, the cultural antecedents...of the setting in which it lives. But this very flexibility can also be, at times, its most dangerous quality as well’ (Onyinah 2002a, p. 204).

Stemming from their ‘superstitious’ cosmological understanding Pentecostal prophets appeal to the emotional states of seekers/clients. As has been noted earlier these prophets instigate power mediation with God via faith extensions such as the use of prophylactic materials or substances. Hence, the

idea of a point of contact proves to be a fertile means of advancing the ministry of these Pentecostal prophets. The concept of 'a point of contact' has always been part of AIC operations. It however received an American touch when Ghanaian Charismatics assimilated some elements from their American mentors. In neo-Pentecostal parlance a point of contact could be a tangible thing or person, such as a pastor's person, a blessed handkerchief, blessed water, 'anointing oil' or even money, which 'props up' believers' faith in receiving an answer or miracle from God. It thus serves as a 'spiritual arm' for divine intervention.

One Phenomenon Different Perceptions

We want to state that there exist differences in the way Pentecostals conceive, perceive or respond to prophetism. For instance, in CoP prophetism may be perceived in two ways: institutional prophetism and grassroots prophetism. Institutional prophetism comprises those levels or types of prophetism such as prophetic singing, the gift of prophecy and what we call institutionalised or official prophetism of ordained ministers of the church. Institutional prophetism does enjoy official recognition and acceptance with little or no difficulty unlike grassroots prophetism.

Ironically although institutionalised prophetism enjoys much respect and reverence, yet it does not carry the same awe and direct impact as 'grassroots prophetism' of the so-called Prayer Leaders. These are the ones whose ministries impact more directly on the ordinary masses of suffering and 'directionless'

people. In fact, the masses resort to them because they perceive in them the similitude of what they believe to be marks and signs of a biblical prophet, with more relevance to their lives. This may explain why the 'troubled' may frown on official prohibition to 'consult' with the 'officially' unaccepted 'grassroots prophets'. Also, this may explain why these 'grassroots prophets', though they may undergo some kind of institutional persecutions are able to thrive on from strength to strength. And what is true of CoP is equally true of prophetism among neo-Pentecostals. We need to be hesitant in accusing the masses as gullible minded. The bottom-line is people will always disregard all forms of condemnation to 'consult' with prophets if they are assured of receiving the answers to their problems.

Conclusion

I have tried to look at the similarities and dissimilarities that exist between OT and Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism in my attempt to answer the question: Are there junctions and disjunctions between Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism and Old Testament prophetism? Clearly the similarity between the two types of prophetism is about the contextualisation of the divine message. Yet there are dissimilarities between them. We realise that OT prophetism responded to systemic injustice. Pentecostal prophetism on the other hand is more concerned about the existential here and now. As we will show in subsequent discussions this Pentecostal concern has not proved to be sufficient in dealing with the socioeconomic and political

problems of Ghanaians. This is why we accede to an analytical approach to OT prophetic writings as the missing link for a holistic development of the individual and the nation. In the proceeding chapter we shall give attention to the emergence of the CoP and show the ambiguity of prophetism in that church's development.

CHAPTER FIVE

MCKEOWN'S CHURCH OF PENTECOST

At the conclusion of the preceding chapter I promised to discuss the emergence of the CoP and also show how ambiguous prophetism was in that church's development. This chapter therefore seeks to answer the question: What role did prophecy play in the historical development of the CoP? It pursues this by providing a historical overview on CoP. Consequently, the chapter traces the historical origin of that church to the dedicated and committed services of the Ghanaian Peter Newman Anim and James McKeown. In this historical narrative efforts are made to show the ambiguous role of prophecy in that church's development.

Pioneers of Classical Pentecostalism in Ghana: Peter Anim and James McKeown

Apostle Peter Anim

In discussing Ghanaian Pentecostalism Wyllie (1974) believes that the works of two highly dedicated and forceful men, Peter Anim and James McKeown, have profoundly influenced the independent Pentecostal movement in Ghana. He traces

Ghanaian Pentecostalism to the initial work of Apostle Peter Anim. Anim's parents, Mr. Simon Appiagyei and Madam Hannah Lartebea, hailed from Anum Boso in the Volta Region of Ghana. Born on 4th February, 1890, Anim was the third of six children. He lived longest. He died in 1984 at the age of 94 years. He completed his elementary education at the Basel Mission Schools at Anum and Boso in 1908 (Larbi 2001).

Anim joined his brother at Akuapem Amanokrom in 1911 in the latter's carpentry trade. Later in the same year he left to work with the Basel Mission Factory at Pakro as a weighing clerk. Due to ill health he left this job in 1912 and later became a brick layer in 1914. But he left this job also and returned to Pakro. He married one Madam Dora Sakyibea in 1916 when he eventually returned to his hometown. They had four daughters but three of them died in rapid succession during their infancy. Unfortunately, his wife also died in 1920 after a short illness, and the remaining daughter died not long afterwards. Thereafter he married one Madam Esther Osimpo with whom Moses Appiah Anim was born, the only son and surviving child of Anim. This woman also died in 1967.

Anim's spiritual turnabout began when he started receiving a Faith Tabernacle magazine, 'The Sword of the Spirit'. The editor, one Pastor A. Clark, founder of the Faith Tabernacle Church, Philadelphia, taught among many things 'holiness', 'prevailing prayer' and 'faith healing' without medication (Asamoah-Gyadu 2000). Despite its non-Pentecostal orientation Faith Tabernacle placed much emphasis on faith healing and holiness. These were themes Anim's

Presbyterian upbringing had not exposed him to. Therefore in 1920, the year his wife died, he embraced Faith Tabernacle teachings. In 1921 he experienced the efficacy of Faith Tabernacle's teaching on healing when he was cured of his chronic stomach ulcer and guinea worm infestation. He subsequently left his Basel (Presbyterian) mission fold where he was an organist to settle at Asamankese in the present day Eastern Region of Ghana. Here he began a healing ministry which was later to be called *Faith Tabernacle Church*. In 1923, Pastor A. Clark sent him an ordination certificate that qualified him to pastor a church.

In his attempt to define the faith and practice of his organisation Anim upon the advice of a similar organisation in Nigeria sought to affiliate with other Western Pentecostal churches. The first was the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, U. S. A. in 1931, and finally, the Bradford Apostolic Church in 1935. Anim's relationship with the Apostolic Church, Bradford, began when a Pastor Perfect from that church visited Anim's group at Asamankese in 1935. Though Pastor Perfect's visit was brief yet it made a strong impression on Anim and his organisation such that they decided to affiliate their organisation to Bradford Apostolic Church. They also requested for a resident missionary to assist them in the administration of their emerging Pentecostal church. Thus, until 1935 there was no direct personal contact between Peter Anim and Western Pentecostals. On March 2, 1937 Pastor James McKeown, the first resident missionary of the Apostolic Church arrived in Accra, and on March 4, he arrived at Anim's

headquarters at Asamankese to begin his work with that organisation (Bredwa-Mensah 2004).

Pastor James McKeown

Pastor James McKeown was born on September 12, 1900, in Glenborg, a village in Lanarkshire, Scotland. His father William John McKeown and his mother Elizabeth Thompson originally came from County Antrim, Northern Ireland. They moved to Coatbridge, a steel-manufacturing town in Glasgow, Scotland, shortly after James' birth. It was here that his father, a former Presbyterian, got interested in Pentecostalism and joined the Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance, today's Elim Pentecostal Church, in 1908 (Onyinah 2004b).

Barely three months after his arrival in Anim's organisation McKeown had an experience which eventually caused them to separate from each other in June 1939. This was when McKeown had an attack of malaria, a tropical disease which killed a lot of white people in the Gold Coast those days. The colonial District Commissioner (DC) sent him to the European hospital in Accra for treatment. The DC had acted upon information from one Mr. Turkson at Asamankese to save his countryman when he visited the town (Tenobi n.d.). That action was interpreted by McKeown's host organisation as a violation of their doctrine of 'prevailing prayer and faith healing'. The organisation's reaction may have to be viewed vis-à-vis Pentecostals' general connection of disease causality to satanic roots which makes them exercise "strong belief that the ultimate source of healing is God and

that his direct intervention is to be preferred to medical treatment” (Wessels 1997, Pp. 363-4).

The eventual separation in 1939 led Anim and his loyalists to seek the face of God in fasting and prayer at Pepeade in the Central Region where under prophetic direction they adopted a new name *Christ Apostolic Church* for their organisation. Meanwhile McKeown maintained the name *Apostolic Church of the Gold Coast* for his (Larbi 2001). It is significant to note that this impasse was not a Ghanaian peculiarity. A similar cleft between the British Apostolic missionaries and their Nigerian brothers is reported by Olokan (1991).

McKeown’s Church initially benefited from Anim’s groups, the earlier Faith Tabernacle and the latter Christ Apostolic Church. McKeown’s earliest trusted assistants, some of whom became pastors and many of his foundation members had all been former members of Anim’s Church. These had not been favourably disposed to the ‘no medication’ teaching of Anim and had found it difficult to keep it. They therefore saw in the new development a window of opportunity to escape from what they felt was an intimidating doctrine and practice. Indeed, for them McKeown’s doctrine represented a more balanced gospel since he taught everything Anim taught but did not consider medication a sin or unbelief or devilish, that demanded church discipline.

Apart from Anim and his organisation McKeown also benefited from an invitation from the Church of the Twelve Apostles led by John Nackabah. This church founded by John Nackabah and Grace Tani has long been associated with

John Nackabah's name. This particular church saw in McKeown the fulfilment of a prophecy of William Wadé Harris, and John Nackabah's vision of the arrival of a slender and tall white gentleman to teach them the Bible. McKeown's relationship with this church was however short-lived. He is said to have been displeased with what he perceived to be cultic practices and worship in that church. In Baëta's (1962) view, however, McKeown actually exhibited the usual Western negative tendency towards African culture in his preference of European tambourines for African rattles by this church. In any case at the end of his brief stay McKeown won and baptized 1,288 converts who later joined his own growing Church (Larbi 2001).

McKeown's secession from the Apostolic Church, Gold Coast

As has already been indicated above McKeown's relationship with Anim and his organisation was short-lived. One would have expected McKeown to be content to work with his home church. However, this was not to be the case. As Wyllie (1974) shows, before he accepted the call to Ghana he had had some reservations about how The Bradford Apostolics manipulated prophecy in calling people into the ordained ministry. Thus:

In 1935, when the Apostolic Church produced its first constitution, McKeown would not affirm it because it clearly defined an organisational framework with a hierarchical arrangement of inter-area, area, district, and assembly prophets,

each with his own sphere of authority. This he regarded as ‘unscriptural’, because in McKeown’s own words, ‘I found they were using Prophets and prophecy to carry out their own design, ‘the hands being the hands of Esau and the voice being the voice of Jacob’ (Wyllie 1974, p. 114).

In fact, he finally yielded to the African mission in 1937 through the tactful persuasion of his wife, Sophia (Onyinah 2004b). It was not that he did not love to work for the Lord or among Africans. Rather he felt his church’s dependence on and use of directive prophecies was somewhat doubtful and manipulative. In Bradford Apostolic Church at the time prophecies directed and guided church life and that of the individual member. Personal or church decisions were made on the strength of prophecies. Thus Bradford used prophecy as a decision-making mechanism which James McKeown perceived as manipulative. Interestingly, prophetism was to play a paradoxical role in McKeown’s own organisation, the CoP, later after he seceded from Bradford in 1953.

There are different reasons assigned to McKeown’s departure from Bradford. Both The Apostolic Church, Ghana and the CoP have entrenched and conflicting accounts on the issue. The former’s accusation, according to Tenobi (n.d.), is that McKeown psyched up his ministers for the secession. The CoP however argues the contrary. McKeown’s secession was more of a reaction to the racist tendencies entrenched in Bradford’s constitutional provisions. Consequently, at the next Quadrennial Council meeting held in 1953 at Bradford,

James McKeown's rejection of the amendments to the constitution led to his eventual dismissal from the Apostolic Church (Tenobi n.d.).

The amendments in question sought to create separate apostles for whites and blacks, so that a black apostle could not exercise authority over a white pastor. It also made it impossible for anyone or group outside the Apostolics to be given an Apostolic Church platform anywhere. But James McKeown considered these constitutional amendments unscriptural and so out of a pure conscience could not affirm the constitution (Larbi 2001; Onyinah 2004b)

Another reason CoP offers for McKeown's secession is the Apostolic Church's uncompromising position on the Latter Rain's evangelistic crusade in Ghana. The Latter Rain Evangelical Association was the opposite of the Bradford Apostolic Church. James McKeown had come to know them through his younger brother, Adams McKeown who had worked with him in the Gold Coast and had been sent to Canada as a missionary. It was Adams who introduced the leader, Dr Thomas Wyatt to James McKeown. The group which stressed the unity of the body of Christ was against the rigid centralized system of the Apostolics. Consequently, their contact with the Apostolic Church of the Gold Coast, which though was a great source of joyous encouragement, motivation and inspiration to the Ghanaians, incurred the wrath of the Bradford headquarters.

McKeown's dismissal was to be an unforgettable mistake on the part of Bradford for the Ghanaian ministers and their congregations adamantly followed

him. These wanted their McKeown back to superintend the work, a fact they knew would be highly impossible if they remained under Bradford. Therefore, led by Pastor J. A. C. Anaman, McKeown's Ghanaian deputy, they took a unanimous decision to sever relations with Bradford. Their action succeeded in producing two factions, an independent African Church led by James McKeown known as The Gold Coast Apostolic Church and the Apostolic Church of the Gold Coast (UK).

It was at the instance of the then president of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, upon the recommendation of the 'Blay Commission', that McKeown's organisation changed its name to the Church of Pentecost on August 1, 1962. This aimed at stopping the incessant litigations that had engulfed the two churches over the use of the name 'Apostolic' and other related issues like the ownership of properties and funds (Larbi 2001).

McKeown's work enjoyed the support of both local and expatriate clergy. At the local front and in consonance with his missionary policy of building an indigenous and enculturated church he trained many local evangelists and pastors who later became his trusted assistants (Ntumy 2000). Though some of his clergy seceded others stuck to him. The loyalists included J. Egyir Paintsil, first church secretary, E. K. Okanta, F. S. Safo, the first Ghanaian chairman after McKeown retired and S. R. Asomaning. Others included R. O. Hayford, D. K. Boateng, J. C. Quaye and M. K. Yeboah, Safo's successor and the second Ghanaian chairman. Others still included F. D. Walker, first missionary to Liberia, Apostle Wood, the

father of the current General Secretary of the GPC, Apostle Ekow Badu Wood, Apostle Dankyi and his brothers Apostle Apau Asante and Evangelist Asante.

One local personality who played an outstanding role in the development of McKeown's church was J.A.C. Anaman. Larbi (2001) deals with the ambiguity that shrouds this man's positive role in the developmental stages of McKeown's church. He thus corroborates Tenobi's 'eye witness' account on the Anaman factor in McKeown's secession and the consequent development of the CoP (Tenobi n.d.).

Tenobi refers to Anaman as the founder of the Gold Coast Apostolic Church apparently in recognition of that man's leading role in its formation. Perhaps he does so as a reprimand of that organisation's 'mistreatment' of this great man of God since the CoP portrays Anaman as McKeown's traitor.

Conclusion

We have attempted a narrative of McKeown's church in response to the question: What role did prophecy play in the historical development of the CoP? We have seen the ambiguity of prophecy in that church's development. What also comes out clearly is McKeown's success as a missionary in Ghana. By his words, deeds and character James McKeown unwittingly contextualised the Christian evangelion so much so that he endeared himself to the natives among whom he worked.

Apostle Michael Ntummy, the third Ghanaian chairman of the CoP writes: "The story of our growth and development is a testimony of what the covenant

keeping God can do through people who are dedicated to Him” (The Church of Pentecost a 2007). When Apostle Ntummy writes thus he echoes his church’s claim of a covenant God made with it through a prophecy in 1931. Actually God originally made the said covenant with Peter Anim. Indeed, as has been shown above James McKeown, the founder of the CoP arrived in Ghana in 1937, six years after the covenant was prophesied. In the covenant God promised eight things that would happen to his church as it faithfully adhered to its part of the covenant. The most crucial aspect of the covenant concerned God’s choice of the Gold Coast per Anim’s organisation to spearhead the herald of Christ’s second coming. This would be accomplished through a European white missionary. God would pour abundant spiritual gifts on both men and women in the church. Moreover God himself would be the church’s financial supplier. This covenant has since been appropriated by the CoP which insists God confirmed it during its Easter convention at Winneba in 1940. In *The Church of Pentecost Ministers’ Handbook* (2008a) CoP connects its growth to this covenant in the following words: “The spiritual growth of The Church of Pentecost and its spread throughout the world is a fulfilment of God’s Covenant made with the founders of the Church at its beginning (from 1931)” (Pp. 3-6; cf. Baduh 1999).

Today CoP is the largest and fastest growing Pentecostal church in Ghana. As at the end of the year 2007 it boasted of a total worldwide membership of 1,695,412. Locally its membership stands at 1,488,728. It has 13,418 congregations worldwide out of this number Ghana alone boasts of 10,634 local assemblies (The Church of

Pentecost 2008b, p. 24). There is a paradigm shift in its social concerns as can be seen in its ventures into education and health delivery. It has 96 basic schools, 6 senior high schools, a university college, 7 hospitals/clinics and a number of farms to its credit. Driven by a strong missionary compulsion that consumes both pastors and laity it has established its presence in over 70 countries in all six continents (The Church of Pentecost 2007b).

Together with AC and CAC (all three are traditionally called Apostolic) it has given Ghana wonderful Spirit-inspiring songs for church worship, prayer and Christian living. In their songs one may discern the theology of Ghanaian Pentecostals in general. This missionary drive is captured in its mission statement thus:

The Church of Pentecost is a worldwide, non-profit-making Pentecostal church with its headquarters in Accra, Ghana. It exists to bring all people everywhere to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel, the planting of churches and the equipping of believers for every God-glorifying service. It demonstrates the love of God through the provision of social services in partnership with governments, communities and other like-minded organizations (The Church of Pentecost 2007b).

This proliferation of the church worldwide is attributed to the Ghanaian economic crisis of 1983 that compelled many Ghanaians to seek for greener

pastures in foreign lands. Church member emigrants in the spirit of the church missionary drive carried the gospel to their new homes resulting in the establishment of local assemblies. The International Missions Director based in the Church's headquarters in Accra coordinates the activities of the foreign missions by paying them frequent pastoral visits.

In the next chapter we shall discuss how CoP conceives prophetism and the phenomenon's liturgical, empowering and governing significance to the life of the church.

CHAPTER SIX

THE OFFICE AND MINISTRY OF THE PROPHET IN THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST

In the foregoing chapter we looked at the historical origin of CoP and the place of prophetism in its development. At the conclusion I indicated that this present chapter would look at how CoP conceives the phenomenon. Hence this chapter aims at responding to the question: What are the ways Classical Pentecostal churches such as the CoP conceive prophetism? Consequently in this chapter we discuss and examine how prophetism is conceived in the CoP. Here there is an attempt to delineate types of the phenomenon in that church. Also there is a narrative account on Elder Andoh's prayer centre at Kasoa which provides insight into the activities of 'grassroots' prophetism in that church. The chapter also seeks to show how prophecy provides tools for liturgy, charismatic empowerment, decision-making and polity in the Church of Pentecost.

Church of Pentecost's Concepts of the Prophet

According to Griffiths (1986) while New Testament teaching tends to indicate that all Christians may engage in prophesying there are people who seem to be

recognised to occupy the definitive office of prophet. This submission of Griffiths then provokes an examination of the whole idea of a prophet in a church like the CoP. It is not easy to define who the prophet is in CoP. However one may identify four types of prophets in it.

In this church like all Pentecostal churches in Ghana two Akan names are used to denote a prophet. These are *nkòmhyèni* (prophesier) and *odeyifoò* (seer-revealer). *Odeyifoò* etymologically may have derived from two Akan words for divination, namely, *adehunu* (foresight, implying foreknowledge) and *adeyie* (revelation).

In traditional Akan religion suppliants go to the diviner who may be a traditional priest(ess) or medicine man (who could be a Muslim religious leader or an expert in traditional metaphysics) for telepathic/therapeutic knowledge on their existential problems. Such experts are expected to have ‘foresight’ or ‘foreknowledge’ of the causality of the problem. This implies they should be able to ‘diagnose’, or ‘reveal’ the causality and ‘prescribe’ or ‘speak forth’ the solution to the problem. This combined expectation about diviners impels them to function in these two roles. Thus the diviner becomes *adehumufoò* and *odeyifoò* at one and the same time.

It is this primal understanding that is transferred into Christian faith by most Ghanaian Christians and which makes them search for seer-revealers during their times of need. Such needs may range from ordinary mundane problems such as joblessness, marriage partners, etc and spiritual protection and security against

one's perceived or imaginary enemies. Actually, there are many today who desire and seek for a prophetic revelation though there may not be any real need for it at all. Their tendency is an unconscious resonance of their primal cosmological understanding.

The Prophet

The prophet is the most common type of prophets in CoP. Prophets are commonly known as *nkòmhyèfoò* (those who prophesy). A prophet is a person who exhibits the gift of prophecy to edify, encourage and exhort the church. The act of prophesying is known in Akan as *nkòmhyè* (that is forthtelling), so the *nkòmhyèni hyè nkòm* (the prophet tells forth God's mind). Actually, *nkòmhyè* derives from the traditional religious practice *akòm* whereby the traditional priest(ess) tells forth the minds of deities to the community or individuals. Whereas in the traditional setting such spiritual benevolence is attributable to the *abosom* it becomes consecrated and christianised *nkòmhyè* in the church where it is attributable to the *Sunsum Krònròn* (Holy Spirit) (Levitt 1990).

In CoP prophets may be members of the laity or ordained ministers. Prophet E. O. Danquah (rtd.), a former Prophetic Director of the CAC, (personal communication, November 13, 2005) asserted that this holds true for his church. Indeed, this is true of other Pentecostal churches in Ghana. The significance of prophets among Pentecostal churches comes out clearly in the following personal eyewitness account. During the retirement service of Pastor Jonathan

Amofa-Adade from CoP's pastoral ministry at Kasoa on Sunday, September 21, 2005, a retired pastor Rev. Owiredu prophesied that God had planned to "uproot" the former from Kasoa to his Kete Krachi homeland to complete his mission. The explanation given was that even though humanly he was being retired yet the Lord was about to begin afresh with him.

Apostle Ntumy similarly narrates how a prophecy was given at his send-off service to Liberia as a missionary about the dangers that awaited him in that country (Wiafe 2006 a). But the prophecy also talked about the subsequent honour God promised to give him eventually. This prophecy was fulfilled partially when he and his family got caught up in the Liberian civil war. Eventually he became the youngest chairman of CoP. He sees all these as a demonstration of God's unfailing love and covenant with his own.

Apostle Ntumy further narrates how his home church was assured through a prophecy that he and his family would be delivered from danger in the Liberian crisis. He points out that it was this time that the song "*Nyame ne yèn wò hò nnè nso...*" (Translated, God is with us today.....) was received prophetically by the church. According to him the song's primary aim was to assure the church that God would see him and his family through that difficult time. The fact that Ntumy, being the Chairman of CoP which claims ownership of the song sings the third line *Ôtene Ne nsa ne mmerè mu...na Ne nneyòè nyinaa kyerε sè Nyame ne yèn wò hò nnè nso, Nyame ne yèn wò hò* (translated, He stretches his hand in his own time.....and all his works portray that God is with us today too, God is with us)

undermines the current modification that renders that line as *Na Ne din Emmanuel kyerè sè Nyame ne yèn wò hò nnè nso, Nyame ne yèn wò hò* (translated, And his name Emmanuel means God is with us today too, God is with us).

Prophesiers in CoP, therefore, are people who bring forth an ‘inspired message’ during times of corporate worship or prayer service. The content of the message may sometimes be individualised and personalised, and thus be quite problematic. Yet their message is acknowledged to possess the basic elements of edification, exhortation and comfort. Normally, they prefix their messages thus: “My children, My children, I, the Lord, Am in your midst...” and end it thus: “It is I the Lord that speak to you”.

It is normal to hear someone leading a prayer meeting or corporate worship request the congregation at the end of the session to wait quietly to hear from the Lord. And the congregation understands this to mean waiting to receive a prophecy or a revelation through anybody present, but more especially through those noted to prophesy often. In such instances there is a high expectation of spontaneous utterance of inspired messages from people. The CoP believes that 1 Corinthians 14: 29 limits such spontaneities to not more than three prophecies.

Some prophesiers’ initial experience with the gift is typified in the likes of Deaconess Comfort Agyeiwaa who worships at the Top Hill Assembly of Kasoa South District of CoP. Her initial experience was more like an ailing person. In the process of praying for divine healing of her ‘supposed ailment’ she felt reinvigorated and started prophesying. She claims before she prophesies she

receives the inner knowledge or 'witness', that 'something' that tells her that God has a word for his people. As she obediently opens her mouth the message flows out spontaneously. All throughout there is that illumination, like a light that shines in her spirit which continues till the whole message is delivered. She, however, contends that prophesying is consciously given (C. Agyeiwaa, personal communication, October 2, 2005). In other words the prophesier's senses are not suspended in the process. Notwithstanding, the prophesier does not retain the content of the message. It takes others to tell him/her the content and details of the message.

R. Amega (personal communication, November 13, 2005.), a deaconess and a prophesier of the Kaneshie Assembly of CAC corroborates Agyeiwaa's assertion when she claims active consciousness when prophesying. She too claims the spontaneity and divine determination of the prophetic content and time. Additionally, she claims to receive divine messages through dreams and closed visions.

T. Eyiah (personal communication, 7 September, 2005), a deaconess of the SNITT Assembly of the Dansoman District, CoP, for example, explains that she either receives prophetic messages through an inner witness or hearing distinctly the word in her ears before she prophesies. By inner witness she means an unambiguous knowing within her heart that God has a word for his church, and somehow she gains precognition of it. Through dreams and visions (open/and

closed) too she has been able to offer spiritual guidance to help fellow Christians to mature and grow in their faith in Christ.

According to Pentecostals God speaks through dreams, prophecies, closed visions, inner witness and audible voice. Ntummy's (1994) narration on how through a dream he and other hostages in the Liberian civil war prepared against an impending holocaust by their captors is revealing of how God communicates through dreams/visions.

It ought to be noted also that it is possible for prophesiers to receive a message before going to church. This is actually sometimes the case of prophecy in both the Old and New Testaments (Turner 1996). Unfortunately some Pentecostal prophesiers fail to present such a message in a normal conversational form but rather make it assume spontaneity. This state of affairs is perhaps attributable to the Ghanaian crave to sound 'spiritual' in both religious and irreligious domains.

For one to benefit from the prophetic message requires that one receives it with a heart of doubtless faith, submission and openness; and an attitude of humility. Thus it is not uncommon to hear Pentecostals criticizing doubting Thomases for their lack of faith in the prophetic word. Among Charismatic prophets, for instance, there is the stress on the need to believe the prophet so that one prospers, and believe God so that one gets established in life. The scripture quoted to buttress their point is 1 Chronicles 20:20.

Notwithstanding the importance in opening up to the prophetic message one needs also to be cautious of prophecies since some may not really be of God. To

check this requires the operation of the gift of discerning of spirits which helps believers identify what kind of spirit is behind a prophecy given so that Christ's church does not become deceived by wrong or false spirits. For example, there is a story in Acts 16:16-18 about how a slave girl through a false spirit, the spirit of divination, gave a prophetic message about Paul and Barnabas. Though the content of the message was true the spirit behind it was devilish and sought to distract people's attention from the apostles' message and associate their ministry with that of her own divination, and thus discredit its divine origin. It took the gift of discerning of spirits for Paul to detect and rebuke the devil behind the hoarse.

The Singing Prophet

CoP is a church which since its earliest beginnings has benefited a lot from 'inspired songs'. These are songs which are received spontaneously during prayer or worship services and are believed to come from the Holy Spirit. Like the gift of prophecy they are meant for the church's edification, exhortation and comfort. As such they qualify to be part of prophecy that operates in certain individuals who possess the spirit of prophecy. As in Judaistic understanding it is by the 'Spirit of prophecy' that these prophets are enabled to sing these 'new songs' to the Lord. Turner (1996) observes that OT Judaism perceived God's Spirit as the 'Spirit of prophecy' through whom God communicated his will and mind to charismatic leaders of his people. He further identifies among many gifts prototypical to the

concept about the Spirit's granting of "invasively inspired charismatic praise and worship" (Turner 1996, p. 11).

CoP takes credit for many of such 'Pentecostal spirituals' in Ghanaian religious life. Unfortunately, for a long time the church did not consider it expedient to document them electronically or in writing. Hence, most of these songs were hijacked by people who were not very conversant with their origins and contents, and who have done much mutilation to many of them.

Actually, the ability to create new religious songs for a religious community is not confined to CoP nor is it restricted to Christianity. Most of the songs Peter Anim's organisation sang before the advent of James McKeown were native or translated Western hymns. The AICs that preceded modern Pentecostals are also characterised by their unique 'African spirituals'. Thus the Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC), for instance, is noted for its creativity in the area of 'spiritual songs'. Its music school at Musano is one of the best in the country. Indeed, Duncan and Kalu (2007) also report that researchers have translated 173 choruses of Garrick Braide, composed in his native Kalabari language. Similarly, Adogame and Jafta (2007), note that among the Roho spiritual songs and hymns are revealed through the founder, prophets and prophetesses. Equally among the Celestial Church of Christ all hymns and songs in the hymn book "are believed to have been revealed to, or channelled through certain individuals such as the pastor-founder, prophets and prophetesses, from a divine source, that is the Holy Spirit" (Adogame & Jafta 2007, p. 281).

Even within mainline churches like the Methodist Church there is this African musical creativity called *Ebibindwom* (African/Black lyrics) whose content is deeply rooted in biblical motifs. Indeed, in Black Africa it is not uncommon to hear religious songs sung in praise and honour of deities and even national heroes. In Africa, music and singing offer a religious channel for expressing and declaring the prowess, benevolence and nature of a deity. Whereas this provides a background to understanding Pentecostal spirituality it must be appreciated that there is a distinct difference. Ghanaian Pentecostals claim their songs originate from and are mediated through the Spirit of God.

In this study those who receive these songs in CoP are designated ‘singing prophets’ or ‘Pentecostal psalmists’. Yet this designation is not restricted to CoP. Broadly this designation may apply to composers of Pentecostal choruses in general in contradistinction to the contemporary more ecstatic *gyama spirituals*. Some neo-Pentecostal gospel singers have introduced a brand of music into Pentecostal praise and worship that uses ecstatic Ghanaian cultural militaristic music with Christian lyrics. The Pentecostal choruses or spirituals are usually not the ecstatic types but are more reflective. The songs emanate from the inner self and they recount the great mercies, provisions and deliverances of the Lord who as *Totorobonsuo* supplies rain and sunshine to sustain the lives of his children.

Again God utilises natural/atmospheric elements to avenge his servants’ cause. These psalmists ‘cook’ their praise/worship songs within the Ghanaian traditional religious pot that sees *Nyame* (the Supreme Deity) as the just Creator and

sovereign who takes the sides of his children in executing judgment on their enemies. He therefore does not hesitate to punish evildoers who interfere with his children's lives. One may even say that this understanding of God's goodness enjoys some support in biblical theology as Dyrness (1979) asserts that not even the fall was able to "alter the essential goodness of creation" (p. 67). Thus, the fact that God punishes evil does not deny him of his goodness.

In the Ghanaian Pentecostalist understanding the destruction of wicked elements in one's life, that is *abayifoò* (witches/wizards) and *sumantufòò* (juju men, sorcerers, magicians, etc) serves a good purpose in the lives of God's children. According to this understanding believers are the new creation that should enjoy perfectly their Father's provisions. It is important to indicate here that the Ghanaian belief in witchcraft has survived and actually continues to be revived through the anti-witchcraft activities of both AIC and Pentecostal prophets (Onyinah 2002b).

These Pentecostal songs are normally received during corporate worship services or prayer meetings of the church, especially during conventions or when the individual prophet is alone serving the Lord through worship or prayers. They become more pronounced especially during times of fasting and prayers. At times too they are received during crises or joyful moments in the prophet's life. They are not restricted to only one sex; both men and women may operate in it. Neither are they restricted to those in the sacramental ministry. In the past the church received most of its songs from pastors like J. A. C. Anaman. In recent times Pastor Appiah-Adu has been used immensely in this area. But perhaps women like

Mrs. Eunice Addison and Eunice Johnson's contributions in this area are unsurpassed. For instance, it was the latter whose song the church used during its fiftieth anniversary celebration in 2003.

Sometimes the prophet may also receive new songs through the study and meditation of scripture and all of a sudden a new song 'jumps up' in him/her. This may underscore why these songs have strong theological content. The reception of these songs can occur at any place but most especially when the Pentecostal psalmist listens to sermons preached s/he at times hears a new song ring in his/her spirit or feels a new song bubble up within. This signals a new song from the Lord to his church. S/he would then rise up to sing.

Though the church believes in the divine origin of these songs it nonetheless holds that as a gift of prophecy they are subject to the judgment of Church leadership. Consequently, some spiritual songs have had to undergo amendment of some sort. But this is in no way to suggest that they were not divine in their original givenness or diluted in their final state.

Grassroots Prophets

These are those Onyinah designates as lay prophets/prophetesses and links their prominence in CoP to the emergence of 'witchdemonology' (Onyinah 2002a). He argues that this current phenomenon in the CoP is a reinvigoration of what emerged in the 1950s but which eventually resulted in secessions of the prophets/healers from the church. These are perhaps the type of prophets whose identity is most

controversial within that church. This is because there is much ambiguity on how to define them. How they are defined officially differs from ordinary church members' definition.

The secessions of the prophets in the 1950s were underpinned by a number of factors. According to Onyinah the prophets wanted the authorities to provide them with accommodation and food as the pastors enjoyed. They also felt cheated that the pastors left them to handle the healing and deliverance sessions during conventions. Furthermore, they claimed healing and deliverance sessions were not long enough and so many sick people went away unhealed. Finally, failure of the church to define their position in the church conditioned their secession from it (Onyinah 2002a). But the church authorities on their part felt these prophets/healers promoted a lot of 'unscriptural practices' such as blessing of water, blessing of handkerchiefs, using of Florida water. John Mensah in particular was known to bless his picture and ask his clients to place it under their pillows as a protective object against witchcraft and magic (Onyinah 2002a). Lawson also in addition to some of the above made his clients practise the use of crosses and crucifixes, and pray with the face toward the East.

Perhaps, the prophets' agitation for recognition should be appreciated that even today it is to the prophets, but not the pastors, that the suffering masses mostly turn in their search for spiritual solace. These prophets who operate prayer centres in the church have as their major focus deliverance from demonic oppressions and

manipulations; hence their activities and operations give vent to witchdemonology which Classical Pentecostals do not encourage.

CoP officially is careful not to designate the title 'prophet' to everyone who exhibits some revelatory gifts. Such gifts include, word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discerning of spirits, prophecy, speaking in diverse tongues and interpretation of tongues. Generally Pentecostals equate the combined effects of the last two to prophecy. In its *Ministers' Handbook* CoP states, "No one is specially trained or referred to as a prophet/prophetess or allowed to begin a new centre" (2008, 125, para. 3). This does not actually imply a prohibition on the establishment of new prayer centres. The clarification is brought to the fore in the following statement, "No new prayer centres are opened without the prior approval of the Executive Council" (2008, 125, para. 1).

CoP's restriction on the use of the title of 'prophet' may stem from its experiences from the past. Onyinah (2002a) intimates that due to the rise of 'unscriptural practices' of the prophets/prophetesses McKeown personally outlawed the use of the title 'prophet' by lay healers/exorcists in the church. It was when Prophet M. K Yeboah became the head of the church that there was a reactivation of the activities of the prayer camps/centres. Prophet M. K Yeboah perceived them as 'gifts' to the church.

Clearly, those that ordinary church members may recognise as prophets are not officially recognised as such. These prophets of the ordinary people we term 'grassroots prophets' because they deal with the ordinary mundane affairs of the

masses who come to them with all sorts of problems expecting that God through their ministries would hear their cry. They are those easily accessible to the ordinary masses; in a sense they fulfil the liberationist motif of taking a preferential option for the poor. They may be men or women and are today known to lead prayer centres. In this capacity they are officially known as 'Prayer Leaders' but not 'prophets'. But if officially they are not recognised as prophets why do the ordinary people regard them so? What is undeniable is that the masses see in them gifts that they believe operated in biblical prophets. Indeed they prove to have prophetic gifts that place them in the office of the prophet.

These prophets are able to reveal to clients/seekers things that are hidden from the ordinary person through the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The anointing, according to Lawrence Tetteh (2002), a Ghanaian televangelist is "'God with us'- Immanuel, or the Christos- Christ with us'" (Pp. 9, 20). The Black American gospel musician Ron Kenoly who forwarded Tetteh's book claims, "Christ, the anointed one, is the title that separated Him from all others who were given the name Jesus" (Tetteh 2002, p. 5). He even goes on to insist that the anointing differentiates one Christian from another. Consequently, he challenges all believers to desire for it so as to be able to combat satanic schemes. In saying this he also ties the anointing to spiritual warfare.

According to Massey (1998) the ministry of grassroots prophets like their counterparts in neo-Pentecostal circles agrees with the conclusions of Mark Cartledge's recent researches. According to Cartledge NT prophecy is

fundamentally of revelatory impulses such as dreams, visions and words given within the congregational context. It has the sole purpose of making room for evaluation, especially, if it is true that prophecy has ““only an authority of general content”” (Massey 1998, p. 76).

The attitude of the masses towards grassroots prophets is similar to that of the Samaritan woman in her encounter with Jesus at Jacob’s Well (John 4: 1-29). They become overwhelmed with the telepathic and therapeutic gifts in the prophets and so stick to them no matter the consequence. Majority of these seekers and clients are women and men in search of successful marriages, businesses, foreign travel, good health and fruitfulness in marriages. The desire to have good and successful marriages, succeed in business, undertake foreign journeys, enjoy good health and fruitfulness in marriage mostly came up during my interviews with leaders and seekers at both Elder Andoh’s Down Town Prayer Revival Centre at Kasoa and Elder Okyere’s Salvation Prayer Centre at Mallam, Accra. Also most testimonies during prayer services showed how testifiers had had their prayers answered along those lines. A few however go there for spiritual renewal and empowerment. These grassroots prophets tend to offer hope to the suffering masses as they are seen to bring solution to the latter.

Identifying Marks of a Grassroots Prophet - the Case of ‘Prophet’ Samuel Johnson Andoh of Down Town Prayer Revival Centre of the Church of Pentecost

We wish to turn our attention here to the ministry of Elder Samuel Johnson Andoh, a grassroots prophet in the Kasoa North District of CoP. According to J. F. Obridja (personal communication, September 28, 2005), the Presiding Elder of the Down Town Assembly, although Elder Andoh is not officially accorded the title ‘prophet’ yet he manifests gifts that are identifiable in prophets such as word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discerning of spirits, prophecy and speaking in diverse tongues (though he does not interpret). Madam E. Blankson (personal communication, September 28, 2005) shared her personal insight into the prophetic calling of Elder Andoh. According to her Elder Andoh possesses a sharp and unique sense of discernment. Moreover his predictions are sharp and accurate. For example, his prediction that her strained marriage would heal and be sealed with a wedding ceremony was fulfilled to the letter. Elder Freeman further added that Elder Andoh is also able to narrate people’s dreams and give prophetic direction to people.

Madam Blankson further claimed to have received a divine assurance of the genuineness of the prophet’s ministry when she fasted about him. During the fast she claimed to have had a vision from God that revealed Elder Andoh dressed in ancient Roman military attire. Also he had eagle-like eyes and long hairs on his head. His finger nails were like shining stars and his legs were fully covered with large mirrors to discern people and their problems. Her description of the prophet

seems to echo Shank's (1994) reportage of Harris' flashing eyes, as a flame of fire, and a terrible voice that impressed his audience visibly as if reflecting the sharp sword in Christ's mouth (Rev. 1:16).

Testimonies abound on the many ways God has used this prophet to salvage threatening and disappointing situations such as childlessness, complicated child delivery, near disaster marriages, etc. For example, the prophet directed Madam Blankson to attend a particular clinic to deliver her baby. This particular clinic turned out to be a place where prayer was integral and thus helped to avert an otherwise disastrous delivery. The prophet has a special way of counselling spouses to work on their marriages even when they are near disaster. He advises women to desist from denying their husbands sexual intimacy. Even when the men are at fault he encourages the women to submit to them and turn to God in prayer for their salvation. He advises husbands too to be faithful to their wives for God to commend his blessings on them. He thus shows a balance in his counsel to marriage couples.

By the gift of discernment the prophet is able to 'read' people's thoughts whether they are evil or wrong and caution them to reject them. Thus, he 'caught' Madam Blankson when she intended to abort her baby due to marital difficulties. But the prophet expressed his delight in having the child born. Consequently, when the baby was finally delivered it was named after him.

The prophet operates in the gifts of faith, miracles and healings. He has a unique ability to pray for seekers to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit without

touching them. He simply calls for the release of the Spirit and seekers begin to speak in tongues. This writer personally witnessed this during one of the prayer sessions which he attended.

Respondents were unanimous on the impeccability of the prophet's character. He is affable, humble, generous and compassionate. He is meek and respectful but bold when ministering under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. By his generosity he has helped many people financially to set up businesses. At the close of a prayer service the writer witnessed the prophet giving out monies to some supplicants who needed money to buy food to eat, pay off some debt or pay for their transport fares back home. This attitude of the prophet seeks to buttress his conviction and belief that compassion is imperative in the prophetic ministry without which God cannot use one to meet the needs of the suffering. God developed this compassionate trait in the prophet when God 'tried' him through four years of chronic debilitating disease that defied any form of medication (S.J. Andoh, personal communication, September 23, 2005). The prophet shows understanding to his clients and tends to suffer with the suffering. He achieves this by undertaking a period of fasting with them at times.

The Call of the 'Prophet'

The date of 'Prophet' Andoh's birth is not very certain. He claims to have been born either in 1956 or 1957. He hails from Breman Bedum in the Central Region of Ghana. He was born to Muslim parents. He has four sisters and two brothers

and is married to a Madam Dora Dadzie, also a native of Breman Bedum. They have a son and some adopted children. Somewhere in 1988 when he was in the Bubiashie District of the CoP the Lord called him to do his work. His initial call came through a dream when he saw himself used by God tremendously in healing the sick (S.J. Andoh, personal communication, September 23, 2005).

He claims to have suffered a lot of setbacks after completing his commercial education as an accounting student. First, he had problem with getting employed. Second, when he responded to God's call he was still working but eventually experienced redeployments. One day he had a dream in which he was taking the photographs of people. Through prayers the Lord told him he was to support himself with photography so that he could have time to do God's work.

During a three-day period of fasting and waiting upon the Lord the Lord confirmed his initial call to him by showing him a lot of wooden forms or benches which had filled both his room and the compound of the house at Bubiashie in Accra. Just after the fasting and prayer people began to flock to him with their problems. Miracles then began to happen. Unable to contain the ever-growing crowd that was coming to him they relocated to a classroom which eventually led to the opening of an assembly, 'Cable and Wireless Assembly' in the Bubiashie District (S.J. Andoh, personal communication, September 23, 2005).

Elder Andoh enjoyed much encouragement from Pastors Asante, Asamoah-Baah and Prophet Osei-Amaniampong during their tenures as District Pastors. However, this official goodwill ceased during the administration of one Pastor

Dompreeh which compelled him to relocate to Kasoa in 1996. The persecution occurred when Elder Andoh was then worshipping in the Peniel Assembly in the Bubiashie District where fifteen of his assistants had been transferred to help establish the assembly (K. B. Yiadom, personal communication, September 29, 2005). He embarked on intensive prayer and fasting for divine direction on the next step of action to take. By then he had finished building his own house at the Down Town suburb of Kasoa. His relocation to Kasoa came about when he saw 'Prophetess' Grace Mensah of Edumfa in his dream telling him to relocate there. This woman has since become his spiritual mentor (S.J. Andoh, personal communication, September 23, 2005).

The prophet claims he has had his fair share of hardships including armed robbery attacks and military detentions during the PNDC era of Flt Lt J.J. Rawlings. But the worst of all his troubles was when he suffered a full year insomnia which he interprets as demonic attack the Lord allowed to try and prepare him for the ministry. During this time he experienced a terrible burning sensation all over his body during midnight and had to stay awake to pray till 3.00 am before he could have some sleep. The attack actually lasted for four years, from 1996 to 1999, after which time the Lord through the ministry of Auntie Grace totally healed him. He asserts that he saw physical lizards and frogs drop from his head when he was healed.

Theology of a Grassroots Prophet

Through our interaction with Elder Andoh and people who are associated with his ministry, and also our personal observation of his ministration we gathered a number of information that provide an idea of what he believes and teaches. Here is a man whose major ministerial focus is to ensure people do not receive just healing or supernatural intervention in their lives but also that they obtain eternal life. Hence, he stresses self-denial as integral of life in God's kingdom. Because of his strong desire to see people attain eternal life his messages are centred predominantly on the salvation of the soul.

It is important to state that the need for individual salvation is perhaps the major bedrock of CoP, and preachers lay and ordained, endeavour to spend time to teach it. Thus, when one Elder Bennett Agyei, a visiting preacher from Kumasi preached at the Centre on Wednesday, September 28, 2005 on 3 John 2 he sought to drive home to the congregation that God places greater premium on the salvation of the human soul than on any other aspect of human life. He even linked the salvation of the soul to material prosperity and victory stressing that because Isaac's soul was prospered he also prospered in Gerar at a time of drought.

The attempt to connect soul salvation to material prosperity and victory may not be peculiar to Ghanaian Pentecostals. Indeed, this has been the teaching of the high priests of the American prosperity gospel such as Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin and John Avanzini, and which the Nigerian prosperity gurus such as the late Benson Idahosa and David Oyedepo appropriated extensively in their ministries

(Gifford 1994). John Avanzini is noted for his extension and stress on tithing and sacrificial giving as the key and surety for material prosperity. Anim (2003) has done quite an extensive analysis of the theology of prosperity which seeks to bring out the origin, source and content of that particular theology as espoused by the CMs. Avanzini is the “acclaimed authority on Biblical Economics” (Gifford 1994, 242). In Ghana it was the bedrock of the Word of Faith preachers such as Nicholas Duncan Williams, Nii Tackie Yarboi, Mensa Otabil and Michael Essel from the late 1970s onwards.

Prominent in Prophet Andoh’s theology is the necessity and importance of the infilling of the Holy Spirit in believers’ lives since he believes it is by the fullness of the Holy Spirit that the believer is made strong. The significance of the Holy Spirit in this man’s ministry evidences in how he ‘sends’ the Spirit to touch and free ‘captives’ by ‘pulling them forward’ during healing and deliverance sessions. During this time it is not uncommon to hear people screaming or moaning and falling on to the ground.

Prophet Andoh has a personal philosophy. This does not derive from CoP’s administrative moderation on prayer centres operations. He desists from telling clients the human causal agents of their problems. Similarly, he disallows demoniacs to make confessions of their own or others’ nefarious deeds when exorcising demons from them. He claims the devil tells lies and craftily diverts attention to nonessentials. This philosophy also stems from his belief that such tendencies are unethical and often lead to confusion in the family. In this regard

the prophet shows a great sense of judgment and wisdom which he transfers into his counselling of clients/seekers.

In this prophet's ministry the biblical concept of delegation of responsibilities and authority is highly employed as his assistants freely function with little or no interference from him. This has resulted in the transfer and development of similar gifts in them. This is a great relief to both the prophet and his clients who are able to enjoy the same prophetic flow from the anointed assistants even in his absence. His current permanent assistants number three, two elders and one deacon.

Delegation here is embedded in the prophet's belief in people's individual God-given gifts for total Body ministry. It is hoped that this system of delegation of authority will continue to be an integral part of the prophet's ministry. In that case the perennial succession problem that continues to mortify the AICs will surely be averted here. Nonetheless, he believes that to sustain the callings and gifts requires some serious preparations such as observance of periods of fasting. Similarly, God may decide to take his chosen instruments through trials and suffering, a sort of baptism of fire.

In a sense prophet Andoh echoes Galli's (2004) submission that "suffering may build character, but ultimately it's not about us..... God loves [us] and has a difficult plan for [our lives]". Rubel (1990) clarifies this when he points out that though natural evil like pain, suffering and death may challenge our conception of God, yet they are not evidences against God's power, existence, or love. In fact,

they are not intrinsically evil but rather instrumentally good and purposeful in our experiences with God.

The prophet connects persecution and suffering with anointing and spiritual promotion. Indeed in Romans 5:3-5 Paul admonishes believers to embrace tribulation or suffering as part of the normal Christian life that leads to glorification and promotion.

In Pentecostalist understanding anointing, identified as “the power of God in action” through his Spirit to enable things and persons to become influential and effective, has much to do with fasting and prayers (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005). For them the anointing is not isolated from a person’s morality and personal discipline of fasting, prayer and Bible study. Morality here embraces financial responsibility, avoidance of greed, inculcation of virtues such as compassion, humility, longsuffering, patience, mercy and submission to rightful authority. Moreover, it includes teachability, a cultivation of a high sense of godliness and personal holiness.

A Visit to a Revival Service of Prophet Andoh

Revival services at the Down Town Prayer Revival Centre attracts not less than 1,000 people with some coming from far away places like Kumasi, Sefwi, Accra and Agona Swedru. For example during the revival service of Thursday September 29, 2005, over 1,200 people visited the centre.

The Centre is housed in an unfenced shed roofed with corrugated iron sheets and augmented with canopies to accommodate the teeming crowds of seekers/clients during revival services. When I arrived in the morning one Elder Amoase was leading the congregation in the opening/preparation prayer session. The topics on his prayer list included destruction of satanic holds and activities in the congregants' lives and confession of God's deliverance from satanic strangulations and domination. The prayers were intensive and earnest, and involved all. The congregational singing of some local choruses was expressive of congregants' own expectations and belief in God's victorious intervention, deliverances and assurances. This was backed with good musical instrumentation made up of a set of 5-piece jazz drums, an organ, a lead guitar, a bass guitar and a conga drum as well as tambourines. Some women as is traditional of CoP played the tambourines.

Next to follow was a time of adoration or worship which was led by a Deaconess Leticia Agyei. Then was the time for testimonies, thanksgiving and solos. At this juncture Elder Andoh joined the service. He wore a pair of brown trousers with a spotted white short-sleeved shirt tucked in. He was a greyless middle-aged man. At a first encounter one gathers the impression of a man prone to much fasting and prayer. And that is equally true of his assistants. As is characteristic of Pentecostals testimonies and thanksgiving times attracted many people who sought to freely express their musical talents and gifts in celebration of their *Ódòfo Yesu Kristo*. For these Pentecostals Jesus Christ is the Beloved One

(*Ódòfo Yesu Kristo*) whose demonstrative love on the cross demands reciprocal love and adoration. He has made them what they are today; a people with confidence, hope, destiny and purpose in this life and the life to come. Moreover, he has taken away their fear of their human and spiritual enemies and provided deliverance and victory over them.

It demands mention that testimonies have always been part of the Spirit movement. Thus, it is common to hear adherents declare God's deliverances from drunkenness, nicotine and hard drug addictions, demonization and witchcraft manipulations (Meyer 1995, p. 236). Membership of the Spirit movement is as a result of *amaneè a mahunu* (my innumerable troubles in this life) out of which emerges adherents' oral theology.

Adherents do not hesitate to tell of their previous religious connections. Often this implies membership of a Western mission church where in spite of their overt involvement they were covertly visiting traditional sources for spiritual and material succour, or engaged in anti-Christian activities. In such cases they claim they were not Christian in the first place until they joined the Spirit movement. For example, this was the basic thesis of the testimony of a female member of Jesus Everlasting Faith Healing Church of Ghana, during its 2-week open air revival crusade to commemorate its 12th anniversary, held at Kasoa from January 16-29, 2006. She claimed to have previously belonged to the Presbyterian Church at her hometown in Kwahu. According to her God delivered her from drunkenness and

hard drug addiction after she was introduced to the Jesus Everlasting Faith Healing Church of Ghana.

The Presiding Elder then invited all new comers to stand before the congregation and introduce themselves telling why they had come. The next activity on the programme was when one Elder Quaye appealed to the congregation to give to support God's work. Many people gave handsomely. This did not in any way prevent those with little money from giving their widow's mite to the Lord's work. As people gave he would pronounce God's blessings upon their lives. He even encouraged those in need of childbirth to give to God as their point of contact for their miracles. For such he prayed fervently breaking all demonic holds, covenants and machinations over their wombs and marriages to release their children into physical manifestation.

It was this same man who preached, reiterating the previous day's message of Elder Bennett Agyei from 3 John 2. He emphatically stated that God's intention to prosper his people underscores his willingness to reverse the satanic troubles and sufferings in their lives. Nonetheless, through Christ's ascension to the Father's right hand his church is empowered to subdue all satanic activities and machinations. According to him Jesus eluded Satan's attempt to frustrate God's work when he 'metamorphosed' into the Holy Spirit and descended upon the disciples in the Upper Room in Jerusalem at Pentecost.

When Elder Andoh took the floor his wife prepared the hearts of the congregation with a popular local Akan Pentecostal chorus telling of God's awesome, unequalled and immutable power:

Tumi yè Wo Nyankopòn dea

Tumi yè Wo de daa 2x

Asafo Yehowa

Ódomankoma Nyankopòn

Tumi yè Wo de daa

Tumi yè Wo de daa

(Translation)

Power belongs to You God

Power belongs to You eternally 2x

O, Lord of hosts

Gracious provider God

Power belongs to You eternally 2x

The prophet reiterating the texts used by the earlier preacher told the congregation of God's available power that could be theirs if they would study and appropriate the promises contained in the Bible. The Bible's message, according to him, is the divine force that vanquishes all satanic powers and machinations. For him Satan is angry with believers because Satan is aware of God's purpose for their lives. He therefore challenged the congregation to bind all satanic works in their lives.

He followed up his exhortation with prayer ministration during which time he asked the congregants to point their hands towards their hometowns. This was meant to enforce God's victory over the wicked *abusua mu abayifoò* (family witches and wizards) in their lives. This action confirms Onyinah's (2002b) contention that there has been a paradigm shift in confronting the menace of so-called witchcraft among Ghanaian Christians; a shift from traditional methods and means to Christian deliverances through AIC or Pentecostal prophetisms. During the prayer session all seats were moved behind the congregation and the congregation was asked to move forward to pray. In ministering healing to the sick he asked them to place their own hands on where they hurt and command the causative powers to quit.

Releasing the Holy Spirit's Presence

The prophet told the congregation that the Holy Spirit told him there was a sister who saw a snake in her dream. The interpretation of this, according to him, was that there was a demonic presence that stole her finances. There was another woman who had a snake in her womb that afflicted her. To exorcise the spirits he 'sent the Holy Spirit to go into the congregation to bring forward the victims'. Then there were commotions as the women in question screamed and fell down. They were carefully carried out from the congregation where the assistants prayed for them. Identifying the evil spirit married to a woman spiritually the prophet commanded the severance of this spiritual relationship. Again he declared there was a tall man

frantically strangling a woman. He commanded this demon also to leave its hold. At each command there were wailings and screaming from victims of the evil spirits as the demons fled their abode, throwing their victims to the floor.

By means of Spirit-engendered perception he could also tell how witches had managed to remove a woman's womb when she was being dressed for her wedding and thus rendered her infertile. He assured her that soon she would conceive and bring forth her first child. Another woman had had her room turned into a highway while another person's body had also been turned into the same thing.

He assured the victims that there was an ongoing surgical operation to undo what their enemies had done in their lives; God was restoring their lost fortunes to them. Moreover, women whose marriages were in crises were assured of their restoration. There were two ladies who had been delivered from their spiritual marriages to 'Maame Wata' and another person delivered from dwelling on the refuse dump spiritually. Among Ghanaians there is the belief in the existence of a spiritual entity that dwells and rules in the sea. This marine entity is capable of marrying humans. It even metamorphoses at times into human form in order to visit the world of humans. People married to *Maame Wata* are thus rendered impotent/infertile since they procreate spiritually with *Maame Wata* to populate her marine world.

The prophet rebuked all manners of sicknesses and diseases: diabetes, paralysis, migraine, insanity and fibroid among others after calling the sick forward. He told a woman of having been set free of a debilitating fibroid. Another person

had a chest problem healed by the Holy Spirit. A lady whose parents had frustrated her marriage spiritually would have matters change to her favour.

He prayed for pregnant women; and warned a woman who had been stealing from her husband to desist from the act. Also women who wore trousers or shorts at night to resist their husbands' sexual advances were to desist from it.

The Mighty Works of God

During the ministration there was a woman who suddenly began to jump and shout aloud "I won't allow, I won't allow. He says he wants blessing. Is all the money for him alone? Is this cheque for him alone? I've troubled him for far too long". This was one out of many such occurrences at the meeting. When a spirit manifests in a person like this it does not necessarily imply the person is actually a witch or wizard. Rather s/he may just be a medium. Such manifestations help to elicit information on the tormenting spirit in another person's life (J.O. Freeman, personal communication, September 29, 2005).

A number of people testified to God's mighty works wrought through the ministry of Elder Andoh. For instance, a man testified of how the prophetic call for prayer for all drivers against motor accidents had saved him from a near motor accident on the Kumasi/Tamale highway. A woman also testified of how God delivered her from a chronic disease that had incapacitated her. Through her participation in the services and faith in the word of the 'man of God' and her use of *Nyame Ahyiraso* she obtained her deliverance. Another woman also testified of

how she chewed *Nyame Ahyiraso* and was cured of a boil in her throat that had defied even scientific/medical cure. Such testimonies received thunderous ovations of 'hallelujah' 'praise the Lord' and 'amen' from the congregation.

Mediating Christian Healing Through Nature: The Case of *Nyame Ahyiraso*

Nyame Ahyiraso is the pounded bark of a tree which seekers to Auntie Grace Mensah's Bethlehem Revival Centre at Abura Edumfa buy and apply as a protective and curative substance with supernatural potency. It is even believed that it has the power to 'arrest' witches and wizards who attempt to harm users. Though not officially told the writer is convinced that it is the pounded bark of the tree known in Akan as *Nyame Dua* (God's tree) or *sinuro*. This tree is used in making traditional trays and other household accessories. In traditional Akan religious belief this tree is believed to be the shrine of *Nyame*, the Supreme Being. Consequently, the tree holds a high place in traditional Akan religion and thus makes it a potential supernatural aid in mediating the divine in human affairs. But apart from its spiritual potency it possesses natural medicinal values which may explain why when used it is able to provide the expected medicinal effects for users. This medicinal bark from Edumfa is bought and patronized by not only seekers to Edumfa but is also promoted by Elder Andoh at his own Centre. When Christian prophets use *Nyame Ahyiraso* as a curative and protective aid they are in effect consciously or unconsciously appropriating Akan traditional religious materials in their Christian practice.

The above scenario shows that exorcism and healing underline the ministries of grassroots prophetism. It also shows how Pentecostals bring to logical conclusion their concept of demonology by bracketing all *abayifoò* (witches and wizards), *akòmfoò* (traditional priests and priestesses) and *adutofoò* (sorcerers) together as the causative agents of people's backwardness and poverty.

The 'Institutionalised' or 'Official' Prophet in the Church of Pentecost

It has already been pointed out at the beginning of this chapter that there are clearly four distinguishable levels of prophetism in CoP. We have referred to the possessors of the first level as *nkòmhyèfoò* (prophesiers). Then there are the 'singing prophets' or 'Pentecostal psalmists' who receive fresh and unknown 'spiritual songs' to give to the church. We have also identified another level and called it 'grassroots prophetism' and attempted to show that the operators of this are the people that the ordinary suffering masses throng to for solutions and answers to their existential problems. But how the church officially defines a prophet is what we intend to look at in this section.

Apostle Opoku Onyinah (personal communication, October 20, 2005) defines a prophet as someone who is sent to speak forth God's mind, and who does so through directive prophecy or revelation. Such persons should have the gift of prophecy, discerning of spirits and must also possess the twin gifts of word of knowledge and word of wisdom. The current International Missions Director, Apostle S. K. Baidoo (personal communication, November 11, 2005) adds that the

prophet exercises gifts of exhortation and teaching. The rationale for the need of the twin gifts is that they insulate the prophet against deception and provide guidance to his prophetic perception.

Apostle Opoku Onyinah further opines that in CoP prophetic gift is not directly associated with the power gifts. By this assertion we may argue that CoP officially attempts to delineate who a prophet is from the normal grassroots definition which associates power with the prophet's ministry. It also seeks to explain why the 'institutionalised' prophet may not operate in power gifts and yet still be regarded as a prophet by the church's leadership.

In *The Constitution of the Church of Pentecost* (n.p., 2005), the General Council of CoP defines the person and functions of the prophet thus:

[Prophets] are Ministers who exercise the Prophetic Ministry and are called into the Office of Prophet. The office of a Prophet is complementary to that of the Apostle in calling, directing and ordering Ministers and other officers of the Church (1Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11-13). The Office is distinguishable from the exercise of the gift of prophecy which edifies, exhorts and comforts the saints (1 Cor. 14:3-4). [Prophets] dedicate church buildings (p. 39).

Apostle S. K. Baidoo (personal communication, November 11, 2005), throws more light on this by stating that:

[Prophets] are ministers who exercise the prophetic ministry and are called into the office of prophet. This is one of the high offices in the church. [They] are Spirit filled, proclaimers and interpreters of the word of God. [They are] called to warn, exhort, comfort and edify (Acts 2:14-36, 1 Cor 14:30). They exercise the gift of prophecy and *sometimes foretell* the future (Acts 11:28) (*emphasis mine*). They expose sin, proclaim righteousness, warn of judgment to come and combat worldliness and lukewarmness among God's people (Luke 1:14-17). True prophet of God operates in the following gifts: words of wisdom and knowledge, discernment, prophecy, gifts of exhortation and teaching. ...The Office of a Prophet is complementary to that of the Apostle in calling, directing and ordaining Ministers and other Officers of the Church. (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11-13).

From the above definitions we may deduce what CoP officially regards as the office and ministry of a prophet:

1. A prophet is a high profile office-holder in the church with complementary ministry to that of the apostle.
2. To occupy the office one must be in the five-fold ministry in CoP.
3. The prophetic office is distinguishable from the exercise of the gift of prophecy which edifies, exhorts and comforts the saints.

4. A prophet exercises some spiritual gifts such as gifts of prophecy, words of wisdom and knowledge, discernment, exhortation and teaching. In this regard the ministry of the prophet is not restricted to just the revelational gifts or the vocal gifts but includes the gift of teaching and exhortation which fall outside the purview of what are regarded by Pentecostals as spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12. Again, it is by the addition of these other gifts in Romans 12:6-8 that the credibility of a true prophet may be established.
5. The prophet can sometimes predict events or things, though not a prerequisite of his office.
6. A prophet proclaims and interprets God's word. Thus in CoP the prophet is more than a seer; he is also a teaching prophet who reveals and impacts God's mind by teaching the Bible.
7. As a high ministerial office holder of the church the prophet provides direction to the church and like the apostle calls and ordains people into the ministry (lay or sacramental).
8. It is a prophet's function to expose sin, proclaim righteousness, warn of judgment to come and combat worldliness and lukewarmness among God's people (Luke 1:14-17).

In CoP then the official determination of a prophet is not the same as the grassroots; the two base their judgments on different criteria. It may also be said that the

official perception conforms to Robert Frost's (2001) criteria on the prophetic ministry.

The ministry of the institutionalised prophet has aided the church in a number of ways as suggestive in Apostle Baidoo's definition and affirmed by Apostle Opoku Onyinah. We will show below how 'official prophetism' was 'appropriated' in the calling of two of the church's chairmen. We will also deal with issues that arise from Opoku Onyinah's work on the benefits and authenticity of such prophetic guidance in choosing leaders for the church. At this point we wish to underline Campbell's (1998) advice on how a church should deal with prophetic directions as a great necessity for a church such as CoP:

Prophetic people are not necessarily responsible for the interpretation of their words. They are definitely not responsible for the application of their message. That responsibility lies with the leaders, or with the individual(s) to whom the prophecy is given.....Prophetic people need to know that they are only responsible to give what they feel the Lord is saying. They are not responsible to see that directive words are carried out. These words may, in fact, be rejected (Pp. 12, 13).

In this regard CoP's use of the ballot box to determine the authenticity of a prophetic direction, especially in electing people into leadership positions, does not in any way depreciate leadership's awesome responsibility in handling prophecies.

The Marks of an Institutionalised Prophet

It has been noted earlier that CoP appropriates prophetism to its utmost advantage in all its endeavours. It is one church where everyone is given the free hand to manifest and operate in his/her spiritual gifts, and prophecy is one gift that serves as a live wire in that church. At any of its gatherings it is not unusual to allow for time to 'hear from the Lord' because of its strong belief in God's omnipresence. Time was when some people felt disappointed when no prophecy was given at service. Some even placed greater premium on a prophecy than the sermon. There have been times when some people have sought for their marriage partners by means of prophetic direction or guidance. Though such practice is not encouraged officially by the church yet there are those who still think it is necessary and indeed imperative to 'hear from God' on such lifelong issues.

We have shown that despite its high regard for prophetism not all who exhibit prophetic gifts are officially considered as prophets. Generally, the church holds that those who operate in the revelational gifts or vocal gifts of prophecy, speaking in different tongues and interpretation of different tongues should maintain a certain standard as becomes of 'a prophet'. This implies, *inter alia*, *nkòmhyèni nkasa bebre* (a prophet should not be a talkative). The rationale is as God's mouthpiece the prophet (irrespective of what level s/he is) must observe a life of meditation on divine matters. Similarly, there must be a disengagement from unprofitable chatter that may potentially 'leak' his/her anointing or colour the prophetic word the Lord gives him/her.

But apart from this general expectation of all ‘prophets’ there is a higher standard that the official prophet is to attain. Hence, it is not every ordained ‘prophesying’ minister who rises to that high office in the church.

The institutionalised prophet must live an impeccable life of integrity that corresponds to the spiritual gifts operative in his life. Integrity here means living blamelessly before church members and outsiders. It also means integrating words with truth and trustworthiness to avoid creating suspicion or doubt in people’s minds. Therefore to be called into this office one must live a clean, uncontaminated life and guard against inquisitiveness and curiosity so that one’s word can be devoid of human colouring. This holy life of the prophet must be obvious to all. For example, the late Prophet M. K. Yeboah was one prophet who was highly regarded by those within and outside his church as a man of God. His compassionate heart and insightful counsel earned a big place in the hearts of many in the church.

Similarly, it is a high expectation from the prophet that he maintains a high level of prayer life that is fuelled with fasting and the study of the Word of God. This is very vital so that his judgment is not beclouded by personal or human weaknesses and biases such as partiality, nepotism, favouritism and clientelism.

Finally, the prophet must exhibit or demonstrate a high sense of maturity in the exercise of his gifts; he must *know* what to speak, when to speak it, how to speak it and where to speak it. For example, during a General Council Meeting at Koforidua (the capital town of the Eastern Region of Ghana) a pastor prophesied

that God had called a Pastor Kwame Noble-Atsu into the office of an apostle (J. Amofa-Adade, personal communication, September 14, 2005).

The pastor was later summoned to appear before the Executives. Apparently, he was expected to be mature enough not to mention Pastor Noble-Atsu's name but generalise the prophecy and then later see the Executives about the specifics. This is because the church seeks to prevent the unhealthy situation whereby a person becomes impetuous or self-conceited when his name is prophetically declared for a position or office in the church. Similarly, it also seeks to guard against a situation whereby a disappointed individual foments troubles for an unrealised expectation of a prophetic word. Thus, in commencing a prophetic declaration the prophet should show evidences of maturity. Moreover, unlike other 'prophets' in the church who may prefix or suffix their messages with "Thus saith I the Lord", the official prophet may declare God's intentions even through his teaching and preaching.

Significantly, Pastor Noble-Atsu has long become an apostle and is currently serving on the Executive Council. He is even the secretary to the Ministerial Committee. Thus, the word of the prophet was eventually fulfilled. The issue then is not about the precision and authenticity of the prophet's word but rather about his maturity in handling his gift.

The Importance of Prophetism to CoP

CoP's history shows that it has been associated with prophetism since its inception. For a very long time people's call into CoP's ordained ministry either came through a prophetic utterance and direction or was confirmed by it. The gift of prophecy and the associated gifts of visions and dreams play prominent roles in the church's ministry even today, though they may be carefully tested with the Scriptures. Onyinah (2004b) indicates that up to 1961 people were called into the offices of apostles and pastors, and transferred often through directive prophecies. However, McKeown believed that his own ministers often manipulated prophecies to suit their own premeditated decisions, and so he demanded that all prophecies should be tested.

Similarly, it is the church's constitutional provision to allow directive prophecies in its decision making especially, when choosing leadership for the church. It is on record that both the late Prophet M. K. Yeboah and Apostle M. K. Ntumy were called into the church's chairmanship by directive prophecies, though not without validating them through the ballot box of the General Council (Onyinah 2002a). One may surmise, however, that in both cases the results of the ballot box, though, were conclusive since few people would be 'unspiritual' to challenge what was perceived to be a divine submission.

The church's developmental process is chequered with secessions by people who were regarded as prophets by the laity, and who at one time or the other enjoyed the goodwill of the church's leadership. According to Apostle

Opoku Onyinah most of these secessions have come from male prophetic figures; their women folks have been quite co-operative with the church's leadership. Thus, when male prophets like John Mensah and Brother Lawson left the parent church women like Maame Sophia Dede remained to carry on their prophetic ministries. In recent times men with prophetic/evangelistic ministries like Owusu Tabiri and Agyeman left the church but women like Auntie Grace Mensah continue to function under the ambit of the church.

CoP's emphasis on the foundational role of prophecy in church government and personal direction places it in continuity with Bradford Apostolic tradition and weakens its founder's pessimism in that gift. In fact, Onyinah's eyewitness account seems to betray a suspicion of an apparent 'compensating' or 'conspiracy' prophecy by two of CoP's senior ministers. There is a subdued hint that Pastor J. K. Ennum 'prophesied' Prophet M. K. Yeboah into chairmanship after the latter had 'prophesied' the former into the prophetic office. Onyinah seems to shrewdly rationalise the Council's delay in 'welcoming' Ennum into that office. His reportage sounds more of a reluctance and suspicion on the councillors' part. Later developments seem to confirm their fears that that particular directive prophecy was perhaps not 'divinely inspired' after all. A few years later this same Prophet Ennum was dismissed from CoP's ordained ministry for the gross misconduct of adultery and abortion.

Conclusion

Our discussions in this chapter have been aimed at answering the question: What are the ways Classical Pentecostal churches such as the Church of Pentecost conceive prophetism? From the discussions so far it has become obvious that prophetism plays a prominent role in the functioning of CoP. Yet there are differing levels of understandings held by its members about it. Just like in many Pentecostal/Charismatic groups there are people who prophesy and others who sing new songs or 'spiritual songs'. All such operate at one level or other in the prophetic giftings and by their gifts edify, exhort and comfort the church of God. The third group, grassroots prophets, may not 'fit' into official mould of prophetism yet the church's leadership has 'managed' to accommodate them within the system since it appreciates the possibility of divine origination of their ministries. Leadership's desire to turn grassroots prophetism into assets rather than liabilities makes it approach it tactfully so that past conflicts would not recur. The discussion has further shown that even with official prophetism the leadership is careful with whom to include or exclude so that God's name and the church could be protected from reproach.

Our discussion on the various concepts of prophetism in CoP shows that there is no easy way of defining prophetism in that church. What comes out clearly is that the phenomenon is identified with the gifts of prophecy, discernment, words of wisdom and knowledge and may or may not include power gifts such as faith, healing and miracles. Discernment, words of wisdom and

knowledge may be received through inner knowledge, visions and dreams and may thus be termed revelational gifts; the gift of prophecy is oracular in nature. Prophecy may be interpreted as a liturgical instrument that manifests through prophesiers and Pentecostal psalmists. It is also a charismatic empowerment through which healings and miracles may be wrought. Moreover, it provides a decision-making tool and an arm in church polity and leadership. A prophet in CoP then, in the light of our study, is someone who is endowed with the supernatural gifts of prophecy, discernment, words of wisdom and knowledge and may or may not exhibit power gifts such as faith, healings and miracles. In the chapter that follows we shall attempt to critically look at the concept of the prophet among Ghanaian Pentecostals.

CHAPTER SEVEN

AN ANALYTICAL APPROACH TO THE CONCEPT OF THE PROPHET AMONG GHANAIAAN PENTECOSTALS

In the last chapter we examined CoP's concept of prophetism and discovered how the phenomenon acquires different characteristics and appearances in that church. At the conclusion of that chapter I promised to look critically at the concept of the prophet in Ghanaian Pentecostalism. Hence, this chapter seeks to respond to the question: What critical issues arise from Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism? This present chapter therefore is a critical analysis of the activities and practices of Pentecostal prophets in contemporary Ghana. It raises concern about some ethical issues that demand dispassionate address by Ghanaian Pentecostals with the hope that that good gift from the Lord becomes beneficial and not a byword to the church. Consequently it discusses such themes as defining the reality of the Divine: peripheral prophetism, releasing the prophetic anointing: the place of music and worship in Pentecostal prophetism, the soteriological content of Pentecostal gospel songs, the place of the media in NPC prophetism and ritualistic practices or prophetic acts.

Defining the Reality of the Divine: Peripheral Prophetism

Throughout our discussions we have tried to show how there exist differing opinions on the person and nature of a prophet among Pentecostals of Ghana. At least we can say that grassroots prophets that CoP laity recognise and accept are not officially recognised as such. Officialdom sees them as elders/deacons or deaconesses and calls them prayer leaders. But even here it is no secret that ordained ministers do consult and seek their assistance during crucial moments.

In this chapter we attempt to analyse Pentecostalist understanding of prophets. In this attempt we seek to define grassroots prophetism in Classical Pentecostalism and prophetism within neo-Pentecostalism as peripheral prophetism. By peripheral prophetism we mean the operations of the protagonists do not enjoy immediate acceptability by their respective systems. Yet this does not limit their operations or popularity. These prophets share a lot of traits with one another irrespective of whether they are of the classical or neo-Pentecostal strand. For instance, though grassroots prophets in CoP may not use anointing oil like neo-Pentecostal prophets they may however use *Nyame Ahyiraso* and carry out prophetic rituals very much at home with the others.

Our observations of neo-Pentecostal prophets undermine Asamoah-Gyadu's (2000) thesis that there is a "democratization of charisma" and a general discouragement of "recourse to and dependence on traditional remedies, biblical symbolisms and the use of prophylactics, to mediate healing associated with the ministry of the *Sunsum Sòre*" (p. 28) among Ghanaian neo-Pentecostals. While his

argument may be tenable to some extent for non prophetic-prone neo-Pentecostals it is still contestable since even among these the pastor is the fulcrum of religious activities. In most cases neo-Pentecostal pastors play roles that normally are performed by the laity in Classical Pentecostal churches.

These neo-Pentecostal prophetic churches make profuse use of anointing oil (olive oil). Their practices fall within the matrix of neo-Pentecostalism. Our observation is that among the NPCs the prophet plays quite a significant role and occupies an important place in the lives of the faithful, who almost always place his/her word on the same footing as the Scripture itself.

These prophets seem to have created the condition for such attitude in their followers. For in these churches there is much emphasis on the prophetic word and the person of the prophet; and the use of Scriptures to underline these is not uncommon. A typical example is the reading of inscriptions on the billboard in front of Prophet Isaac Anto's Conquerors Chapel International. It reads as follows: Conquerors Chapel Int., Power House. Believe in God and you shall stand firm, *believe in his prophets and you shall prosper* (2Chron. 20:20b). Host: Prophet Isaac Anto.

Apparently, seekers and members are being encouraged to believe in 'God's prophet' Isaac Anto since their prosperity hinges on how they relate to him and his ministry. The situation may not be different from Hanegraaff's (1993) "fear and sympathy" (Pp. 193-209) antics of prosperity preachers. In fact, this is not peculiar to Anto and his church. Even in the CoP seekers seem to define their lives and

future on the word of grassroots prophets. Indeed, there are many who make it a practice of embarking on nothing until they consult the prophet for a ‘divine word and advice’.

Seekers’ attitude somewhat affirms Molloy’s (2002) observation of some religious people’s perception of the divine transcendence as that which necessitates prophetic mediation in integrating proper belief and morality. Thus, it is not uncommon to find ‘committed regular’ clients ‘rush’ to Edumfa Bethlehem Revival Centre or to Elder Dan’s Paradise Spiritual, Revival and Healing Centre at Odorkor, Accra, on almost every issue stretching from perceived spiritual problems to ordinary mundane matters. One wonders, however, what the fate of such people will be in the event of the demise of these prophets. It is within the context of this kind of prophetism, peripheral prophetism, that ‘ordinary’ seekers define the reality of the divine and which currently pervades their minds and infuses their worldview with hope and confidence.

Releasing the Prophetic Anointing: The Place of Music and Worship

In Pentecostal Prophetism

The place of music and worship in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism cannot be overemphasized. Adubofour traces what he calls ‘contemporary gospel music’ movement to music groups formed by evangelical students in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Adubofour 1994). The continuous presence and importance of music in Pentecostalist services is clearly and strongly underlined in both grassroots

prophetic ministries of CoP and the NPCs. In these ministries there is a conscious effort to employ good, soul-inspiring, spirit captivating music and worship to ‘tap’ into the spirit realm. This is aimed at ‘releasing’ the active presence of the Holy Spirit into the faith community. To some degree their livelier, spirit-filled and empowering worship revitalises and revolutionises Christianity (Hackett 1998). Indeed, there is an appeal to OT prophetic ministries of Elisha and David whose employment of music and worship led to the manifestation and release of God’s Spirit in resolving serious existential problems of people (I Sam. 16:14-23; 2 Kings 3:14-20).

Pentecostal prophetic services are evidences of the strong consideration practitioners give to music/worship. For example, Prophet Atsu-Manasseh’s ‘Prophetic Service’ or Prophet Isaac Antoh’s ‘Miracle Service’ utilizes music and worship profusely during prophetic ministrations. This is not unlike what normally pertains in grassroots prophetic services of CoP’s Down Town Prayer Revival Centre or Salvation Prayer Centre of the McCarthy Hill District in Accra led by one Elder Okyere, a son of a retired pastor of the church.

One would wonder why Pentecostal prophets are so enthused about music and worship. During a Miracle Service at the Family Bible Church at Mataheko in Accra, Prophet Stanley Nana Quagraine, the Head Pastor, provided an insight into this when he told the congregation:

In this end-time the prophetic ministry thrives on music and worship. By these God speaks to individual worshippers. Music

invokes the supernatural presence of God into the midst of worshippers. Music is indispensable to the power of God. Prophets of this end-time employ music and worship in their ministry greatly.

By the 'End-Time' Pentecostals tend to interpret the current charismatic manifestations in the church in continuity with the apostolic era. Consequently, they do not believe the gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased with the passage of time. They also see the Pentecostal phenomenon as an evangelistic tool for reaping lost souls for God's kingdom till Christ's Second Advent. This understanding undergirds the urgency of their evangelistic ethos. Against this background is their assertion that the church today must function and operate in the charismatic gifts which include prophetic gifts of words of knowledge and wisdom, and discerning of spirits. Nonetheless, Pentecostals, at least Ghanaian Pentecostals, are not known to be date setters of the end of the age, the very thing that Scott (1944) reminds the church to be wary of.

It is not uncommon in a Pentecostal prophetic service to find a singer called upon to 'prepare the ground and charge the spiritual atmosphere' with 'powerful' worship songs before a prophet preaches. This explains why Evangelist Michael Agumanu would echo prophets Atsu-Manasseh and Stanley Nana Quagraine's earlier assertions that he could 'flow' (that is, able to preach the word of God) in an atmosphere of worship. In fact, in consonance of this the guest artiste for that night,

Christiana Love, was purposely invited to 'activate' the Spirit's presence through her music.

It needs to be stated here that notwithstanding their many similarities the ecstatic nature of NPC worship places them at a disjunction with most Classical Pentecostal churches particularly CoP, where restriction or 'moderation' is placed on how one dances in praise services. For example, in CoP one is supposed to 'dance in the spirit' but not dance 'worldly'. As to how one's dance is spiritual or not is another issue. But as Baëta (1962) has shown this ecstatic worship is characteristic of the Spiritual Churches among whom the state of ecstasy is looked upon as the climax of religious experience. The Spiritual Churches actually believe that ecstatic worship makes possible the achievement of the human/divine contact and communication and reception of values. Exorcism, they believe, is connected to both and so they employ practically identical methods of inducing the desired state, that is, rhythmic and repetitious music with special forms of dancing. Like the Spiritual Churches a typical NPC church service is approached with a sense of liberty as worshippers fully participate with all their energies in a kind of prophetic ecstasy.

Assessing the worship services of Black Pentecostals from his British backyard Hudson (1998) connects the ecstatic celebration in Black churches with the socioeconomic freedom they find in their new world of personhood. But he does not hesitate to caution against focusing on just the music rather than the message of the songs and the fact that Black Pentecostal youths should guard

against deculturalising in a Western culture. Bauman (1961) describes prophetic ecstasy in Israelite Prophetism as:

An experience of being overcome with an emotion so powerful that self-control or reasons are suspended. This might include frenzied dancing, self-mutilation, and other forms of hyperactivity....These ecstasies (prophets) were called upon to deliver the will of Yahweh in specific situations. They usually travelled about in bands or groups, were often called 'sons of prophets' and soon developed into a professional group (p. 87).

With the exception of mutilating oneself this sounds more like an apt description of contemporary Ghanaian NPC prophetism which sees prophets normally 'band' together in their organisation of prophetic/miracle services. Similarly, their 'prophetic' dances smack of something akin to a loss of self-control.

Perhaps, the unique difference about the NPCs is that unlike the OT prophets their 'band' lacks a mentor, someone they can safely look up to as 'father of prophets'. This lack is perhaps one major cause for the many problems associated with the prophetic ministry. At the surface it is easy to blame the prophets for it. There are arguments that these prophets do not want to submit to authority, they are proud and self-conceited because of the anointing on their lives. But what is normally not considered is that at their formative stages many of them sought for pastoral mentorship. However, due to imaginary threats they posed to their mentors, who equally harboured envies and jealousies against the 'boys' they

abused and maligned them to the extent that the budding prophets were forced to go solo. It therefore becomes impossible to attempt to offer them guidance in their 'powerful and popular state'.

A significant feature about NPC praise and worship is that they afford a participative opportunity for new seekers/visitors since these churches do not 'place a ban' on what may be considered worldly dance by typical Classical Pentecostals. In fact, the dance is a 'free for all with all'. Pastors may join the dancing squad, a situation which is unlike what pertains among Classical Pentecostals such as CoP. This is in accord with the Ghanaian natural tendency for demonstrative worship. In Hebrew to 'prophesy' strongly suggests "to prophesy ecstatically" (Anderson 1975, p. 228), but ecstasy here is more than being overcome with an emotion so powerful that self-control or reason may be suspended. This is because in OT prophetism:

Ecstasy arises not from mere emotional rapture but from the Spirit (i.e. *ruach*) of Yahweh which falls on a person, takes control of the centre of the self, and makes him an instrument of the divine will...In such a prophetic state unusual things happened..." (Anderson 1975, p. 228).

We may however have to excuse NPCs of their 'worldly' ecstatic dances with the understanding that Israelite prophets transformed the ecstatic prophetism they borrowed from their neighbouring Canaanites to fit into their Yahwist worship. However, due to their lack of moderation NPC worship services can be quite noisy

which may underline the fragile relationship they tend to have with residents of the communities where they are located. Unfortunately, these churches often tend to misconstrue the ‘offended’ communities’ reactions as demonic and sometimes spend time unend to pray against and bind these supposed ‘forces of darkness’. Notwithstanding their problematic nature they do provide a home for the destitute in society. They also serve as a better alternative for people who would otherwise live ambivalent Christianity by visiting ballrooms/discotheques while still maintaining their church memberships.

The way NPC singers dance to their ‘*gyama*’ *spirituals* is another subject for discussion. *Gyama* music is a kind of street music sung traditionally by Ghanaians especially during times of festivities and/funerals. It is often employed by students during sporting activities or special events. *Gyama* is a Ga word for getting rowdy or demonstrating some form of power to an authority. *Gyama spirituals* in the church are a form of militaristic praise that seeks to demonstrate the believer’s indifference to the threats of Satan, and faith in the incomparable power of Christ. This kind of music which would in the past be regarded as worldly, especially among Classical Pentecostals, has now gained ascendancy in Ghanaian Pentecostal worship. As a matter of fact, it is exhilarating to see Gospel singers dance ‘Christian boogie’, a contemporary dance employed in *gyama* singing by secular musicians. For example, the *Gospel Advocate* (November 20, 2005) (an Accra-based Christian weekly) showed pictures of Grace Ashy, Christiana Love and Andy Frimpong “‘boogieing’ live on stage @Warehouse” (p. 8).

Like their secular counterparts these NPC singers are backed by expert singers and demonstrative dancers during their performances. Notable among these musicians is Pastor Josh Laryea who Christianises popular traditional Ga *gyama* music with Christian lyrics. Elder Francis Agyei of CoP may also be placed in this bracket though he belongs to the Classical Pentecostal stream. He not only sings typical Classical Pentecostal songs but of late has sought to Christianise francophone secular music with Christian lyrics. So are the Soul Winners of the Apostolic Church, who like Elder Agyei do not allow their Classical Pentecostalism restrict them from going the *gyama* way. But there are women who also may be said to have refused to accept this as men's privileged domain. Such women like Christiana Love and the group called Getty and Friends have become very popular due to their innovative *gyama* type of music.

The involvement of women in the creation of this kind of music is not surprising since in Africa it is not uncommon to find women compose and lead local choral groups. When African feminists agitate for women's theological education and a re-reading/reinterpretation of both Scripture and cultures they deserve a serious and wholesome hearing.

The emergence of *gyama spirituals* in contemporary Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism may be said to provide an ingredient for authenticating African Christian theology that is brewed from 'village theology'. This 'village theology' refers to the distilling of theological knowledge from the everyday conversations about God and his acts among us which one hears in village squares, homes,

market places, buses, recreational spots, etc. That is why we may equally call it ‘fireplace theology’ or ‘marketplace theology’ or even ‘*nkwakwaduase* theology’. In this kind of theology African Christian language provides the lyrics for contextualising traditional secular music or poems of appellations, as exemplified in Afua Kumah’s song of praise to Jesus. In this Christianised traditional poem Afua Kumah portrays the God-Man as the Incomparable Hero, Wonder worker, Dependable One, Deliverer, Great Provider, Sustainer, Life Giver, Saviour, Strong Rock, Big Tree, Mighty One, Dependable Friend, Greatest Physician, Great Reconciler or Peace Maker. This is because “he is the one who, when he raises his hands gives even our enemies their share” (Bediako 1998, p. 44; cf. p. 13). Significantly, in most of these songs, there is a translation of ‘power’ of local deities to the glory of the true Lord of the land that now is made to rule in the realm of the former.

Prophets of NPCs are themselves psalmists, the ‘new Davids’ who believe that God deserves good worship as the strong Wonder Worker. As such there cannot be any meaningful Christianity except through a living and lively worship of the Creator, All-powerful, *victor Christus* by his church. It is with this understanding that Rev. Seer Tony Asamoah Boateng who prefers to be known and called ‘*Apaē Live*’, sought to demonstrate through his singing at the Forward Ever Evangelical Ministry International crusade at Darkuman Circle Station, Accra on Wednesday, December 14, 2005.

In this peripheral prophetism of Ghanaian Pentecostalism soul-inspiring, Spirit-provoking worship not only provides the matrix for interpreting prophetic ministration but it also unlocks the secret and mystery that lie behind the prophets' powerful anointed operations. Through worship the prophets dethrone and debase Satan and enthrone the Son of God in his rightful position as the only sovereign of all cosmic powers, authorities, principalities, thrones, dominions and names. Thus, through their worship they translate Pauline cosmological conception of the victorious reigning Christ from the cosmic reality into the physical reality of humanity.

In both Ephesians 1:20-23 and Colossians 2:10 Paul emphatically argues that by his death and resurrection Christ has been exalted and made preeminent far above all spiritual and corporeal powers in the cosmos. With this understanding Pentecostal prophets, by their worship, validate Christ's rulership over all our fears, anxieties, troubles, difficulties and inabilities and like the psalmists attribute human security to God's action.

Given this backdrop it becomes quite disturbing to hear allegations about some gospel musicians' employment of occultism for ministerial excellence and popularity. I recall in particular a discussion the Peace FM, an Accra-based private radio station, held with Collins and Ophelia Nyantakyi on the morning of Sunday, October 30, 2006. The discussion bothered on a Kumasi-based FM station, Fox FM's allegation of the couple consulting fetish powers for the

promotion of their gospel music. The couple denied the allegation and challenged their accusers to come up with their proof.

The Soteriological Content of Pentecostal Gospel Songs

Gospel music among Ghanaian Pentecostals not only serves as an assurance of divine benevolence but also as a supernatural weapon that destroys the enemies of believers. As Asamoah-Gyadu (2000) rightly points out Ghanaian Charismatic Christians' understanding of salvation is that deliverance from sin results in deliverance from "the hands of our enemies and all who hate us". It also includes deliverance from the devil, evil spirits, witchcraft and other enemies who are only out to "steal, kill and destroy" the children of God" (p. 188). This is the basic thread that weaves through the anointed singing of Nicholas Omane Acheampong who due to his popular song '*Tabitha cum*' wears the accolade, *Tabitha cum*.

Nicholas Omane Acheampong claims that he was a secular artiste who performed with what are known in Ghana as concert parties. The continuity of his musical prowess in his new-found Christian experience is similar to Pastor Josh Laryea's pre-conversion *Gyama* past (Wiafe 2006 b) Pastor Josh claimed to have been the leader of *Gyama* groups during his high school days. The musical ministries of the likes of Pastor Josh and Omane Acheampong today underscore Guthrie's (1981) assertion that there are "some gifts [that] are parallel to natural qualities while others are more extraordinarily phenomenon" (p. 764). Perhaps

these 'natural qualities' are activated during one's new birth experience and are 'charismatically charged' through an experience of Spirit baptism.

In one of his songs: *Sè Kristo se yoo...* (If Christ says yes....) Omane Acheampong invokes curses upon wicked forces such as witches, sorcerers and other wicked human agencies and malevolent spirits. The lyrics of the song run as follows: *Sè òtanfo pè wo sèe a, òkraman nka no mma wo; sè òtanfo pè wo sèe a, èpo mfa no mma wo; sè òtanfo pè wo sèe a, a owuo mmèfa no nkò mma wo.* (Translated, the words mean: If the enemy wishes your destruction s/he should be devoured by a dog; if the enemy wishes to destroy you may s/he be drowned in the sea; if the enemy wishes your destruction may s/he be killed).

Similarly, in his '*Yesu Kristo nko na otumi gye nkwa*' (Only Jesus Christ can save) he tells believers to turn over their chronic diseases, existential problems, anxieties and troubles to Jesus Christ since he alone is the liberator and problem solver of those who come to him. Hence, whereas all kinds of authorities, whether religious (*Kòmfo Anokye* failed so is *Antoa Nyama* a failure) or political can offer no help to the believer Jesus Christ has proved to be the All-sufficient, All-capable, All-providing Saviour for humankind. This conception of Christ resonates the traditional African concept of God which conceives the Supreme Being as a Keeper, Upholder, Protector, Preserver, Guardian, Pastor and Saviour and which is underlined with the feeling that the universe's enjoyment of God's protection has no ending.

God's benevolent goodness impels believers to make appellations to Jesus the *victor Christus*. Singing praises to the conquering, all providing God is their sole duty in eternity which ought to commence right from this earthly plane. Consequently, believers are to continually connect to him as their spiritual and physical/material recourse. Thus, the salvation that the Pentecostal psalmist conceives is in a sense this-worldly rather than other-worldly. Or better still the song's lyrics buttress Larbi's (2001) contention that Ghanaian Pentecostal Christianity tends to conceive salvation in terms of a *victor Christus* who responds not only to other-worldly but also this-worldly needs.

Within this same context may we consider Bernadette Mbuy-Beya (1994) when she asserts that spirituality in the African reality, earthed in the socio-cultural cosmology of the African person, is what makes life intelligible to human beings: psychologically, politically, *artistically*, sociologically and technologically; and is thus the basis of life and culture. To Africans then to live is to conquer death and this is what traditional society, with its rituals and structures, seeks to achieve: an integration of individuals to the community and the invisible community of the ancestors. She is of course, of the opinion that urbanization, unfortunately, has brought in its wake a destabilization of the traditional moral, cultural, political, economic, spiritual and social values. This is echoed in the sermons of prophets like Mark Afranie and Emmanuel Kofi Anim.

In '*Tabitha cum*' Omane Acheampong tells believers that Christ came to transform their wretchedness, hopelessness, sinfulness, diseases, etc. Jesus,

according to him, is impartial in his dealings with humanity; he has concern and care for the poor, sick and downtrodden who look to him for help and restoration of hope. Apparently, by titling his song *Tabitha cum* Omame leaves out the 'i' ending to *cumi* and confuses two narratives concerning the resuscitation of two lives in the New Testament. The scripture he appropriates refers to Jesus' command to a dead little girl in Aramaic *Talitha cumi* (Mark 5:41) but not *Tabitha cum*. However one looks at it, it is equally true that a *Tabitha* or Dorcas was brought back to life by the Apostle Peter (Acts 9: 40) and in that sense despite the mix-up *Tabitha cumi* can still be relevant.

Pentecostal Christianity is both an expressive and experiential faith. Pentecostals express their religious experiences by means of personal testimonies in oral or narrative form which some theologians define as oral theology (Asamoah-Gyadu 1997). It is asserted that Pentecostalism is a movement whose Christology is distilled primarily from oral tradition. Being Biblicist they rather take much delight in seeing Jesus straight from the Scriptures and feel it necessary to interpret him by means of their experience of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is thus seen as the 'Anointed' or 'Christ' of God who dispenses the Holy Spirit to transform God's people to work the works of God and whose name they cherish and revere both in their prayers and songs (Burgess & McGee 1988).

Oral theology among Pentecostals may manifest in at least two forms, namely, choral or prosaic. Choral testimonies are the means by which Pentecostals vent God's goodness, almightiness, provisions, benevolence,

deliverances in their lives through songs and prayers. On the other hand prosaic testimonies occur when a believer stands before the congregation to narrate God's mercies, deliverances, provisions, help towards him/her in prose form. A testifier may not necessarily narrate a personal experience of God's supernatural intervention in his or her life. It could at times concern another person's life which the narrator believes s/he has a cause to celebrate about. For example, a Ms. Boham, during Testimony Time at the Hour of Solution International Ministries, Dansoman, Accra, at a Sunday morning service (August 12, 2006) testified about how two of her staff members escaped death in two separate fatal motor accidents. She interpreted these as the demonstrations of God's goodness and mercy toward her.

The most effective tool of choral testimony among Ghanaian Pentecostals is gospel music. T. L. Osborn (*Miracles, Healing, Faith*, 2005) asserts that gospel music is a gift of God because of its dynamism, potency and impregnation with miracle sermons. Pentecostals believe and employ oral testimony not only as a major indicator of radical personal salvation but also as a declarative source for winning sinners to Christ (Asamoah-Gyadu 2000). With its primary task of proclaiming the goodness of the Lord oral testimony serves as a soul winning tool by which Pentecostals are able to populate the kingdom of God and fill their own individual and several congregations with new converts. It is against this backdrop that the Chairman of the CAC, Apostle Michael Nimo's sermon on *The Apostolic Voice*, a GTV sponsored programme of the CAC on Sunday, May 14,

2006, should be seen as timely. The Apostle challenged Pentecostal gospel singers to use their music to win the lost to Christ rather than focus on monetary gains or entertainment

The Apostle's admonition is significant when one considers recent media reports on some gospel singers' lust for money and fame to the neglect of evangelising the world through their music. For instance, a recent Ghanaweb publication ("I will kill you" 2006) reported a nasty feud between two Accra-based pastors, Bishop Michael Osei Bonsu and Pastor Love Hammond. In the said feud Pastor Love was alleged to have threatened to kill the 'Bishop' if he failed to pay him his agreed fee for giving the latter the songs for his gospel album.

It must be pointed out that Pentecostal prophetic ministries understand salvation to include *awoò, nkonimdie, yiedie, akwantuo, òpàgya, ahonya ne ayaresa* (child bearing, victory, prosperity and success, foreign travels, promotion, wealth and healing) which *Ódomfoò Yesu Kristo* (benevolent Jesus Christ) avails to those who put their trust and confidence in him. Hence, much of their prayers centre on these.

The stress on foreign travels is of significant interest. This emanates from the traditional Ghanaian belief that one's prosperity is effectively defined within the context of Western economic prosperity. This is because Africans in general tie economic emancipation and individual and national economic definition to Western connectedness. For most Africans then the economic and political emancipation that the continent needs depend on how well connected individual

countries and governments are to Euro-American powers. This is the basic assumption that the avid desire among many Africans to travel overseas whether for education or economic freedom hinges on. Consequently, a competent and good African government or political leader is one which (who) can connect well with Western powers and finds favour with the same. Any African leader who tries not to dance to tunes called by these Western pipers stand a chance of being condemned by his/her own kin and kith because for most Africans it is the West which has the best form of policies and political arrangements that must be imbibed by all unquestionably.

Thus against this socio-economic and political interpretation of life by Africans may we then understand Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism. In a country where getting one's daughter married to a 'been-to' (one who had travelled to Western nations) is seen as the greatest blessings, and an indicator of divine blessings and favour, it is no wonder then that these 'messengers of God' should endeavour to assure their clients/seekers of such 'divine interventions' in their lives.

It is important to argue, however, that politico-economic power or prosperity is not to be confused with, and equated to, divine approval or favour as is popularised by North Atlantic and African Pentecostal prosperity preachers. What is often lost sight of is the factuality of the immense wealth that Africa possesses in terms of human and material resources. The only problem, however, has to do with

how we harness, mobilise, insure and maximise our physical, human and collective assets so that they become profitable to us.

The peoples of Africa need to face the stark reality that as a people we cannot afford, for example, to allow our human resources waste away through debilitating diseases like the HIV/AIDS. We should not encourage the negative use of religion or spirituality that diverts the right use of time from productive services into the holding of prolonged fasting and prayer vigils. Such pious practices only create conditions akin to laziness, and a false and misplaced belief that God blesses us according to the level of our spirituality or how much we pray or fast (Asenso-Okyere 2001). It may again be argued that what the Scriptures seek to teach is that God blesses the work of our hands; God blesses industry but not religious pomposity. African Christians, especially Pentecostals, will need to get this home soundly, for what Africa needs is a new work ethic.

The Gospel According to Ghanaian Peripheral Prophetism

At this point it needs to be stated that the theology of Ghanaian Pentecostal peripheral prophetism is not clearly articulated in precise language. A logical conclusion of this demands a careful analysis of various prophetic rituals, symbolisms, songs, prayers and actions of both leaders and their followers. This means one needs to carefully observe the way practitioners sing, pray, dance and practise their prophetic symbolisms among other things in order to safely draw a fairly good conclusion. Talking about symbolism it may be pointed out that these

prophets may not be totally acting out of place for symbolism is a significant part in biblical interpretation. Symbols represent something else, being either real or imagined objects or actions that are assigned a meaning for the purpose of depicting rather than stating the qualities of something else. Consequently, Zuck (1991) points out, “in prophetic passages symbols are sometimes based on imagination rather than actuality” (p.185).

Another way of distilling Pentecostal prophetic theology is by analysing critically the posters the prophets display on walls and other conspicuous locations. These posters and notice boards exhibit the confidence of the prophets in the potency of prayer and the power of God. They also emphasise their own self confidence in their peculiar calling. Furthermore, by means of these posters they seek to ‘entice’ seekers and clients to their meetings with the promise of a supernatural visitation and undaunting supernatural combat with satanic forces. This is evident in the stated purpose for Friday All Night prayer meetings of Prophet Kum Cha Cha’s Heaven Gate Ministries International and Efa-Tha Prayer Centre: Operation Fire Your Enemies (2 Samuel 15:30). The Thursday 7:00am-2:30pm prayer meetings emphasized the need to pray for personal deliverance thus: *Bògye wo ho* (pray to deliver yourself) (Obadiah 1:17) (cf. Appendix 2). But it is not only Pentecostal prophets who use religious symbolisms. As Molloy (2002) shows, in all religions including Christianity, religious symbolisms play a very significant role in entrenching the belief of the faithfuls in the *Unknown* and the unknown life.

The Place of the Media in New Prophetic Churches' Prophetism

Randall (1999) theorises that the communication media has a role in generating, facilitating and shaping the impact of religion in Third World politics. Though his assessment bothers more on religio-political relationships it still offers some insight into the role of the media in Third World evangelisation. Similarly, Asamoah-Gyadu (2000) has well observed that the news media play a significant role in the ministries of neo-Pentecostal preachers.

In the light of the foregoing we wish to demonstrate that these churches fully utilise the current proliferation of the electronic media in Ghana to their advantage. They have thus become more or less the pacesetters in media communication of the Christian evangelion (Randall 1999). Meanwhile, the media-mania and the almost insensitivity to education and development projects of these churches have been criticised by Gifford who sees their inability to extend their 'prophetic' voice to national issues ironic (Gifford 1994). In fact, one CM pastor, Rev. Steve Mensah of the Charismatic Evangelistic Ministries, Legon-Accra, tied the media-mania of Ghanaian Charismatic preachers to their greed for popularity. He identified the Charismatic church's powerlessness as its insensitivity to the poor, desire for political recognition, love for money and prayerlessness. This crave for public image makes them connive with North American televangelists to fake miracles. He lambasted, "When our eyes shift from prayer to money we become charlatans [and] comedians..." It is worth mentioning that Rev. Mensah's critique of Charismatic pastors came during the aforementioned 1st National Prophetic

Leadership Conference that was organized by Ghanaian Charismatic pastors to address the ‘prophetic problem’ in the system.

Actually the neo-Pentecostals were not the first to patronise the electronic media in their gospel dissemination. From the late 1970s to 1982 the Ghana Broadcasting Company-TV featured the American televangelist Oral Roberts every Sunday. The only difference is that neo-Pentecostals whose inspiration derives from American televangelists have learned to embrace “the techniques needed to propagate their message on a mass scale...” For them modern media technologies are evangelistic facilitators, weapons for spiritual warfare and have “ontological relevance” (Hackett 1998, Pp. 258-67).

Moreover, it is not only the Word of Faith or Deliverance strands of neo-Pentecostalism which are ‘exploiting’ the media to their fullest advantage. In fact, it seems the prophets of the new ‘wave’ are beginning to take the lead in recent times. Notable among the radio stations are the Channel of Righteousness (Channel R), Peace FM, Adom FM and Sunny FM all in Accra. There are also television stations such as the Metro TV, TV 3, TV Africa and GTV all in Accra. But this phenomenon is not restrictive to Accra. As a matter of fact, it cuts across the entire nation. Again, it is not even restricted to Pentecostals; AIC prophets such as Odeyifò Acquah of the Church of Bethesda, Anyaa in Accra take their fair share in this radio evangelisation.

A notable thing about the prophets is that most often than not they zealously ‘advertise’ themselves to would-be clients and this they achieve extensively

through both the use of the electronic and print media. Walking through the streets and crannies of Accra, one cannot help but read posters that seek to advertise some 'prophetic' event that promises to offer 'fast track' solution to prospective clients' problems. A recent poster had as its theme: "Come for Prophetic Direction".

But the electronic media is the one area that stimulates more unwholesome attack from fellow Pentecostal preachers who interpret the prophets' actions as a sure sign of self-aggrandisement. Perhaps we need to understand that normally many of these prophets have no social standing. It is just by 'sheer luck' that they have suddenly become public figures and since they least expected to attain this status they become euphoric, hence all the advertising and unnecessary trumpeting of their credentials.

As has been indicated earlier in this work their messages mostly concern overseas travel, childbearing, protection and deliverance from wicked people, wealth/prosperity and business success, health and neutralisation of witchcraft and evil manipulation. Consequently, many have chosen nicknames which they believe depict their 'anointed' ministries. We have *Odumgya Tutugyagu*, *Jesus Aberanteè*, *Jesus Ahoòfè*, Apostle One Touch (also known as Apostle Witch catcher), *Kum Cha Cha*, among many others.

What could underlie the lead of the prophets in the 'media race' is probably the fact that much of the money that goes into church ministry is now with them. They seem to be the current sensation in town with their 'fast track' solutions to clients' quests and worries. In fact, they 'fill in the gap' and provide the 'missing

link' seemingly left by the others with their telepathic and therapeutic knowledge and responses. Thus they attract all classes of people, many of whom have good standing in established churches.

Our argument that they are the current providers of the here-and-now solutions of the people is undergirded by the simple fact that despite their 'theologically' unintelligent use of Scriptures they still attract a great following. Their ritualistic practices which other ministers from the Pentecostal movement do not hide their criticism and attack from also raise eyebrows. Maybe the latter do so out of several motives not excluding envy and jealousy. The fact that the prophets are depriving them of their clients and in effect depleting their coffers of funds should be a great cause of worry. Or perhaps it is due to their desire to safeguard the unwary from falling prey to 'wolfish sheep' that they 'zealously fight for the Lord'.

Ritualistic Practices or Prophetic Acts?

In meeting the soteriological expectations and needs of their clients/seekers Ghanaian Pentecostal prophets may involve clients in a number of activities. How to interpret them depends on one's perceptions, religious background and expectations. To the outsider they are ritualistic practices through which adherents are involved in enacting their beliefs through real ceremonies. On the other hand practitioners may insist they are prophetic acts that are rooted in Scripture and therefore deserve a place in Christian practice and faith. Hence, they may appeal to

the prophetic activities of prophets like Elisha to buttress and illustrate the place of prophetic acts in effecting divine intervention in people's lives (2 Kings 2: 19-22 and 5; 6:1-7; 13: 14-19).

But even if they are taken to be prophetic acts how do we delineate them from ordinary religious rituals? A visit to a prophetic/miracle service or Sunday services of a NPC could offer the visitor some insight into their group psychology. For instance, during a Friday prayer meeting Prophet Emmanuel Fiifi Anim asked his congregation to hold up their bottles of 'anointing oil', pour out some of the content on the floor and step into it with their bare foot. Additionally, they were to take the remaining content home and pour some in their bathrooms, toilets, garbage and the entrance to their homes.

Similarly, Prophet King Quansah during an evening service at the Living Christ Church International on Wednesday, November 27, 2005 asked his congregants to lift up their new and unused handkerchiefs while he made some prophetic declarations on them. This was re-enacted by Prophet Prince Nana Kojo Quagraine during his ministration as a guest preacher, the subsequent week, at a revival service on November 30, 2005, at the Family Bible Church. Significantly, all these 'men of God' alluded to divine directive for their practices. They also assured their congregants of the inherent potency of the acts against the diabolic powers of their enemies. It may be indicated here that an issue that arises out of the profuse use of the anointing oil and other prophylactics is how some prophets commercialise these in alleviating clients/seekers' sufferings. This practice seems

to connect well with the sale of indulgences in medieval Catholicism which eventually provoked Martin Luther to spark off protest in the church (Gonzalez 1985).

The greatest determinant of whether a religious act is prophetic or mere ritual is clarified by Prophet Emmanuel Fiifi Anim. He insists that even if God may direct a prophet to act in a manner it does not necessarily imply it becomes a divine precedence for all times (E. F. Anim, personal communication, December 9, 2005). Though this prophet has little secular education and no theological education at all he echoes the view of Apostle Opoku Onyinah (personal communication, October 20, 2005), a respected and proven churchman and theologian in the CoP.

Cautioning on the threat that rituals can pose to a religious community Karecki (2005) writes:

Ritual is often equated with routine. People sometimes feel that ritual signifies empty conformity... A second threat to ritual is rooted in individualism and its accompanying subjectification of reality. Everything is evaluated in terms of individual preferences. This leads to the privatisation of religious experience and ritual is robbed of its role in social and cultural transformation. Further, the public dimension is estranged from the private dimension of life. This obviously has implications for the moral fibre of a society or culture because the community exercises no significant authority over the

individual. Interpersonal sharing then replaces communal ritual

(p.5).

We suggest that due to the dicey nature of 'divine directives' it is necessary prophets and their clients become circumspective of how they receive them. This is because though God speaks we cannot deny that Satan or humans can fake the divine to achieve their own ends. Griffiths (1986) cannot put it any better when he cautions the church to subject the operations of spiritual gifts to critical analysis in conformity to Scriptural injunctions.

Significantly, whereas some of these practices look quite innocent there are some which look very bizarre and repetitive and are more of a ritual than a prophetic act. For example, the writer personally witnessed two of such 'magico-ritualistic' acts during Prophet Akwasi Apraku's 'Kasoa for Jesus Crusade' in February 2005. During his ministration the prophet claimed to 'see into the realm of the spirit' and declared God wanted to 'give back' sexual potency to a certain man. To this effect he pulled the man's penis several times to 'put fire' into it. And this was not the first or the last time this prophet had done such a thing. Gifford (1994) similarly recounts how a Prophet Elisha Salifu Amoako anointed the penis of a man in order to exorcise the causative witchcraft in it.

A more bizarre ritual was displayed during Evangelist Agumanu's Forward Ever Evangelical World Outreach crusade at Darkuman Circle Station, Accra on Tuesday, December 13, 2005. The preacher, Rev. Seer Tony Asamoah Boateng (*Apa*e Live) literally 'hypnotised' a supposed infertile woman to sleep as magicians

were wont to do and made her ‘conceive’ triplets in the full view of the gathering. He then put his right foot on her stomach and poured oil into her two palms. Afterward he commanded triplets into her womb as everyone witnessed its protrusion and movements within. And this is a normal occurrence at his own services at his Great Light Worship Centre in conformity with his slogan ‘Wonders shall never end’.

This operation of *Apaē* Live smacks of two possible interpretations. Either the prophet with the connivance of the said woman played tricks on the gathering or that he used magical powers to achieve the result. The former position is the explanation that Prophet Wilberforce K. Afum (personal communication, December 12, 2005) alludes to. Prophet Emmanuel Fiifi Anim on the other hand suggests that apart from the plausibility of this position the magical element is an equal possibility and therefore the so-called miraculous act cannot be of God. For him God’s omnipotence does not mean he nullifies natural laws in creation. So there cannot be another virgin birth aside Jesus’! (E. F. Anim, personal communication, December 9, 2005).

Anim himself had witnessed God’s miraculous intervention in restoring a stunted pregnancy in his ministry. But that was when the woman in question had conceived for over four years without any significant development and growth of the pregnancy. Similarly, another woman’s pregnancy was restored to normalcy after eight months of retardation when the church prayed intensely for her. To

instantly have abdominal protrusion without prior conception tantamount to the employment of spiritism or concocted trickery to mislead the gullible, he surmises.

How do we explain the ever-growing popularity these prophets enjoy among Ghanaians in the light of the foregoing? That these prophets present themselves as offerers of spiritual panacea to the Ghanaian lack, and exploit the traditional desire to probe into the unknown cannot be ignored. Traditionally, Ghanaians have an insatiate desire to obtain explanations for every mishap in their lives.

Among Ghanaians nothing happens accidentally; there is a cause to every effect. Thus, even when a woman is infertile it must have some evil causal connection somewhere. It does not matter whether or not she aborted so many foetuses in her hey days. She is infertile because of some witch in the family: a mother, a grandmother; a rival or an in-law. The ethical explanations to misfortunes are not sought for. Thus, when Prophet Prince Nana Kojo Quagraine 'read' a woman's life and told her she was infertile he did not bother to find out whether or not she was legitimately married. He rather assigned her 'misfortune' to her family witches. He claimed her family witches had transformed her spiritually into a layer to feed them with eggs (fetuses) anytime she conceived. It was when I interviewed her after the service that she indicated she was illegitimately married. Her physical features also resembled an alcoholic and betrayed reckless living which could also explain why she had problem with maintaining her pregnancies. As Gifford (1994) rightly points out, in the view of these prophets cause is almost always traceable to spiritual forces often working through human enemies denying

human responsibility in morality. Sin always has a spiritual root to be dealt with by the gift of the prophet.

It is this desire to explore the unknown that dictates the religious quest and actions of many a Ghanaian. In a sense this desire is more than a mere religious inclination. It sits well within their superstitious belief and desire and opens them up to the exploitative whims of 'self-proclaimed men of God'. Many seekers will follow anyone who promises to hold the supernatural wand to unlock the recesses of the unknown. Thus, the peripheral prophet is welcomed to 'read' and 'speak' into people's lives. This also may provide an explanation to why some prophets like Atsu Manasseh love to 'prophesy into' everyone's life at any given meeting. Such induced prophecies may be rooted in client's expectation and the prophets' self confidence as possessors of divine insight and knowledge.

Examples of 'Ritualistic/Prophetic Acts or Practices'

In his assessment of the significance of religious ritual Karecki (2005) writes:

Ritual is endemic to both individual and community life. It is the storehouse of a community's central values, or root metaphors of a community or culture. In ritual, root metaphors cause a fusion of two separated realms of experience or two different understandings of an event or even a symbol into one illuminating, iconic encapsulating image.... Ritual has the power to open the participants to the meaning conveyed through

the ritual actions, language, and symbols. It also challenges a community to evaluate its behaviour and presence in the larger society in relation to its basic religious identity (p. 4).

Thus rituals are religious acts that a religious community employs in linking the experiences of one realm to another, in this case the physical and the spiritual. He further argues:

Performance in a ritual context does not imply that ritual is an action done for someone else and is merely to be observed. Performance is a particular kind of doing.... It is an enactment that requires engagement of the whole person at the physical, mental, emotional levels. In ritual there are no spectators. Ritual does not operate on the discursive level. In fact, wordy explanations hinder the power of ritual from being unleashed. Rites do not countenance either didacticism or moralism. Wordy explanations or sermons by which one purports to save rites in reality hinder them from operating on their proper level.... The basic law of liturgy is, "Do not say what you are doing; do what you are saying....." Since ritual works on the trans-rational level it generates wholeness because it engages the whole person and in that active engagement through myth and symbol, gesture and movement transformation occurs. In the Christian context ritual deeds initiate members of the

worshipping assembly into the mystery of God who invites them to participate in that life of love and meaning. Within religious ritual: There is a profound union between what is done in ritual and how faith is lived outside the ritual context, but in the ritual context identity and mission are given content and form (Karecki 2005, p. 4).

As he points out rituals occupy an area of greyness in both Catholic and Protestant Christianity. In Ghana though, these practices or acts are not restricted to NPCs. Even in Classical Pentecostal meetings pastors and leaders may lead congregants to embark on such acts. For example, as far back as 1990 one Rev. John Yaw Acquah, the CoP District Pastor of the then Dansoman District, Accra, led congregants at a district prayer meeting on a 'Jericho Match' around the Gbegbese church building, to typify the destruction of satanic holds in their lives. A similar act was enacted at Mount Ararat Assembly by Rev. Jonathan Amofa-Adade, then District Pastor of the Kasoa South District of the same church in February 2002. Again, as far back as the 1990s clients to Auntie Grace's Bethlehem Revival Centre fetched water from a pond believed to symbolize the Bethesda Lake whose water, the Bible alleges, was stirred through intermittent angelic visitations (John 5:1-11). Also there was the belief that pounding the bark of the *Nyamedua* used in the preparation of *Nyame Ahyiraso* opened one up to receive special divine benevolence in the form of miraculous interventions.

Furthermore, it is reported that even in the North Kaneshie Assemblies of God there were instances when a visiting pastor asked congregants to jump across an imaginary line typifying a 'crossing of one's Jordan' (V. Agbeko, personal communication, December 22, 2005). One visitor to a Prophet Ampadu's church, whose followers nicknamed him 'Odi', (*Odi* is an abbreviated form of the Akan word *Odeyifo*) recounted how during a prophetic service the prophet poured oil at the doorstep of the church. He then asked the congregants to put notes of money into it to serve as their point of contact for receiving foreign currencies. Though the congregation heeded to his instruction she felt it was quite bizarre. She also recounted how a prophet at a Family Bible Church Miracle Service asked congregants to dole out huge sums of money and pray over them as a means of revoking and redeeming themselves from any familial curses that beset their lives. This prophet asked them also to lay monies on the floor as holy money for the 'work of God' (S. O. Agyeman, personal communication, December 22, 2005).

Apparently there is evidence of the appropriation of the Akan worldview and primal belief by the prophets. Again, it is evident that these prophets cash on the ignorance of their clients and their fear of the unknown to exploit them in the guise of operating by divine directive. It is gratifying however, that not all seekers/attendants to prophetic meetings become easy 'prey' to these prophetic manipulations. There is still an evidence of cynicism and 'questioning' of the authenticity and tenability of prophetic injunctions and instructions by some Pentecostals as the foregoing example shows.

Currently, one prevailing prophetic act among some NPCs is what is referred to as 'altar erection'. This practice is premised on some alleged scriptural motifs. One key text is Genesis 28:10-22. According to proponents Jacob's raising his stone pillow as an altar for the Lord is prophetic and paradigmatic for Christian practice. Hence, prophets may ask congregants or seekers/clients to pick stones, 'anoint' them with oil and put them in designated spots of their homes, offices and workplaces with the purpose of mediating and channelling divine favours or assistance into their lives. The NT support is derivative of Jesus' declaration that failure of humans to praise God would result in God raising stones to perform that duty. This practice raises a number of theological and ethical questions.

Firstly, it suggests a return to practices native to African traditional religions. In African traditional religions, just as the case of Israelite primal religion, stones play important function in setting up altars and shrines for the deities. In the Akan world for instance, there are sacred stones in palaces on which the blood of slaughtered animals is poured to the spirits. Even the etymology of the Akan name for the lesser deities, *abosom*, derives from the Akan belief that basically these spirits are embodied in stones or rocks and other inanimate objects like trees. Hence, a worship rendered to them is *abosomsom* (the worship of occupant deities of rocks). But it is no secret that Pentecostalist messages are vehemently antagonistic to this same worship of the lesser deities, and the prophets do not spare a second to condemn the *abosom* whom they seek to break their control over clients/seekers.

Secondly, by appealing to the Scriptures to buttress their practice these NPC prophets display their theological ignorance and their allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures. For by so doing they attempt to go behind the text of Scripture to justify their belief even when it is apparent that their claim has no theological basis. This assessment is very important when we consider that by the time of Jesus the Jews had long stopped offering sacrifices on stones to God

Another prophetic act is what may be termed as ‘prophetic walk’. This practice seeks to re-enact God’s promise to Joshua that wherever the sole of his feet would tread was given to him for his possession and inheritance (Joshua 1:2-5). As such practitioners are asked to remove their footwear and walk barefooted across a designated distance or place. It is the ardent belief of the actors that this makes them conquer and possess spiritual, material, physical, and financial territories that their satanic and wicked enemies had controlled. Herein again is a theological problem; it does indicate the repeatability of divine directives which is contrary to what Scriptures teach. In the Scriptures God never asked his people to follow the same ritualistic act or practice every time. Even when there were evidences of similarities of prophetic acts they were never the same. That shows that God employs various methods in dealing with his people under different contexts.

There is also the practice of ‘atmospheric vocation’ which involves speaking to atmospheric elements like the stars, moon and sun. It aims at reversing any possible curses that are transmitted to people through magical manipulation of the elements. It is the belief that powerful people with malevolent intents are able to

invoke curses upon less powerful people by speaking into these atmospheric elements. This explains why in African traditional religions there are priests and priestesses of lightning who manipulate lightning and thunder to strike and kill less powerful people. The argument is that there are people who go insane because they were cursed by either the sun or the moon. When a person is cursed by the moon s/he experiences the intensity of the insanity during moonrise. The converse holds for those cursed with the sun.

Still there are some churches which practise 'foot washing'. Upon visiting Prophet Atsu Manasseh's Watered Garden one gathers that this is a common practice in this church. For example, during a counselling session the then Resident Pastor, Pastor Anthony Lerbuny, took a woman client outside and made her remove her feet from her sandals. Then praying he washed the feet with water and mobbed them with a towel.

According to this pastor the act had a biblical motif (A. Lerbuny, personal communication, September 15, 2005). When the angelic visitors visited Abraham the latter washed their feet. Just as foot washing in oriental societies was necessary for cleansing guests' feet of physical dirt so it is necessary that people who for some reasons have had spiritual dirt of curses, spells etc on their lives get washed or cleansed spiritually. He claimed he counsels clients, asks them to fetch the water and then he performs the washing while praying and making declarations such as:

Today, I wash your feet from setbacks, faulty foundations, and
pray for your promotion, [I pray for you] to be lifted up. Any

filth around you; any demonic spell you have trodden upon, we wash you of it, lifting you from the pit to your glorious height.

Foot washing then is a symbolic act that helps to impact a spiritual work in the lives of believers that results in their promotion, upliftment and success in their endeavours. Indeed, this is the same understanding a member of the Winners' Chapel-Ghana, Mr Stephen Quainoo (personal communication, October 12, 2005) shows for his church's practice of the act. He opines that Winners' Chapel foot washing practice makes the Bible relevant to believers' needs and lives. But Pastor Lerbuny denies any connection to or borrowing from the Winners' Chapel. He claims his is a personal insight gained from the study of the Scriptures though he could not speak for his superior, the Prophet Atsu Manasseh.

According to Gifford (1994) Winners' Chapel's 'foot washing' is based primarily on Joshua 14:9 which states, "Wheresoever your feet shall tread shall be given for your possession" (p. 60). This understanding, belief and interpretation of the Winners' Chapel's so-called 'possession treading' of the scripture above virtually receives reinforcement from a testimony shared by a seeker at the Royalhouse Chapel International. The *Ahenfie News: A Bulletin of the Royalhouse Chapel International, Ahenfie* (September 24, 2006) carried a story under the heading, "Letter from Abroad". In the "letter" one Ama Boatema Sarpong connected her success at a U.S visa interview to her participation in the foot washing and anointing practice at Rev. Sam Korankye-Ankrah's Ahenfie (Royalhouse Chapel International). In her testimony Ama was full of praise of "the

God of Royalhouse Chapel” for making her overseas dream travel materialise though other churches and prophets had failed her.

We wish to indicate that no matter how prophetically pragmatic foot washing is perceived in these churches their understanding of it portrays a sharp departure from Jesus’ own act on his disciples on the night of his betrayal. In the light of the Lord’s example (John 13: 1-20) foot washing symbolizes believers’ humility and love towards one another. In his follow-up explanation Jesus showed that believers ought to forgive one another. But forgiveness is not that easy. It requires true love undergirded by humility of heart. Foot washing then has no miraculous effect on practitioners. This has been the traditional evangelical position of Christ’s church.

Even clapping in Pentecostal worship has now assumed a new meaning in so-called prophetic services or meetings. In both grassroots prophetic meetings of CoP and neo-Pentecostal churches congregants are asked to clap their hands during warfare prayers. The usual rationale assigned to this is that by this act one’s enemies are supernaturally neutralised, subdued and punished. Ritualistic clapping serves as a supernatural arsenal or missile that discomfits and destroys one’s enemies spiritually. As such it is not uncommon to hear a prayer leader charge congregants to clap their hands during such warfare prayers.

Closely connected with this is what Pastor Sunshine Anaba calls ‘Bulldozer or Dangerous Prayers’ which seeks to ‘call down thundering fire’ on all malevolent enemies of clients/seekers. During a Friday evening service at his Paradise Way Chapel located at Santa Maria in Accra on January 6, 2006 Pastor Sunshine Anaba

asserted that ants are spiritual thieves used by enemies to steal valuable things from others. As such he goes as far as pour hot water on ants when he sees them in his room. He stressed the need to pray fire on one's enemies since there are spiritual informants all around whose sole aim is to leak information to one's enemies for one's destruction. His argument was that nothing happens accidentally or naturally; there is always a connection between physical evil and supernatural wicked forces such as witches and wizards, charmers and sorcerers. Similarly, animals such as ants, mice, fowls, vultures, crows, dogs, cats and swine are potential allies and mediums of witchcraft and other malevolent forces. Even clothing materials can be 'stolen' to provide a 'point of contact' for emitting evil forces to 'invade' a victim's life. From all indications Rev. Sunshine who has since changed his church's name to Crystal Fire International Ministries is a pastor who believes and practises 'brimstone and fire' prayers.

It is against this backdrop that we may understand and assess the energetic 'soldiery' 'karate' prayers of congregants in such meetings. But it also shows how fear of the imaginary and inexplicable defines many Ghanaian Christians' life and religiosity. But even more serious is the apparent suspension of reasoning among some who call themselves Pentecostal Christians including the prophets/pastors themselves. Of course the seriousness of it all is seen in its socioeconomic and political connotations. It provides interpretation to why Ghanaians shirk responsibility for their lack, failure and poverty to some unknown forces or

causality except themselves. Thus, emanating from this understanding is the idea of the *other* which implies that ‘misfortunes’ are rooted in the *other from outside*.

Thus, if one’s business goes bankrupt it has nothing to do with one’s failure to apply the right business principles. If one is fired from the job place it has nothing to do with one’s failure to apply the right kind of work ethics. If one’s marriage fails it has nothing to do with one’s failure in applying the right attitude to it. It is always the ‘other’, the evil person who does not want one’s prosperity and success who is behind it all. As the Akan put it, *Aboa bi bèka wo a na efiri wo ntoma mu* (that is, one carries the very tormenting pest in one’s own clothes). Evidently, this is what the popular Gospel song “*Anadwo bogya kayere bòmbòm, kayere bòmbòm, wo nnwuma nyinaa ara ayè kwa*” (“You nocturnal fireball, meaning witches and wizards, all your intentions, plans and orchestrations concerning my life have become futile”) seeks to emphasise.

This belief in the *other* abounds in many stories one reads in many Ghanaian newspapers and tabloids. Some of these stories sordidly narrate how some frustrated fellow suspicious that a relation is a witch or wizard and is responsible for the failures in his or her failure life decides to murder the supposed witch or wizard. Some of these supposed evil relatives are sometimes fathers, mothers, siblings or other family members. In carrying out their heinous crimes the culprits forget about any blood bond with their victims; all they care is how to rid themselves of their enemies so they can enjoy life uninterrupted by any evil spiritual force or person. It is significant to note also that despite the belief that the

victims are guilty and so deserve such capital punishment the culprits end up fleeing away to distant locations until either the long hand of the law catches up with them or they end up surrendering themselves to the police. When the latter happens the interpretation takes a traditional superstitious belief that they did so because the spirits of their victims haunted them.

The causality due to the 'other' in Pentecostal prophetism resonates the general Ghanaian religio-cultural understanding of life. In fact, the wicked fellow who causes the misfortunes of innocent people has been the subject of concert parties (music and drama groups) in Ghana. In 1975 one such group, All Brothers International Band, went across the country and performed a drama titled *Ewiase yè Esum* (literally, the world is dark) to show how witches and wizards can kill less powerful people as well as render others useless in life. A protagonist of this drama, Guy Boakye, has recently used its story line for a popular local movie series called *Kyeiwa*.

It is this same belief which vibrates also through many secular music as the lyrics in a popular Highlife song *Maame ei ènyè me a....Obi na òde biribi ayè me è* by the ace musician Paa Bobo go. In this song Paa Bobo's imaginary character blames an evil person for his failure to succeed and prosper.

In effect the underlining motivation in both prophets' and clients' prayers and service is fear. To the former, however, it also offers a sure means to cash on clients' commitment and wealth to sustain their lives and operations.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have tried to examine certain pertinent features in Pentecostal prophetism in Ghana in response to the question: What critical issues arise from Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism? We have discovered among other things the role music/worship play in Pentecostal prophetism, a role which is common to even non-Christian religions. We have also seen how Pentecostal prophets employ certain rituals to mediate divine help in their clients' lives. But more importantly we have sought to argue that much of what goes on in these prophetic services thrive on clients' fear and some prophets' desire to make the Scriptures work at all cost. In effect the underlining motivation in both prophets' and clients' prayers and service is fear. To the former, however, it also offers a sure means to cash on the latter's' commitment and wealth to sustain their lives and operations. This leads us to what we may call Pentecostal pragmatism. The problem with Pentecostals is that as long as an act or practice works it is authentically divine and therefore must be perpetuated. Indeed, for Ghanaian Pentecostals doctrinal systematisation is not an issue "but experienced participation in ritual through performance of correct action and the adoption of correct attitudes in worship [for] African Christians are concerned with the practice rather than the theory" (Asamoah-Gyadu 2000, p. 72).

Pentecostal pragmatism prefers subjective to objective approach to Scriptures. Many of its adherents desist from critical analysis of so-called divine instruction for fear of disobeying God. By the way who can question a leader who prefixes his claims with "The Lord or God told me or said to me....."? In the concluding

chapter that follows we shall offer our reflections and propose a rationalisation of Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism that benefits the Ghanaian person and society.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS: MAKING SENSE OUT OF PENTECOSTAL PROPHETISM

This concluding chapter seeks to find out how the main research question of the study has been responded. The study has sought to respond to the question: What discernible trends in Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism enable us to systematise, analyse, formulate and evaluate how Ghanaian Pentecostals conceive prophetism as a recurring phenomenon in Ghanaian Christianity that reveals dialectics of OT prophetism and the Akan religio-cultural worldview in responding to the Ghanaian quest for meaning? We have made quite an excursion on the topic. In the last chapter we did some critical analysis of the phenomenon and concluded how Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism is more subjective than objective in its response to the Ghanaian religious, social and economic quests. I also promised to reflect and propose a reasonable way of making the phenomenon relevant to the Ghanaian person and society. That is what this chapter is about.

Towards a Relevant Peripheral Prophetism in Ghana: the Role of Theological Education

Over the years Pentecostals worldwide showed some levels of antagonism towards education in general and theological education in particular, because for them anointing and spiritual empowerment override theological training (Hackett 1998). This was particularly so with African Pentecostals. No wonder rarely do Pentecostalist literature by African Pentecostals make their way to the academic shelves of the West (Ellis and ter Haar 1998). Really, this has been the bane of the Spirit movement because practitioners have not been able to articulate concisely and intelligently the faith they claim to espouse. Yet Pentecostal empowerment has been known to be associated with radical critiquing of existing socio-religious status quo:

Because its proponents were unflinching in refusing to be co-opted into any other agenda than the one for which they knew they had been empowered by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In this sense it was a prophetic religion, a religion similar to that of Elijah and Jeremiah (Clark 2002, 73-6).

But Pentecostalism should not be seen as a religion of low critical thinking. This is what the General Secretary of the GPC, Apostle Ekow Badu Woode meant at the 1st National Prophetic Leadership Conference when he noted that many Pentecostal predecessors' failure to balance spirituality with scholarship made them lose considerable influence on society. But the acquisition of doctoral degrees by

Pentecostal pastors shows that “scholarship will show the way to Pentecostal delivery”. In fact, since Pentecostal/charismatic Christianity has come to stay it is necessary for practitioners to realise that whatever the level of [their] spirituality [they] need the counsel of scholarship to sustain them in the ministry. Indeed, while glossolalia unlocks the mystery of empowerment it does not in any way suggest that it sums up the totality of Pentecostal spirituality. It just serves as a foretaste of divine empowerment. We may add here that while the apostle’s claims make good sense Pentecostals need to be circumspect of what kind of theological education they acquire.

Commenting on Pentecostal hermeneutics among African Pentecostals Allan Anderson (The Hermeneutical Processes) notes that “the significance of this Pentecostal hermeneutical process is that a reciprocal relationship between the Bible and the Spirit occurs”. He further observes that:

One presupposition that conditions this hermeneutical approach [] is the emphasis on the experience of the Holy Spirit that is common to Pentecostals, including African Pentecostals. The Bible is used to explain the experience of the working of the Holy Spirit in the church with supernatural “gifts of the Spirit”, especially healing, exorcism, speaking in tongues and prophesying - although there are sometimes differences between the churches in the practice of these gifts...(The Hermeneutical Processes).

Today, however, the tides are changing; there seems to be some unexplained ‘move’ towards theological education among many Ghanaian Pentecostals. As the Pentecostal fellowships or ministries metamorphosed into churches, neo-Pentecostals gradually began to shift away from their mockery of theological education. They set up their own Bible schools to train and equip their potential leaders to ‘catch’ the principal leaders’ or founders’ visions. Others also travelled to far away lands to pursue some level of biblical education. Notable among the countries where these acquired their education was Nigeria where many Pentecostals attended the late Archbishop Benson Andrew Idahosa’s All Nations For Christ Bible Training Institute International at the Edo State capital Benin-City. But there were a few who travelled further to eastern African countries such as Kenya. An example is the Rev. Prof. Emmanuel K. Larbi who has become the first individual to pioneer two university colleges in the country.

Today, with the establishment of the Central University College many Pentecostals have acquired theological degrees. Other seminaries and universities such as the Pentecost University College, the Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon and the Christian Seminary, all in Accra among many others across the country are offering theological education that Pentecostals are patronizing. Regent University College of Science and Technology also has a Divinity School that runs undergraduate and postgraduate theological programmes.

Trinity Theological Seminary belongs to Protestant historic churches, namely, Presbyterian, Evangelical Presbyterian, Methodist and Anglican. It was set up to

train pastors, and evangelists for these churches. When the neo-Pentecostals began ministers from these churches were often maligned and despised by the new preachers who equated the former's seminary training to education acquired from the cemetery. The Charismatics were actually echoing the ranting of their North American mentor Morris Cerullo. Today, however, there is evidence to show that not only are some of these 'mockers' seeking theological education, but many are they who are actually acquiring it from this same institution. Some are even employing the services of its theologians in the theological departments of their own universities and seminaries.

The ironical explanation that one Rev. Derrick Amanor (personal communication, December 23, 2005) assigns for this paradigm shift among neo-Pentecostals is that the Trinity Theological Seminary has the finest stock of theological scholarship in the country. Hence neo-Pentecostals now prefer sending their ministers there for theological training to sending them to the newly established Pentecostal/Charismatic theological universities which even have to fall on these same scholars to achieve their goals. For Rev. Amanor, a senior pastor in the Royalhouse Chapel to say this shows how far the Charismatics have over the years matured and changed towards the 'theologically dead training' of the mainline churches. Rev. Amanor himself is a graduate of the Trinity Seminary.

But there exist still some remnant adherents of the old belief; the self-conceited church leaders who think theological education diminishes one's anointing and in effect renders one ineffective in ministry. This belief so strongly

and jealously espoused rather underlines the demise of many Pentecostal prophetic ministries. As Prophet Emmanuel F. Anim (personal communication, December 23, 2005) observed education, especially theological education, promotes one's prophetic calling. It also trims down unnecessary excesses in ministry and tones down ignorance which is the cause of spiritual deception and destruction often evident in many prophetic ministries today (cf. Griffiths 1986).

It is not far-fetched that as Pentecostals pursue theological education, and the historic churches continue to open up to Pentecostalism it will not be long when it will be difficult to tell a 'Pentecostal church' from an 'Orthodox church' (a Ghanaian neo-Pentecostal derogatory designation for the Western mission churches). In fact, all the churches will become Pentecostal in character and ethos balanced with sound doctrine and theology. We argue here that this will be the true and authentic fulfilment of the theological quest for an authentic African Christianity which African theological debate has gravitated around since the 1970s (Sawyer 1971; cf. Kato 1985). Then the church of Jesus Christ will reach its maturity as the holy apostolic church of Pentecost.

It is also hoped that with the increase in theological education the church will be able to arise to fulfil its prophetic mission of righting the wrongs in the socioeconomic and political fibre of our societies. Of course this will be attainable when the church cleans its own stables of any filth of competition, covetousness, hypocrisy and manipulation of the poor to enrich the aristocratic priests who load their followers with burdens too difficult for the poor laity to

bear (Wright 2004; Maimela 1986; Mosala 1986). For when the leadership is inconsiderate of the people's plight, and are seen to be part of the 'without and within rejectors' behind the sufferings of the masses, the church will lack the will to confront the political 'principalities, powers, thrones and dominions' that manipulate our poor in the guise of international trade inequity (Waliggo 1997; cf. Chrisholm 1991; Ela 1986). Ela (1986) cries loudly against the insolent luxury of a privileged few who vainly try to hide the misery of the great majority of African peoples:

Social class differentiations are becoming more accentuated in society as a whole. The atmosphere is permeated with illusion. The wretched masses are being piled with a mass culture that they imbibe like a drug and that prevents them from ever becoming aware of the growing injustices against them. The dominant ideology has a ready-made explanation for the current difficulties: the crisis of the international situation and inflation... One begins to realize that the rapid exciting prosperity of a minority is not always the fruit of productivity. It can be the fruit of corruption...the basic living conditions of the masses have scarcely changed, and the profits of development, which accrue at the national level, accrue to a select few only (p. 84).

Magasa (1997) similarly opts for a paradigm shift in African Christology. This praxis-oriented Christology of liberation sees liberation as religio-cultural, socioeconomic and political fact of reality and duty that incarnates Christ in human sufferings for the total liberation of the African person.

When the Pentecostal church embraces serious theological education it will be in a position to make its voice heard on national issues without having to echo other people's voices. It is then that it will be able to fulfil its prophetic mission as a true messianic church with a clear understanding of the politics of Jesus. This will be in accord with EATWOT's (Fabella & Torres 1983) aspiration for the African church. This is because the church would be in a position to tap into religion's potential for revolutionary transformation to bring about true and authentic biblical liberation of African peoples (Howard 1994).

Ethical Problems Arising From Prophetic Declarations and Practices

Pentecostal Prophetic ministries have traits that resemble the AICs. In the older AICs prophets disclosed the human enemies to clients/seekers without any circumspection. Today, this has resurfaced in NPC prophetism. This approach raises ethical questions. Many familial and relational conflicts are rooted in some prophets' lack of circumspection in disclosing family members or friends as the causes of clients/seekers' problems. Prudence is required in delivering the prophetic message. It demands prophets avoid being specific with their declarations to clients/seekers even when they have definitely seen a diabolic agent

behind their problems. It is to ensure decency that in Classical Pentecostal churches prophetic revelation is given without specifically mentioning the causative diabolic agent of a problem.

Similarly, the practice of some prophets ‘lying on’ sick female clients to effect healing and restoration is bothers on Christian ethics. Hence, their appeal to the following biblical texts to support their ‘unethical’ and ‘unscriptural’ practices is unwarranted:

And Elijah *stretched himself out over the child* three times and cried out to the LORD... Elisha got up and walked back and forth in the room a few times. Then *he stretched himself out again on the child*. This time the boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes! (1 Kings 17:21; 2 Kings 4:35)

It is this misunderstanding of Scripture that made an unscrupulous prophet unconcerned about the civil implications involved in ‘massaging’ a sick female client in her nudity carry out that unholy ritual at Kasoa on Sunday, February 12, 2006. He was subsequently apprehended by the police. In this case the prophet acknowledged the unscriptural nature of his act but was quick to assign it to the instruction of the Holy Spirit.

There are also prophets who, we learned, transfer traditional Ghanaian religio-magical rituals of curse invocation upon enemies into Christianity by dragging their buttocks on the ground while chanting supposed biblical vindictive texts. The Ghanaian media (“NDC Disowns Fetish Priests”, 2007) reported of how

the people of Keta in the Volta Region of Ghana employed the help of fetish priests to invoke curses on the NPP government for slapping a ten-year prison sentence on their Member of Parliament, Mr. Dan Abodakpi. In the event some women folks were reported to have dragged their naked buttocks on the town's streets. One wonders how this traditional ritual differs from the above practice among some Pentecostal prophets.

These apparently are not Christian and raise questions on the genuineness of the prophets' claim of divine call. These abuses have become possible because we live in a country where people have not as yet learned to delineate what is spiritual from mundane. They therefore resort to spiritual leaders for solutions to every problem in their lives and thus often fall prey to the unscrupulous manipulations of some crafty 'prophets'. Incidentally, most victims are Christians who either due to instability in their faith and/or lack of endurance in trying times and situations, or out of curiosity to experience the latest spiritual move fall prey to these prophetic manipulations and trickery.

We strongly believe that these unethical behaviours send powerful signals to the church that it is time to take the social needs of its members seriously. One way of achieving this is by creating room for professional counselling to take care of the psychological, emotional, material and social needs of the congregation. But to achieve optimum results will demand educating Christians to take advantage of available professional expertise. For instance, we need to organise seminars on health matters to educate our members on how to handle their health issues. More

importantly we need to develop a system of mentorship for Christian leaders and workers, especially the prophets, for many of their excesses may be attributable to their lack of mentorship. This lack may in turn be explained in at least three ways.

Firstly, the Christian church, even among the so-called Pentecostals, is still having problems with accepting the ministry of the prophet in its midst. Instead of adopting these budding ministries, mature Christian leaders/pastors rather keep a suspicious eye on them and refuse to offer them the needed mentorship.

Secondly, it is often said that most prophets refuse prudent counsel from pastors who would wish to mentor them. This is due to the prophets' belief of the infallibility of their revelations which must not be doubted or subjected to human modification or regulation. But that also leads us to the question of the determination of the authenticity of what is claimed to come from God; the more reason for mentorship from more mature ministers.

Thirdly, the prophetic ministry is one of the most ambiguous ministries in the church, difficult to determine and operate. One cannot always moderate it with some fast and hard rule as may be the case with the pastor's ministry. This is why others outside it need to approach it with some circumspection though the Scripture enjoins the church to judge prophecy. A way out perhaps is to have more senior and mature prophets raise upcoming prophets by organising something like a school of prophets. Perhaps we can develop curricula of courses in prophetism in our theological institutions to help the church become better enlightened on this particular arm of its ministry. Our theological institutions have courses on pastoral

ministry but no room is made for the prophet's ministry and yet the same church is quick to criticise and malign this particular office/ministry. And if we want prophetism to enjoy the needed acceptance, and benefit the church and the world then more scholarly research ought to be done on it.

Pentecost Revisited

The Upper Room experience of Acts 2 has become a paradigm for Pentecostal empowerment, the Pentecostal point of departure for Spirit baptism (Shatzman 1998; cf. Petts 1998). Pentecostal assemblies are noted for their overstress of glossolalia and the need for every believer to experience this baptism or new blessing. But one may wonder why we should limit the Spirit baptism to glossolalia and empowerment for 'mighty works of the Spirit' without translating it into our mundane experiences. We argue here that Pentecost does show God bestowing on his church the abilities to 'dream' and 'see' 'new things'. It is an indication of his bestowal of creativity upon us, to make us seek to harness the earth's resources for the good of all humanity.

The current practice among Christians to 'display' spiritual anointing and gifts is inadequate. It is an unproductive use of the gift of God and restricts it to the advantage of only a select few. As African Christians we may need to ask ourselves if we cannot examine again our understanding of Spirit empowerment in the area of technology, science and development. God has given us the mandate of filling our societies with his creative power and this is achievable through the

empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit is meant to bless all people and this is the work of Christianity. Can the Holy Spirit not fill our minds with ideas and images that can make us take up our technological and scientific challenges? As Wessels (1997) shows Moltmann queries:

What about the neglect (among charismatics) of the charismata?

Where are the charismata of the 'charismatics' in the everyday world, in the peace movement, in the movements for liberation, in the ecology movement? If charismata are not given to us so that we can flee from this world into a world of religious dreams, but if they are intended to witness to the liberating lordship of Christ in this world's conflicts, then the charismatic movement must not become a non-political religion, let alone a de-politicised one (Pp. 361-62).

The God who gives us spiritual gifts to heal diseases and perform miracles is also able to make us become scientifically relevant if we are willing. It is important to understand that salvation means God making life meaningful in real life situations. We ought to recall that the missionary enterprise of the early missionaries brought us great benefits in education, health, agriculture, technical skills acquisition, etc. This realisation should make us understand that the Christian faith does not dichotomise between the spiritual and the so-called secular. Therefore we need to bridge our Pentecostalist dualism by exploring how best we can relate our Spirit empowerment to our day to day material problems. Is it not

troubling that despite all our spirituality and religiosity we still depend on developed economies for our scientific and technological needs?

Ecology and Prophetic Ritualism

Current trends in Ghanaian peripheral prophetism indicate that Pentecostals are willing to 'break' all so-called theological rules and interpretations in order to make sense the Christian evangelion to their people. However, many people, Christian and non-Christian, Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal, find it difficult to accommodate many of the ritualistic practices of Pentecostal prophets. Some even go as far as condemn them as unbiblical, deceptive or demonic. It is therefore important Christ's church takes a second look at this particular gift the Lord has graciously given her. Prophecy, and the prophetic office and ministry are not easily comprehended, yet Paul admonishes the church not to despise prophecy (1Thes. 5:20).

We are of the opinion that instead of perceiving Pentecostal prophetism as dubious we should rather consider it as a challenge for reflecting and re-orienting our attitude towards our African spirituality, worldview and environment.

In commenting on the Hebrew words *kabas* and *rada* Wright notes that human beings, in addition to their function of harnessing (*sabak*) the environment for their survival, also have the function of mastering creation (*dar*) to their fullest advantage. It is a kind of regal representative rule in God's territorial control of the earth as the creator and owner of the earth. But this in no sense implies abuses or

failures evident in tyranny or arbitrary manipulation and exploitation of subjects, but just, merciful and benevolent rule. It is thus a “kingship that reflects God’s own kingship...not a licence for abuse based on arrogant supremacy, but a pattern that commits us to humble reflection of the character of God” (Wright 2004, p. 120). That assessment by Wright leads us to a consideration of the ecology and the environment in the light of contemporary ministry of Pentecostal prophetism.

It has already been intimated that one of the mediating curative and protective elements used by clients/seekers to Auntie Grace Mensah’s Bethlehem Revival Centre and Elder Andoh’s Down Town Prayer Revival Centre is the pounded bark of the *Nyamedua* tree known as *Nyame Ahyiraso* (Divinely blessed). Traditionally this tree’s forked branches hold a pot that receives rain water in the compound of a typical Akan home. The water thereof is used as blessing and purificatory substance for members of the community and may also be used in offering prayers or libation to *Nyame*. Moreover, witches are even alleged to fly in the bark of the tree as a mystical aircraft on their nocturnal travels. One Kweku Seidu, a self-acclaimed spiritualist with mystical powers to overpower witches and wizards gave this insight on an Accra-based private radio station, Peace FM’s programme codenamed *Etuo mu esum* on October 10, 2006. *Etuo mu esum* (translated ‘gun barrel is dark’, implying there are mysteries in the world) is a Tuesday nightly programme that discusses the mystical world between 8.30pm and 9.30pm. Thus, this tree has religious and mystical significance as far as the Akan people are concerned cannot be disputed. Its symbolic significance is

comparable to some Christians' use of insignia such as the crucifix to represent the presence and power of God.

We have already noted that traditionally, *Nyamedua* is believed to possess medicinal and supernatural qualities. Consequently, when Christian prophets appropriate it in Christian service their action sacralises its traditional religious value. They thus 'Christianise' what is religiously Akan and thus invoke the healing power of the *Oduyèfoò Kèseè Yesu* into it. Assessing the gospel/culture dialectic Bediako (2001) writes:

The engagement of gospel and culture means more than the altering of surface elements like music, dance and artefacts. It is also more than 'spiritual salvation', more than the saving of the spiritual part of us. It is also not about the demonisation of our culture. Rather, gospel and culture engagement is about the conversion of cultures, the turning to Christ and turning over to Christ of all that is there in us, about us and round about us that has defined and shaped us when Jesus meets us, so that the elements of our cultural identity are brought within the orbit of discipleship (p. 2).

By sacralising what ordinarily would be considered 'fetish' by Christians Pentecostal prophets make meaning of Christ's lordship over all creation. They

also demonstrate how creation can be infused with the mediating presence and power of Christ's Spirit for human benefit.

Among Ghanaians it is traditionally known that the medicinal values of most plants were received through a spiritual encounter of some form or other. Thus, there are reports of how some people through dreams received such knowledge from their ancestors or some deity. Some also claim their acquisition through the guidance of dwarfs. When Christian prophets claim they acquire knowledge of the medicinal value of these plants from God are they not echoing the same traditional claims in Christian tongue? Well, that may be the case but the Christian also knows that all knowledge come from God. We argue that God could communicate to our pre-Christian ancestors in languages and symbols best understood by them in response to their existential needs. This is because as Christians we appreciate God never leaves himself without a witness in any culture. Similarly, his goodness is unrestricted to Christians but as the creator of all he shows his concern for all his creation. Such communications with all probability were misconstrued to come from the deities and ancestors. In Mbiti's (1980) view:

Revelation is not given in a vacuum but within particular historical experiences and reflections. When we identify the God of the Bible as the same God who is known through African religion (whatever its limitations), we must also take it that God has had a historical relationship with African peoples. God is not insensitive to the history of peoples other than Israel. Their

history has a theological meaning. My interpretation of Israel's history demands a new look at the history of African peoples, among who this same God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has indeed been at work. In this case, so-called 'salvation history' must widen its outreach in order to embrace the horizons of other peoples' histories.

We thus contend that now that the Christian gospel with all its inherent power and spirituality has found a home among Africans God has chosen to unveil his knowledge, not through the traditional lenses but rather, through the Spirit's gifting, notably the prophetic. Hence, all such experiences cannot be alluded to satanic manipulations but to the operations of God's Holy Spirit, who now works through his ministers to save and deliver humanity from the threat of diseases and illnesses. Indeed, the potency of these Spirit-given medicinal plants is seen in the claim by one 'Prophet' Akwasi Opoku, a member of CoP at Kasoa, whose prophetic ministry is still in its formative stage. He alleged to have heard audibly divine directive to specifically use the *Nyamedua* to cure measles, shingles and other skin diseases, stomach ache, palpitation, waist problem, boils and swellings. Furthermore, he was directed to use the bark of the mahogany tree to cure fibroid, menstrual difficulties and disorders (A. Opoku, personal communication, December 24, 2005).

There are different ways of looking at the coincidental usage of these trees by these two prophets (Auntie Grace and Akwasi Opoku) whose ministries are in no

way connected. 'Prophet' Opoku claims to have had no contact with Auntie Grace yet they both use the same medicinal plants for Auntie Grace also uses the mahogany tree to cure fevers in people.

Firstly, granted their claims of divine directive is true, it shows that they possess similar ministries from God. Secondly, it does also underscore the fact that God gave vegetation for human benefit. That in an underdeveloped scientific society one way by which God enables people to acquire this knowledge is through the agency of his spiritual gifts which hitherto were believed to come from the ancestors and lesser deities.

This also leads us to the argument that it is not enough to keep this knowledge at its primitive level; its possessors should avail it to others and also allow their discoveries to be validated scientifically. In other words, subjecting all such discoveries to scientific or empirical research may make the medicinal properties of the trees benefit all people, Christian and non-Christian. Consequently, the Christian God's benevolence will become relevant and beneficial to all his children. This will also result in the translocation of prophetic benefits to all without any geographical, religious and cultural boundaries whatsoever. When this is done then the church may be fulfilling an aspect of its commission to a world sickened and riddled with incurable diseases and illnesses. Moreover, it will be a clear sign of hope to Africa, a continent which today is no longer a 'dark continent' for lack of the Christian gospel but for its beset with chronic and crippling diseases that result from unbridled poverty, famine and wars.

Secondly, it is an undeniable fact that red tape, corruption and lack of public support for government policies hamper investment efforts and attempts in the poorest nations of our world. What this means is that among many things there are too many unnecessary bureaucratic bottlenecks that are inimical to development in poor countries like Ghana. While we fancy attributing all our woes to colonialism we need to appreciate that since the departure of the colonialists a lot of waters have passed under the bridge. We therefore cannot afford to remain entrenched in such retrogressive actions and behaviour. The colonialists themselves have learned to scale above this obnoxious practice hence, their advancement in scientific and technological development.

The above argument provides a backdrop to the perennial African problem; the problem of inability to acknowledge and celebrate our heroes and successes. Many are the reports of some geniuses coming up with solutions to our problems who are met with scepticism and pessimism. Recent incidents in Ghana underscore this assertion. When the issue of 'Goat Serum' came up it received a lot of authoritative disapproval and has not been heard of again. In such an environment how can our 'illiterate' prophets or seers avail their prophetic discoveries for scientific scrutiny when already their ministries are a suspect in both the church and society?

We have developed such insatiable taste for foreign cultures to the extent that many of our youth and students believe that they can only have good opportunities to realise their dreams when they travel to North Atlantic lands. In a country with

exotic taste including herbal preparations from China and India, and where we malign and vilify our own traditional herbs and herbalists it comes to a near impossibility to subject any supernaturally 'received medicinal gift' to scientific scrutiny. Indeed, such is the case that even in our manufacturing sector there are still many who produce goods for our market and write 'Made in Taiwan or Italy', and etc. Many believe if they had for example, 'Made in Ghana or Nigeria', it would not be marketable. In fact, this is a major barrier to our socio-economic and technological development as a continent. We feel the time has come for us to strategise for new measures to secure the future and impact of science and technology in Africa.

Finally, God's revelation of plant medicinal value to prophets underscores the need for environmental responsibility since this is included in the Adamic covenant. That is why we need to have a new ecological ethic that makes us take care of our ecosystem. Vegetation must not be destroyed through arbitrary mining, sand winning, and real estate development, destruction of wet lands and felling of trees for timber exportation. We cannot continue to remain the primary producers and exporters of raw materials when we can transform these with added value for export and domestic consumption.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Questionnaire on Current Trends in Ghanaian Pentecostal Prophetism

Please answer the following questions concisely and without any prejudice. The information you give will be treated with all confidentiality. The questions are not meant to malign or vilify your person or ministry or church in any way. The whole exercise is meant to aid in writing academic work, which is a Master of Philosophy in Religious Studies thesis for the Central University College, Accra. You may use additional sheets to provide your responses. Thank you for your co-operation and understanding.

1. What is the name of your church/ministry?
2. What is your position in the church/ministry?
3. Could you explain the origin of this name?
4. What is the meaning of the name of your church/ministry?
5. When did your church/ministry begin?
6. What is the main vision of your church/ministry?
7. What are the activities/programmes of your church/ministry?

8. What spiritual gifts are operative in your life that promotes the ministry of your church/ministry?
9. What is your call?
10. How did you know God had called you?
11. Could you explain how these gifts operate in your life?
12. How have these gifts benefited the ministry of your church/ministry?
13. What do you understand about the prophetic ministry?
14. Who in your view is a prophet?
15. What are some marks of a prophet of God?
16. What are the gifts that operate in a prophet's life?
17. How does one identify a true prophet?
18. How does one identify a false prophet?
19. Are there levels in the prophetic ministry?
20. Which of the gifts of a prophet operate in you?
21. Could you explain what and how the prophetic gifts operate or are?
22. What is your view in the use of prophetic symbols such as anointing oil, foot washing, blessed cloth, blessed water or articles?
23. Which of these do you use in your ministry and why do you use them?
24. What have been the effects of the use of such things in your ministry?
25. Do you think it is proper to call people and tell them things about their lives in public?

26. What is the socio-economic and political importance of the prophetic ministry in Ghana?
27. What is the relationship between the ministry of the prophet and the other ministry gifts of apostle, pastor or necessary to mention the apparent enemies of those you see something about?
28. How are you able to tell people's problems, past, present or future life and prescribe solutions?
29. Why do people fall during ministration?
30. Could you explain why you use anointing oil in your ministry? Is there any mystery behind the anointing oil?
31. What have been some of the challenges you have faced in your ministry?
32. Could you give at least three testimonies of what God has used you to achieve in your ministry?
33. What are some reasons for which people come for counselling/or attend prayer meetings?

Appendix 2

The banner of one 'Prophetic church' located almost opposite the Mars Business College at Mataheko around Wesley Grammar Junction in Accra reads as follows:

Heaven Gate Ministries International and Efa-Tha Prayer Centre

Host: Prophet Nicholas (Alias *Kum Cha Cha*)

Tel.: 0244-423315

Days of Worship

Tues: 7:30am-1.00pm (Consultation and Deliverance) 1 Samuel 9:3

Thurs: 7:00am-2:30pm (*Bògye wo ho*) Obadiah 1:17

Fri: 8:30pm-5:00am-All Night (Operation Fire Your Enemies) 2 Samuel 15:30

Sun: 8:30am-2:30pm (Anointing Service) Psalm 23:56

God Bless You

**Paper posters on the wall had the following messages:

- Joining the Group of Prayer Warriors is the only way to help you. You are welcome.
- Pray until something happens: By the Group of Prayer Warriors

Appendix 3

A Doctor of Divinity Conferment programme held at Ahenfie, Royalhouse Chapel, Accra on Saturday, 11 November 2006. The candidate of this occasion was one Rev. Philip Adutwum. The conferring body was the Evangel Christian University of America whose chancellor Bishop Dr. Charles Henderson was supported by the Nigerian campus Vice Chancellor, Bishop Dr. Victor Ojeniyi. This is another illustration of the Ghanaian Pentecostal pastors' unprecedented race for social recognition.

10:30-10:45	OPENING PRAYER	REV. AGYEMANG DUAH
10:45-11:00	PRAISE & WORSHIP	ISAAC DADZIE & MRS. BOATENG
11:00-11:15	WELCOME ADDRESS (INCLUDING PURPOSE OF CONVOCATION)	REV. HORATIO- LARBIE
12:00-12:10	MUSICAL INTERLUDE	ROYALHOUSE ACCAPELLA
12:10-12:50	SERMON	BISHOP VICTOR OJENIYI
12:50-1:20	IMPARTATION TIME	REV. ADDY

		LAMPTEY
1:20-1:30	PRESENTATION OF AWARD	BISHOP DR. CHARLES HENDERSON
1:30-1:45	REMARKS BY RECIPIENT	REV. DR. ADUTWUM
1:45-2:30	FUNDRAISING	REV. ASANTE DARTEY
	VOTE OF THANKS	MRS. APPIASIE GIFTY
	CLOSING PRAYER	REV. CHARLES NII QUAYE
	BENEDICTION	BISHOP CHARLES HENDERSON

OFFICIATING MINISTERS

Bishop Sam Korankye Ankrah

Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah

Rev. Jonny Apeakorang

Rev. Dr. Robert Addo

Rev. Dr. Fred Deegbe

Rev. George Horatio Larbie

Rev. Asante Dartey

Rev. Agyemang Duah

Rev. Charles Nii Neequaye

Apostle Aboagye Darkow

Apostle Francis Amoako Atta

Rev. Kenneth Addy Lamptey

Rev. Nkrumah Gyasi

NB// Many of the ministers listed above such as Bishop Sam Korankye Ankrah, Rev. Mrs. Korankye Ankrah and Rev. Dr. Fred Deegbe were absent. One suspects their names were included to give the occasion some credibility and importance. The programme took place in the morning though the programme outline fails to indicate the period of the day it took place.

Appendix 4

DETAILS OF DATA COLLECTION

TARGET OF INVESTIGATION	METHODOLOGY	PURPOSE
Pastors and leaders of Church of Pentecost	Interview	To gain in-depth understanding of CoP's leadership's concept of prophetism.
Pastors and leaders of Charismatic Churches & Ministries	Interview	To gain in-depth knowledge of Charismatic Churches' understanding of prophetism.
Leaders and Assistants of Prayer Centres of CoP	Interview	To gain in-depth knowledge of Prayer Centres' leaders' understanding on prophetism.
Visits to Charismatic	Observation	and

Church Services	Interview	
Visits to Prayer Centres in CoP	Observation Interview	and To observe the services of the Prayer Centres on how the prophetic gifts operate. To gain in-depth knowledge of patrons of the centres understanding on prophetism.
Pastors and Leaders of CAC	Interview	To gain in-depth understanding of CAC's leadership's concept of prophetism.
Visits to Charismatic Churches' Miracle/Prophetic Services	Observation Interview	and To observe the services of the Prayer Centres on how the prophetic gifts operate. To gain in-depth

knowledge of patrons of
the centres
understanding on
prophetism.

Visits to Charismatic Churches' Crusades Observation Interview and To see what goes on in the evangelistic crusades of prophets in the Charismatic Churches.

Visits to Other Classical Pentecostal Churches Observation Interview and To gain in-depth knowledge of the general perception of Classical Pentecostals on prophetism.

Appendix 5

CHURCHES VISITED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 2005 AND NOVEMBER 2006

	Name of Church or Prayer Centre	Place
1	Christ Apostolic Church	Kaneshie, Accra
2	Conquerors International	Chapel Dansoman, Accra.
3	Down Town Prayer Centre	Revival Kasoa
4	Family Bible Church	Mataheko, Accra.
5	Global Revival Ministries	Mataheko, Accra,
6	Living Christ International	Church Mataheko, Accra.
7	Heaven Gate International and Prayer Centre	Ministries Mataheko, Accra. Efa-Tha
8	Hour of Solutions Ministries	International Dansoman, Accra
9	Paradise Way Chapel	Santa Maria, Accra.

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 10 | Royalhouse Chapel (Ahenfie) | Accra |
| 11 | Salvation Prayer Centre (CoP) | Mallam, Accra |
| 12 | Top Hill Assembly (CoP) | Kasoa |
| 13 | Watered Garden | Dansoman, Accra. |
| 14 | Word Victory Church | Mataheko, Accra. |
| | International | |
| 15 | Assemblies of God | Odorkor Official Town |
| 16 | Kasoa Central Church (CoP) | Kasoa South District, Kasoa |

Appendix 6

A picture of James and Sophia McKeown, the Irish missionaries who pioneered two Apostolic churches, the Apostolic Church and the Church of Pentecost in the Gold Coast (Ghana)



Mr. James McKeown

& Mrs. Sophia McKeown

