IJFANS INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES
ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

UNDERSTANDING THE PRACTICES OF WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY

Dr. Vikramendra Kumar
Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, New Delhi
Bardhan.vikramendra@gmail.com

Abstract

A number of social philosophers have used their work on witches to illustrate the connection between religion and culture. These ideas are safeguarded by a system of social processes, argues Evans Pritchard (Douglas 1970). According to Levy Bruhl, one is driven to embrace such views due to societal pressure (Douglas 1970). Witchcraft, oracles, sorcery, and magic were thus accepted beliefs and behaviours in pre-modern western and aboriginal communities in order to preserve social order. Prehistoric peoples in South America, Europe, and Africa relied heavily on witchcraft rituals to guide their daily lives. Any gender might be a witch. According to traditional beliefs, witchcraft is a "psychic act" that addresses a person's mental health issues and is thus intrinsic to the human condition. It stems from animosity, envy, or competition between the parties involved. When a family member becomes sick, they go to an oracle to figure out what's wrong. The oracle, in the course of his magical ceremonies, attempts to identify the witch who is causing the victim pain, as this is where the initial suspicion usually lies; subsequent charges and admissions are based on this. Similarly, the assumptions and ideas that uphold witchcraft practices and its impact on social life vary greatly between countries. In his seminal study on Azande belief systems in witchcraft, "Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande," Evans-Pritchard (1976) explains that the Azande view witchcraft as a moral code that governs how people should act. From farming to housekeeping, from ethics and the law to proper protocol, in their view, witchcraft is pervasive and involved in all facets of life. In addition, it provides the Azande with a natural philosophy that explains the connection between humans and disasters. Since they attribute all forms of misfortune and failure to witchcraft. Even though they blame witches for every bad thing that happens, their belief does not go against what is known about cause and effect from science. In certain cases, individuals may also make a rational determination of the cause, rather than relying on mystical reasoning, due to the needs of society.

Keywords: magic, sorcery, oracle, witchcraft, belief, society, confession, accusation, practice.

Introduction

It was originally believed that many historical events had their origins in witchcraft, an old phenomena that has managed to survive for millennia in human history. Today, many see witchcraft as nothing more than a myth or fable. It mirrored the common ideas of the people and their eternal curiosity in the realm of supernatural and natural powers. Its impact on prehistoric society was greater, yet it has persisted in many other cultures and religions. The rituals and

practices of different groups served as symbols of the many socioeconomic assumptions and belief systems upon which witchcraft was based. Because witchcraft is so intrinsic to these communities' social discourse and cultural identity, many historians, anthropologists, and academicians have examined them.

Due to the pervasiveness of witchcraft activities in these countries' social discourse and cultural identity, they have been extensively studied by historians, anthropologists, and academics. Research centred on the nature of witchcraft and the ways in which it relates to the supernatural and human interaction. As a means to both bring about and alleviate ill fortune, witchcraft was considered as having dual positive and negative connotations. A psychic act constitutes a witchcraft ritual. Research across several cultures has revealed the pervasiveness of witchcraft in people's everyday lives. Kids as young as six years old were already familiar with the technique. In traditional beliefs, a witch's ability to cast spells and bring about calamity upon a person or group was a key component of the evil eye. The connection between the Azande people's belief system and rituals was extensively investigated by Evans Pritchard in his book "Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande."

Azande was a colonial subject of Sudan, Zaire, and the Republique Centrafricaine when he resided in the tumultuous central African region in the Niel–Congo watershed. Zandeland was situated in northeastern Africa, whereas the inhabitants of Central and West Africa had the concept that witchcraft, or Mangu, was a substance in the body of the witches. Because of the previous autopsy that found a dark material near the liver that may pop when found, they know exactly where the organ is. They believed that witchcraft could be passed down through generations in a unilineal fashion. All male descents were accused of possessing a witchcraft ingredient if a man was shown to be a witch. Curiously, they had a theory that the witch was dormant (called cool) inside a person. Therefore, the individual who is a member of the witch's family was judged to be an ideal citizen. In order to safeguard the males of the tribe, becoming a witch meant certain death. The witch would be branded as a bastard because the prior autopsy on the clansman failed to detect any evidence of witchcraft. Oracular verdicts might reveal its presence in a living person, and autopsies could confirm it in the dead.

When Azande experienced bad luck or something directly related to his personal interests, he would consider witchcraft. People used to believe that if they were sick, it was because of witchcraft, and that the victim should tell the poison oracle his neighbor's name in order to protect him. Their consensus was that death was the result of witchcraft and that justice demanded vengeance. Witchcraft and revenge magic were two separate things. A family's vendetta came to an end in the former, and a new one began in the latter. Rather than expressing anger, the goal is to preserve family honour. The princes and their oracles were all part of it.

Every person's social experiences contribute to the development of witchcraft. The accusations

ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

levelled on the basis of witchcraft tended to be more hierarchical. Its examination was limited to the commoners and lower-class individuals. The intermediary between the witch and her victim was the mbisimo mangu, the soul of witchcraft according to azande. Witchcraft doesn't target men from a distance, necessitating more deliberate guidance. As a means of self-defence, the Azande people of Anglo Egyptian Sudan lived in a secret roadside community where no one except their immediate family knew anybody.

Their natural philosophy, based on the idea of witchcraft, explains why males tend to have bad luck. Beliefs in witchcraft provide a code of ethics that guide people's actions. Except in cases of flagrant transgressions of taboos or moral guidelines, Zande put all of their misfortunes down to witchcraft. Both the belief in natural causes of death and the belief in death due to witchcraft are valid; in fact, they support each other. When people die, they turn to oracles, magical rituals, and vengeance as remedies. Issues of social conduct are relevant to the concept of witchcraft as a killer.

Scholars have contributed by writing articles and conducting extensive research on different groups and historical events. No discussion of historical events can be complete without referencing "A modern American witch-craze," an article by Rebecca Cardozo. Cardozo mentions two fads that had a lasting influence on people's actions and how they behaved in society. First, there was the witch hunt that swept Europe in the 1600s and 1700s. This widespread fear of the "Enemy of people" sprang from religious intolerance and the accompanying uncertainty that accompanied it. Inspired only by the dread that prompted the church to legitimise witch hunts as a means of protecting its members from harm.

Evidence, derived from coerced confessions and baseless allegations, fed the witch hunts and bolstered the belief in witchcraft. People were afraid to stand up for themselves for fear of being accused of association with the devil, which led to low resistance rates. Joan of Arc is only one example of how these persecutions were used for personal and political retribution.

Second, there was MaCarthysim, a political faction driven by Joe McCathy's naiveté and irrational dread of communism. Similar to the European witch hunts, the government-sponsored Red Scare targeted members of the community and lasted for a few years. For fear of being linked to the enemy of the people, followed by baseless allegations, writers and journalists were frightened to write about or against MaCarthy.

For African civilisations, witchcraft was an unjustifiable evil that might be defended against by magical means, with the help of a local expert known as the witch doctor of Traditional Africa. The link between human contact and cleaning cults is discussed by R.G. Wills in Instant Millennium: the sociology of African witchcraft. As people become more aware of the dangers of witchcraft, cleaning cults emerge, with the promise of eliminating the source of the issue once and for all. The processional confessions were crucial in establishing the veracity of the purification

ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

cults and, by extension, the witch. There was a great deal of moral pressure to confess, and the only way out was to either give up and start again with the torcher implicated upon you or to capitulate and undergo the cleaning process with medication and communal integration. The cleaning processes had such a strong impact that they caused side effects including illness and death in those who took the drug. As a result, many lost trust in the cult and were ready to adopt new rituals. Congo and other Central African witch cleaning cults are a good illustration of this cyclical development in social mentality.

He contends that religious movements, political shifts, and economic upheavals brought about by colonial authority are all indicators of a link between cults and societal currents. A number of writers, including Ritchard Wards, Bohannan, etc., have drawn this link. He implies that these relevant points do not disprove the social change hypothesis in and of itself, but that it is need to be rethought from a broader viewpoint. The fact that African civilisations were changing and evolving in the pre-colonial era is something that these reformations recognised. They evolved inventive and adaptable ways to cope with change. Because of their dual nature—seeking to revive the traditional concept of social unity and harmony while simultaneously transcending tribal and ethnic boundaries to give birth to a new feeling of unity that transcends social division—anthropologists and others have erred in their interpretations of these cults. According to Wills, cults bring about societal transformations on a more localised scale. From its roots in purifying cults, the Supra Tribal Maji Maji arose to dominance in East Africa during the early 20th century, rebelling against German control.

The economic realm was heavily influenced by witchcraft in some communities. In his essay titled "Witchcraft, Economics and the Continuity of Belief," Ardener examines how various social and economic constraints interacted with the witchcraft beliefs held by certain African civilisations. He made the case that views of witchcraft are ephemeral, changing with the times much like the reality they are based on. The Bakweri people of West Cameroon were the centre of his research because they inhabit a geographically advantageous region with very fertile land and a relatively small population of 16,000 people. The Germans conquered the area because of its very productive soil. As the horticulture business thrived, Xanthosaoma's development was critical to its full flowering. The Bakwari were despondent after a few years, which led to German persecution and the subsequent influx of labourers to help with the plantation. The bakwari were already on the decline when these newcomers outnumbered them.

Because of the severe decline in their fertility rate, the women of Bakweri were forced to engage in prostitution and concubinage. Reproductive disruption was thought to have resulted from a venereal illness that had spread from the plantation centre to the community.The locals thought this was a retribution for their supposed involvement with Liemba, or witchcraft. Two women were arrested and hung from the witch hanging tree, which was present in every town, soon before the German climate. According to the diviner's diagnosis, illness was linked to witchcraft. It was

believed that a person was either innocent or a witch depending on whether or not taking the Sassoon prescription caused them to vomit. Nevertheless, in order to maintain the plantation and economic circumstances similar to before colonisation, the colonists placed an emphasis on a pro-bakwari strategy.

Nyongo, who arrived during World War I, was the deadly witch, not Liemba. The nyongo could make his own children and closest relatives look dead while they were actually living, and he could also get rich. The witch master planned to transport them miles away from the mountain and put them to work. The tin huts they lived in became a symbol of who they were. The purchase of Nyongo made no one dare to build a dwelling. Everyone started to question any overtly successful ventures.

Since they thought that nyongo was the key to wealth, this Nyongo had an effect on the economic initiative, making it move more slowly or not at all. Despite their lack of firm beliefs in nyongo, they were conflicted about wealth and success due to fears of extinction, infertility, collective, and isolation. Economic stability, the discovery of witch cleaning groups, and the guidance of Njombe (the Nyongo doctor) allowed the Bakweri to overcome this obstacle.

To avoid inona, or ill-intentioned jealousy, it was common practice to avoid living near patrilineal kin. Wherever Inona was, Liema was thought to be. Inheritance restrictions and familial jealousy were at the heart of this avoidance. In a society where everyone had an equal say, property claims were made using pigs, cattle, etc. The possessions that had been sacrificed were dispersed during the Nabaya, a potlatch ritual, which was used to display status. Accumulating a bigger portion was seen as a sign of elevated status. The ritual had the unintended consequence of relieving the boys' mysterious headaches. The lads eventually took on the role of medicine men. When it came to property, jealousy, and Liemba, Bakwari's attitude was quite passionate.

The three factors that Ardner identified as contributing to the persistence of witchcraft were changes in economic conditions, which were objective, and changes in moral and supernatural situations, which were subjective. Bakweri were able to fix supernatural problems because of the changes in the economic condition. He stressed that psychological factors dictated their beliefs in witchcraft.

Involvement in supernatural beliefs was a means to political power in some communities. In his exploration of New Guinean social dynamics, Anthony Forge uncovered a complex web of relationships among status, magic, and influence. Mysterious rituals are a part of sorcery. The Big Man, a powerful clique in the area, is intimately associated with clandestine magic operations. These webs help control aggressive behaviour in social interactions by encouraging more subtle kinds of contact rather than confrontation. As a metaphor for describing the dynamics, "death by the spear of night" suggests that one dies as a result of doing witchcraft or magic.

The prevalence of accusations and abuse directed at women makes gender roles in witchcraft activities all the more significant. dissecting cultural mores and hidden hierarchies of power. Witches, or ku-tangram, are believed to have an inherent knack for injuring people unintentionally among the Abelam tribe of New Guinea. The common belief is that witches harbour a little being called kwu within them. Nighttime hunting by witches who supposedly leave their sleeping bodies is a common belief. When a baby dies, which frequently occurs before the kid is a year old, the parents typically hold the witches responsible.

In areas traditionally associated with women, such as infant care, pig farming, and household goods like pots and pans, witchcraft is often held responsible for tragedy. In many communities, children were the central figures in witchcraft. The effects of witchcraft on a society's machinery were shown by the characteristics of child witches that were found in several studies. Robert Brain covers the 16th and 17th centuries in Europe and Massachusetts in his book Child Witches. Europeans and Bangwa people alike saw children as official witch hunters.

The identity of the victims would be confessed by the accused children in Bangwa. Brain zeroed in on the Bangwa witchcraft's psychological underpinnings. He adds that there are parallels between the confessed kid from Bangwa and the child accused of witchcraft in Europe, even if the accusations were not levelled recklessly as they were in Europe. Due to the perceived validity of the accusations, professional witch hunts used youngsters as pawns in their political games. The purification ritual required the consumption of flesh, which a youngster may confess to for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to: hunger, attention seeking, violence, etc.

His stories mostly revolved around the children's own transgressions and the terrible things that happened as a result. The prevalent belief was that adult witches, pollution, revenge, and magic and sorcery could cause children to become sick. Two groups emerged: the Children of God, who were influenced by the earthly gods, and the Children of the Sky, who were cast out from society due to their association with witchcraft. Their eerie characteristics and vulnerability to supernatural hazards were mitigated by rites of passage.

Countless civilisations across Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa have long recognised the significance of the Evil Eye as a universal phenomena when it comes to possible dangers. Spooner contended that it was demonstrated to be comparable to witchcraft in several instances. Despite the lack of clarity around its function in social contexts, it can be openly disregarded as a superstition without facing any public charges. In most cases, it stands for envy or dread, depending on who you ask. It goes by several names in Persian, including "the eye" and "the narrow eye" (or "the wounding eye"). As this ideology evolved and spread over time, it occasionally rode on the coattails of other religious movements. The prevailing consensus was that it brought about unexpected tragedies or deaths, and then people would perform rituals to appease the deity.

It was common practice to attribute bad luck to those who were perceived as economically or physically flawed. There was concern that the individual would be oblivious to the fact that they were a bearer of the evil eye. Since nomads had less privacy, this was more usual among them. Those most vulnerable to the evil eye might include children and women. The veil likely originated from the widespread dread of the evil eye, which may be attracted to attractive people. Being more socially involved put women at a greater disadvantage since they were more likely to be suspected. It was believed that beggars, along with the eyes of some animals, carried the evil eye. To keep the eye from creating problems, particularly in children, charms, amulets, and the like were utilised. Many rites call for the usage of salt.

An individual's social and personal problems may be hinted at by a witchcraft plot. Its cultural legacy and traditional discourse included its beliefs and rituals, which let it endure for centuries and become deeply embedded in society. False allegations and coerced confessions followed the steady stream of evidence. Some have argued that this is the case with Rebecca's work during the Red scare and the European witch mania and with Robert Brain's young witches. The economic and geological factors contributed to the perpetuation of witchcraft beliefs. The widespread idea that witchcraft runs in families was a major factor in its transmission from one generation to the next. Since death was an inevitable consequence of witchcraft, autopsies provided the strongest evidence that might determine the fate of the remaining living relatives. The political underpinnings of esoteric phenomena like witchcraft were mirrored in the allure of power induced by magic possession. Throughout history, witchcraft has played a role in the instrumentalisation of many civilisations.

The practice of harming other people via the use of one's psychic talents is known as witchcraft. Although it takes on diverse forms in African and European civilisations, it has played an important part in both. Examining the ways in which fear, social conflicts, and ideas of power and morality contribute to the perpetuation of witchcraft practices, this study seeks to shed light on the assumptions and beliefs that form the basis of these activities. To have a comprehensive knowledge of the reasoning behind witchcraft, it is necessary to analyse it in various cultural contexts and then link it to broader ideas.

Situated in Central Africa, the Azande are a Zande-speaking people. Three contemporary African states—the Republic of Sudan, Zaïre, and République Centrafricaine—form their historic homeland. E.E. Evans-Pritchard focused on the Zande people of Sudan in her fieldwork for Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande. While Europeans view witchcraft ideas with suspicion, Mary Douglas argues that in Africa they have been tamed and put to good use. But the rudimentary functionalist explanations put out for African witchcraft did not sit well with Evans-Pritchard. He agreed with Emile Durkheim and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl that everyone is driven to believe what society says they should believe because of the pressures they face in society. He was

ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

not a fan of the intellectualist explanations that sought to explain thinking patterns by focussing on how the mind functions. According to Douglas, the sociology of knowledge and perception is the subject of this work. The Azande are sceptical, yet they reveal unwavering faith in their belief systems and ask less questions about the cosmos.

Witches, according to the Azande, are hardwired to hurt those around them. They don't have the means to provide medication or conduct rituals. Because the Azande lack empirical evidence to back up a theory of action, they must depend on the abstract concept of the soul to explain how witches do their feats. The mbisimo mangu, or "soul of witchcraft," physically connects the witch with her victim in a psychic act. The mbisimo pasio, or the victim's psychic organs, are said to be removed as it flies through the air, dazzling in its path. That being said, every member of Azande culture has easy access to information on witchcraft. On rare circumstances, when they perceive a threat of witchcraft from another person, though, they do take an interest in it. Witchcraft allegations follow, with the use of poison oracles, medications, and the use of diviners or witch-doctors to drive the monsters out.

Witchcraft is an inherent phenomena and a bodily feature for the Azande. According to Evans-Pritchard (1976, pp. 2), this chemical is present in the "small intestine in certain digestive periods." As a result. The Azande fear the elderly because the witchcraft-substance becomes stronger with age and social experience. In addition, the practice of witchcraft is inherited through the same kind of transmission as other genetic diseases are: from one generation of a certain sex to the next. This goes hand in hand with the transfer of a parent's physical and mental traits to their offspring. The Azande are a people that are genetically related to one another. Even a witch's near paternal relatives might be considered witches. While it's true that some men's ancestors may have been witches, it's not brought up much until the guy is defending himself against charges and can point to cases where his ancestors were cleared.

A key component of death as a result of witchcraft is vengeance. Rather than stemming from animosity and wrath, it is the brotherhood's religious obligation fulfilled and a means of financial gain. You can exact your revenge by killing a witch or by settling with her for restitution. Witchcraft starts the vengeance of another family, while vengeance-magic ends the anguish of one. This is how the mystical language of witchcraft explains a conflict in the ideas around it.

According to Evans-Pritchard (1976, p. 61), "the poison oracle does not err." This is the philosophy of every Zande. For the most part, a Zande will only seek the advice of oracles and witch-doctors when dealing with serious health issues or crucial social or economic difficulties. In most cases, he seeks their advice when he anticipates impending disasters. While oracles are primarily intended to ensure good conduct, they can be misused to evade responsibilities. Take the case of a novice potter who attributes the shattering of his wares to witchcraft. The princes have authority over the most reliable and accurate poison oracles, while anybody is free to employ their

own.

One of the tribe's members is a witch. He should be able to live his life without fear of molestation so long as he refrains from killing others. But according to custom, a witch must remember her spells when the people she is harming beg her to. People who identify as witches are often the ones whose actions defy accepted standards of conduct. People who are easily angered and who cause problems for their neighbours sometimes find themselves the targets of accusations. As a matter of status, the commoners often refrain from accusing noblemen and princes. It would be incredibly insulting to the aristocracy to accuse a prince's family line of being involved in witchcraft. As a result, conflicts arise between men at all levels of society. Disparities in socioeconomic status are clearly seen here. Witches do not enjoy the same level of fixed views as nobles since people only pay attention to them when they are hurt.

Attacks on unsuspecting humans by witches do occur. Because of the widespread misconception that those who live far away from one another don't connect with one other enough to foster animosity, persons in close quarters are more likely to experience relationship problems. People are less likely to believe in witchcraft in areas with low levels of social contact and ill-defined connections. A highly structured system of assigned jobs and a minimum of organisation can also manage witch beliefs (Douglas, 1970).

A causal framework is provided by theory to demonstrate the regularity of apparently irrational occurrences. Because of its chaotic complexity and irrationality, some modern authors reject old religious thought as speculative. African cosmologies, however, provide a framework that explains the variety of everyday experiences via the action of a small number of forces, according to research into these traditions. Here, common sense is a great tool for dealing with a wide range of everyday problems. usage of a low-level theory is associated with a smaller region of experience, whereas usage of a high-level theory is associated with a greater area of experience. The belief in a one supreme entity coexists with beliefs in a multitude of spirits in many traditional African religious systems. This shows how conventional religious thought is affected by the procedures of deconstruction, analysis, and reintegration (Horton, 1967).

Michael Polanyi argues that the circularity of systems of implicit beliefs is what keeps Zande witchcraft beliefs stable in the face of legitimate criticisms. Because of its cyclical nature, a different problem is tackled by reinterpreting it within the framework that has already been used for other subjects. The second stable feature of an interpretive system is the automatic growth of its operational circle. The recurrence nature of such systems provides a pool of alternative explanations for complex phenomena. A self-contradiction in two successive oracle replies may be explained by eight separate subsidiary assumptions, which shows that Azande belief is epicyclic. Thirdly, it is said that their stability is due to the fact that they don't allow any other ideas to flourish. A new concept that might displace Azande beliefs can only be established by a string of

ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

pertinent instances. Suppressed nucleation of alternative notions is the term he uses to describe how most people ignore them. Just as with scientific theories, when there are inconsistencies, they are rationalised as anomalies. The stability of a conceptual framework is enhanced by circularity, epicyclic elaborations, and the subsequent suppression of alternative conceptual advances.

When it comes to the acknowledged body of theoretical tenets, traditional cultures are "closed" since no one there is aware of any alternatives. If Azande wanted to stop believing in witch-doctors, he would have to deny the validity of oracles and the reality of witchcraft. Once these'sacred' principles are fully accepted, there is no way to question them, giving believers a powerful influence. They are extremely anxious and afraid of anything that may challenge these absolute convictions. Social anthropologists have used the term "secondary elaborations" to describe how flawed ideas are "excused" by providing supplementary explanations that uphold the theory's central principles (Horton, 1967). The Azande also view witchcraft as a mystical explanation for death, illness, and misfortune. It provides a strategy for coping with the inevitable challenges of daily life and an explanation that takes into consideration any unanticipated events that may arise.

The details of a person's death are less important to them than the people with whom the victim had troubled connections. To be clear, the Azande do not put all their eggs in the mystical causality basket. Witchcraft explains the particular conditions in a chain of causes that link a person to bad natural occurrences. The missing connection between two independently produced events that crossed physically and temporally is supplied by Zande beliefs, according to Evans-Pritchard, via an idiom that describes such happenings. Witchcraft gives social events moral meaning by providing an explanation that is useful to society for an undesirable event. As the saying goes, "witchcraft explains why events are harmful to man and not how they happen" (Evans-Pritchard, 1976, pp. 24).

It should be mentioned that not all misfortunes are attributed to witchcraft by the Azande. There are many other possible explanations. Falsehoods and deceit cannot be excused by the belief in witchcraft (Gluckman, 1944). If a supernatural explanation for illness, death, or tragedy conflicts with moral or legal obligations, AZande will not accept it. Ignorance, incompetence, and sloth might all be considered reasons. No matter what happens, the victim will almost always accuse witchcraft, even if others might disagree. We can see that the logic and principles of witchcraft are distinct from those of science, yet this does not rule out the possibility of natural causes.

In addition to shedding light on interpersonal dynamics and fateful occurrences, the idea of witchcraft incorporates moral judgement. People often picture a witch as someone who is full of evil, greed, and deceit. As a whole, witchcraft tends to mirror the feelings that are believed to motivate it. As a result, the Azande associate these feelings with witchcraft.

ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

The absence of local tensions and worries based on witchcraft, according to G.I. Jones, is associated with the Ibo communities in Nigeria. The latter is because people have access to more possibilities that meet their social requirements as a result of a developing economy and certain social structures that lessen conflict. Malcolm Ruel describes the Banyang people of Cameroon as deeply introverted and self-critical. This ties into their notion that every person possesses were-animals that, hiding behind a different persona, carry out their masters' malevolent objectives. A few of the were-animals that made the cut were elephants, leopards, bush-pigs, and owls. Accusations of witchcraft against children are very common in this region (Brain, 1970).

'Witchcraft' was a catch-all word for anything involving magic or occult rituals in Tudor and Stuart England. As Keith Thomas put it, "witchcraft" was the widespread social condemnation of the practice of using supernatural methods to harm other people. Therefore, a witch may be of either sex if they possessed the power to kill or cause unexplained harm to others; yet, in both belief and practice, witches were more commonly women. For a long time, the witch was an integral part of the community. This clarifies why the majority of witches were female, particularly widows who were economically disadvantaged due to a lack of social support. Their status was diminished, particularly among the elderly, due to the deterioration of traditional manorial structures, not because of sexual tensions. A witch's unhappiness with her lack of authority to physically or legally retaliate led her to utilise curses or black magic.

While many contemporary theologians did not view witchcraft as inherently bad, they did view it as a heretical ideology that included worship of the Devil. Rather of hurting people, the witch's main transgression was heresy, the act by which Satan bestowed her authority. People thought she should die for her defiance of God even if she didn't hurt anybody else. A victim's sense of having violated a traditional social obligation to their neighbour or a personal tragedy were the most common causes of witchcraft allegations in sixteenth and seventeenth century England. Some doubters argue that physicians would even charge witches if they couldn't determine a "natural distemperature of the body"—a sign that medical knowledge was inadequate—and that witchcraft was only used as a last option (Macfarlane, 1970).

In England, charges of witchcraft were more common in rural areas and seldom happened inside families or intimate relationships. So, according to Thomas, prior anthropological research that focused on kinship networks was mostly fruitless in this case. Tightly knit households sought supernatural protection from the outer world, just as certain modern-day African villages do. Villagers would accuse one another of practicing witchcraft when they had a disagreement, usually over money or presents. The accusing process began when a victim turned down a little request, then heard the witch making menacing or mumbling noises, and then suffered ill luck. At first, the conservative function of witch beliefs was to strengthen moral norms by associating repercussions with transgressions in neighbourly conduct. Nonetheless, there was a radical aspect to them as well; for example, some advocated avoiding those who were thought to be witches in order to

rationalise social exclusion and place blame on themselves. As a result, people were afraid to ask their unpleasant neighbours for help, which further damaged their social connections.

The idea that "primitive" people have distinct worldviews that are both conceptually and linguistically grounded was initially put forward by Lévy-Bruhl. In addition, the research conducted by Evans-Pritchard on Azande thoughts shows that, although their belief system may appear strange or illogical to those from outside the culture, the Azande people are actually very sensible inside their own cultural setting. This essay proved that the Azande do not consider witchcraft to be a rare occurrence, but rather a common one. Due to their limited conceptual comprehension, kids are more likely to feel the effects of witchcraft than to have ideas about it. When it comes to explaining and evaluating it, they are better at defending themselves. Edwin Ardener demonstrates how beliefs in witchcraft may evolve in response to changes in the world by bringing the Bakweri of West Cameroon to life. These belief systems and the impact they have on adherents are susceptible to shifts in the social and economic climate. To acquire a more thorough knowledge of witchcraft beliefs, it is necessary to apply a strategy that combines social, ideological, and psychological levels of analysis (Biedelman, 1970).

Those who believe in witchcraft have a natural philosophy that they use to make sense of the connections between bad luck and the ways in which people are hardwired to respond to it. Belief in witchcraft is also associated with a code of ethics that governs how people should act. "Manipulate situations in which roles are competitive and ambiguously defined" (Jones, 1970, pp. 327). That's its purpose. It is not an abstract philosophical concept, but rather a socially maintained set of assumptions and ideas that emerged in response to certain historical events.

Many cultures' views and practices of witchcraft have endured through the ages. Through it, individuals are able to make sense of the social, political, and moral environments in which they live. Concerns about maintaining morality and methods of explaining misfortune are intricately related to the beliefs that uphold witchcraft activities. By stressing the difference between the "inside" and "outside" of a society, these ideas serve to strengthen social bonds and solidarity. The accusation of witchcraft is taken very seriously because the accused is seen as someone who goes against the values of the community, which helps to reinforce group identification. Within the organisation itself, members still hold witchcraft beliefs and utilise them to their advantage when attempting to establish their supremacy over other groups. To demonstrate the beliefs and assumptions that uphold witchcraft practices in different cultures, this essay draws on the works of anthropologists such as Peter Riviere (1969), Anthony Forge (1969), Mary Douglas (1970), Max Gluckman (1944), Michael Polanyi (1958), and E. E. Evans Pritchard (1967).

According to Evans-Pritchard (1967), the Zande theory of witchcraft can provide the missing link between two causal chains that meet at a specific location and time, even though they are not interdependent. As an example, a young lad who was possessed by a witch accidentally stomped

ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

his foot on a little tree stump while making his way through a forest trail. More importantly, if his wound persisted in being open and festering, it could only have been caused by sorcery. This one time, although taking his normal precautions, the Zande lad slammed his foot into a stump of wood, which he attributed to witchcraft because on a hundred other instances he had not. Unlike scores of other wounds, this one was festering. As far as witchcraft is concerned, there is a causal relationship between these two events.

Furthermore, in his 1944 work "The Logic of African Science and Witchcraft," Max Gluckman cites the research of Evans-Pritchard. This research sheds light on the idea that African tribals are innately magical and mystical because they are born into a society that believes in witchcraft. In contrast, European and American thought abandoned the system of magic and witchcraft around 150 years ago. So, these ideas became ingrained in the culture of the Azande and other African tribes, and so they continued to be practiced.

The Zande anticipate encounters with witchcraft at all hours of the day and night, as pointed out by Evans-Pritchard (1967). He would be surprised if he didn't come into touch with it. When he sees that supernatural powers are at work, he does not take it personally when bad things happen. His irritation levels rise, and he views it as an insult and a cunning ploy. Magic and witchcraft, according to Gluckman (1944), are real occurrences; as a result, these beliefs shape the Zande's day-to-day activities; he encounters witchcraft at every turn and responds to it by divination and magic.

The Zande is permanently entangled in the web that has been spun, according to Gluckman (1944), since he is unable to compare his belief system to any other. In addition, he claims that the beliefs in witchcraft are reinforced by traditions, the behaviour of elders, and the support that tribe leaders provide to the system. There is a web of interconnectedness between all of the Zande beliefs, as Evans-Pritchard (1967) lays out. Since the Zande is only familiar with this web of mind, he is unable to escape it. "They have no idiom in which to express their thoughts, so they reason outside, or against, their beliefs, but they reason excellently in the idiom of their beliefs" (Evans-Pritchard, 1937, p. 194). This lack of an established set of alternatives to the recognised corpus of theoretical beliefs is what Robin Horton (1967) calls "closed" traditional cultural systems. Horton (1967) stresses in his book "African Traditional Thought and Western Science" that adherents to the established principles feel tremendous fear whenever they are threatened. Additionally, he claims that there is no way to challenge the old theoretical premises since people blindly follow them when they are unaware of any alternatives.

In example, Michael Polanyi (1958) talks about how the Azande maintain their beliefs despite the fact that they are contradicted by European institutions and concepts. In his article titled "The Stability of Scientific Theories against Experience," he explains why the belief system around witchcraft has persisted for three reasons. The first thing to notice is that the systems' circularity

has kept them stable. By analysing the interpretations used in a wide variety of other contexts, the challenges to the belief system are addressed one by one. The Azande often go to other mystical conceptions to explain the gap between their thoughts and their experiences, as pointed out by Evans-Pritchard (1937). When you cast doubt on one node in the web of interpretations, you are also casting doubt on all the nodes that depend on each other. Thus, the cyclical nature of these systems is strengthened with each encounter with a fresh topic or criticism.

The next thing that Polanyi (1958) mentions is how the belief system grows automatically. Numerous assumptions may be made to account for the seemingly contradicting oracle results, which reveals the cyclical nature of Zande beliefs. Explanations for nearly every possible outcome are provided by the self-expanding character.

Polanyi (1958) concludes that the persistence of witchcraft beliefs is due to the fact that they prevent the development of competing ideas. As an example, when individuals gather data supporting the concept that natural causes may be the source of tragedy instead than witchcraft, it becomes a real possibility. People would continue to attribute every occurrence of bad luck to witchcraft rather than natural causes if they are unable to understand the idea of natural causality. Consequently, the opposing idea or viewpoint is never given an opportunity to develop and pose a threat to the dominant viewpoint. The concept of suppressed nucleation is the name of this third line of defence. "A measure of a conceptual framework's completeness is the degree to which it is stable, which is conferred by circularity, a readily available reserve of epicyclical elaborations, and the consequent suppression in the germ of any rival conceptual development" (Polanyi, 1958, p. 337).

The Azande research also introduced the concept of witchcraft as a homeostatic control system, according to Mary Douglas (1970). Societal processes upheld not only their institutions and moral principles, but also these beliefs. The practice of these beliefs demonstrates the homeostatic equilibrium. As an example, in order to maintain the traditional family unit, no Zande could ever accuse his father of being a witch or sorcerer without himself being accused of being one, which would suggest that he comes from a corrupt line of ancestry. Regarding the moral function of witchcraft, Godfrey Lienhardt's (1951) research on Dinka sorcery provides intriguing insights. In Dinka culture, the witch is a figure who remains nameless and faceless. Men were reminded of their own inherent wickedness through the notion of the witch. An evaluation of typical human nature and one's own worth were central to this set of beliefs. The Dinka believe that maintaining social norms and principles is crucial, since their inner hell serves as a reminder of this. After the Azande research was published, another principle that came to light was the idea of supporting and protecting foreign ideas. One approach to fulfilling this duty was to highlight the positive role of witchcraft in a well-functioning social structure.

The use of the concepts of the exterior and the interior in witchcraft symbols is also mentioned by Douglas (1970). These are based on the belief that external power might weaken an individual's

inherent goodness. The inner and the outside might be given meanings through the experience of a limited social unit. As a result, Douglas explores the two primary paradigms of witchcraft belief: one in which the witch is an external adversary and the other in which he is an interior one. In the first level, when the witch represents an outside force, the purpose of witchcraft accusations is to reinforce the borders and unity of the community. Further information about this may be found in Peter Riviere's (1969) research on the Trio tribe of South America. For the Trio, death, failure, and any tragedy is an act of witchcraft. A code of hospitality is upheld between various villages in order to travel in the area, and inhabitants of one village are typically accused of sorcery by members of another community. There is a clear internal vs external divide within the Trio since they focus more on vengeance sorcery.

Accusations of witchcraft serve to reorganise factional hierarchy and redefine factional borders in the second dimension, where the witch represents an internal opponent. For example, as Riviere found among the Akwe Shavante (1969), the witch could be an ally of an enemy party. In this case, witchcraft becomes a political issue since it is involved in disagreements between factions. Because these groups constitute the building blocks of Shavante politics, betrayal by a man from a weaker group against a stronger one results in death, communal upheaval, or an open challenge to the dominant group's dominance. Thus, the Shavante maintain their witchcraft practices through inter-factional politics, turning them into a means of political activity. In the work of Alan Macfarlane (1970) on sorcery in Tudor and Essex, the witch is portrayed as a sinister and potentially harmful individual. Another way in which the witch is perceived as an adversary from inside is in Brian Spooner's (1970) theories on the evil eye. People in Islamic nations think that total strangers may cast spells that harm others with the flick of a wrist. All of this points to the witch's physical form as a metaphor of the internal vs. external struggle. As a result, the purpose of witch hunts is to govern and control outcasts while claiming to uphold communal ideals.

The witch can also represent an adversary from inside with ties to the outside world. Consider the Abelam people of New Guinea with their sorcerers and "big men" as an example. In his 1969 work, Anthony Forge explores the role of sorcery and witchcraft in this society's political sphere. The sorcerer maintains covert communication with powerful men from other villages, who supply him with "leavings" of individuals from their own community to be enchanted. What we call "leavings" might actually be bits of food, betelnuts, or tobacco that have come into touch with saliva or sperm. These sorcerers grant these "leavings" to these "big men" so that they may produce yams, which will raise their social status and power. Sorcerers from an enemy town typically come from a distance to procure this magic paint as it is not a local commodity. Therefore, among the Abelam, witchcraft has a practical purpose in ascending the social ladder.

The case for witchcraft as a functioning system is strengthened by all these anthropological reports, which give clear proof that witchcraft beliefs and practices play a crucial role in communities. These ideas have been maintained among the Azande, the Trio, and the Abelam through their

connections to the larger social, moral, and political institutions. It becomes a coping mechanism for dealing with the underlying issues that lead to setbacks and unfortunate events. Douglas goes on to say that these belief systems serve as homeostatic control mechanisms, which is how they end up facilitating societal disagreements and battles. Taking into account all of these viewpoints, we find that beliefs in witchcraft are intricate systems that aid communities in dealing with moral dilemmas, customs, disagreements, and calamities.

On the Sudanese Azande, Evans Pritchard conducted an anthropological study for the Anglo-Egyptian Sudanese administration. “Witchcraft, Oracles, And Magic among the Azande” is his account of Azande beliefs and behaviours related to witchcraft. The Azande practise witchcraft as a natural and inherited occurrence. The man's own "psychic act" manifests as a witchcraft material, as indicated before. It is removed during an autopsy from its location in the small intestine. It is said that a woman may pass her magical powers on to her daughter, while a man can do the same with his son. A child's psychic abilities are inherited from their parents. There are two souls, according to Azande belief: the physical and the ethereal. When a person dies, their soul transforms into their totem animal and their spirit into a ghost. In traditional families, the totem animal of the father's clan is the lion and the totem animal of the mother's clan are reversed. "Mbisimo Mangu" is the essence of sorcery. According to Pritchard (1937), it acts as a link between the witch and her victims. The witchcraft's effects are limited to the immediate area, not affecting others further away. Because of this, the majority of witchcraft allegations are levelled against members of the victim's community or tribe, rather than their immediate relatives.

The Azande believe that witchcraft is the cause of bad luck, and those who experience it often go to their opponents for a witch. Death, illness, or misfortune of any type is said to be connected to witchcraft. If a man's wife stops responding, for example, or if a prince starts to withdraw from his subjects, it might be due to witchcraft. There are several similar stories; for example, one in which a little kid blamed witchcraft when his foot hit a tiny stump of wood. A master woodcarver from the Gbudwe kingdom by the name of Kisanga would occasionally have his bowls and stool crack while he worked. He blamed witchcraft for this disaster. Similarly, if a man dies in battle or at the hands of an animal, it is believed that witchcraft was involved in his demise. According to Evans Pritchard, the Azande practise witchcraft, which gives a mystical explanation for the unpredictability of human occurrences. As a social truth, death is more real than a natural one. The two socially significant reasons are what lead to the knowledge of sad events. The first is the taboo breaking, and the second is the sorcery. The Azande believe that bad things will happen to men who break societal taboos, such as the taboo against incest. However, when it's not a violation of a taboo, the accusation of witchcraft is levelled. Not every mysterious occurrence is linked to sorcery. Deaths caused by revenge or those resulting from the loss of a baby are not considered witchcraft, but rather are ascribed to the Supreme Being.

When Azande people suspect someone of being a witch, they consult a small number of oracles to

ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

determine who the culprit is. The poison oracle "benge" is one example of such an oracle. In order to get the name of the suspected witch, the oracle inserts poison into a chicken's throat. The chicken's demise gives the ill man's relatives some answers. Once the kinsmen learn the witch's identity, they pay to have a messenger sent to the witch's house to beg her to halt her wicked spells. If the witch takes a gourd full of water, spits it on the wing of the bird, and the man becomes well, all because the water cools his witchcraft potion. To narrow down the vast pool of potential witches, other oracles such as the Termites oracle and the Rubbing Board oracle are employed. The sick person's relative delivers a public speech. No one knows who the witch is, but he or she is urged to abandon the sick individual and cease their witchcraft.

It is debatable whether Azande witches are capable of free will or not. Most people think that witches are quite self-aware when it comes to wielding their magic. However, a young witch who has inherited the blood of a witch cannot act consciously. No one ever accuses a child of practicing witchcraft. Because, so the theory goes, the witchcraft ingredient within them is harmless and cool. Conversely, princes despise commoners and commoners loathe princes (Pritchard 1937).

The Bakweri people of Africa believe in two distinct types of witches. This is Liemba and Nyongo. A traditional kind of witchcraft is Liemba. "Liemba" means "unborn" in Swahili. During the night, it exits the host's body and infects additional commoners. The next step is to have the witch-hunter consume the sasswood concoction. If he threw up the medication, he is free to go; else, he is condemned to death by hanging (Douglas 1970). The Nyongo witch, in contrast, hurts his own family, even his own children. The witches reside in tin dwellings that were constructed with zombie labour.

The Ibo people of southeastern Nigeria hold the belief that sorcery and witchcraft work hand in hand. As Douglas (1970) explains, witches occasionally assault their victims on a supernatural, spiritual level, with the explanation that the victim's soul is eaten by the witch's soul. One Ibo folktale describes how a witch sacrifices a close relative and serves the flesh at a communal feast to illustrate the Ibo belief in witchcraft. Those who possess it transform into witches.

In the Banyang culture of Cameroon, Central Africa, were-animals and reclusive witches are believed to exist. As the person of the night, the were-person is thought of as wicked. Under some conditions, humans may assume the form of an animal and even take on some of its traits. As part of this process, the man's physical appearance changes; for example, he may become a bush pig. Legend has it that this quality is passed down through generations of parents. A school teacher whose were-animal was a leopard is only one of many human cases that eloquently illustrates the point. While on the search, the leopard was shot. Consequently, the man becomes sick. Confessing about his were beast and its death was necessary for the guy to become well. Another case in point is the Okorobak hamlet in Tali, where a man's wife has been known to feast on the crops grown by the villagers. At one point, a trap grabbed the bush pig, and it was returned home. Even the wife

devoured the swine. She also passed away within a few days. The Naguals of Chiapas in Central America are quite similar to the Banyang. The Naguals also hold to the belief in the tale of man taking on animal characteristics and transitioning into one. For prehistoric societies, witchcraft and magic offered a theory of causality and an acceptable explanation for mysterious occurrences like illness and death, and these assumptions and beliefs reflect that.

Accusations of witchcraft against children were common in Bangwa, Cameroon. One interesting thing about this case is that the youngsters admitted to being the ones who cast the spells. Confessions often involve the administration of emesis and purges in an effort to flush out the witchcraft material—which takes the form of bile and excrement—from the child's stomach. Getting rid of them means getting the witch and victim back. The Bangwa believe in witchcraft, which means that the victims of child witches are typically locals. Uncles, half-siblings, and fathers are among the people they hurt. An example of this is the case of Asung, a young man who admitted to killing his half-brother. Many individuals were distressed by these revelations, said Robert Brain. Serious consideration is given to nightmares and disrupted sleep among Bangwa. A particularly profound slumber is an indication of sorcery.

Some superstitions about supernatural powers are popular in the Gonja state, which is located north of Ashanti and across the Volta river. The concept of "Kegbe," the ability to do magical damage to other people, is born out of this. Old women are typically connected with witchcraft. However, the ability to cast spells is innate to all sexes. To ward against wicked witches, dependents in the Gonja state also turn to witchcraft. The practice of expelling and killing witches was commonplace in towns where such a correlation was established. Children of witches were traded in pre-European times.

According to the ideas and assumptions of Tundor and Straut England, witchcraft is any type of magical or ritualistic practice that employs occult ways to achieve its goals. Edward Coke said that a witch is someone who consults or does an act after having a conversation with the devil (Douglas 1970). Similarly, commonplace misfortune was believed to be caused by witchcraft in England. For instance, a child's unexpected death, a cow's disappearance, or the ineffectiveness of a regular procedure. Witchcraft was a major issue in the English county of Essex between the years 1560 to 1680. There were a lot of witchcraft trials covered. Executions for witchcraft occurred in excess of 545 cases. In order to criminalise witchcraft, the English Parliament enacted a trio of statutes. It was approved three times before being repealed: once in 1542, again in 1547, and finally in 1604, again in 1736 (Douglas 1970).

The Trio and the Akwe-Shavante are two examples of the archaic South American communities that hold a strong belief in witchcraft and sorcery. Each of the three Trio villages operated independently. They believed that magic was the root cause of their ill fate. They believed that curses were the only means of death. The Akwe-Shavante people believed in the power of sorcery

ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

and witchcraft in situations when the outcome was unknown. Sorcery was alleged against the son-in-law since these communities were predominantly matrilocal.

African, Pre-European, and South American tribes were not the only ones whose beliefs were pervasive in witchcraft. Its native range extends throughout Southeast Asia as well. This is illustrated by the case of New Guinea. Witchcraft and sorcery are practiced by the Abelam Tribe in the Sepik area of the trust territory. They primarily link witchcraft to females. Their belief is that witches hurt humans when they go from this world at night, taking their souls with them. They bring anguish to the commoners by feeding on buried corpses. People could explain away every good and bad thing that happened to them because of these generalisations about ordinary life.

The 'Evil Eye' is a Middle Eastern belief system that is closely associated with witchcraft. People often associate witchcraft with ill health, death, and misery. throughout a similar vein, throughout the Middle East, the evil eye portends calamity and loss. Beholder perception is paramount, and the evil eye is a metaphor for jealousy. According to Persian belief, a mother's adoring gaze is more harmful than an evil eye (Douglas 1970). People who had green or blue eyes were thought to be evil-eyed. When it came to protecting themselves, individuals turned to strategies like wearing amulets and charms.

There is a litany of charges and admissions involving witchcraft that follows the diverse spectrum of ideas about witches. Almost every community in Africa, Europe, South America, and Southeast Asia has some kind of witchcraft accusation pattern. All four spouses—husband, wife, and co-wife—are implicated in serious witchcraft claims. Most often, a husband would be accused of bewitching his wife, a co-wife of the other wife, or even the victim's neighbours would be implicated if they lived nearby and were envious of the victim's success in social, economic, or political circles. Windows, single women, and those in the workforce were the targets of charges. The establishment of witch-cleansing cults can also be traced back to accusations of witchcraft. The Fipa were home to a number of sects that practiced witchcraft purging, including the Lukusu, a Congolese cult, and the supratribal Maji-Maji. Many people think these cults may have been the birthplace of revolutionary new social structures. One such group that sought to use symbolism to reorganise society was the Cargo-Cult of Melanesia. The community's definitions of social interactions are brought to light by such allegations. Many innocent persons lost their lives because of false allegations levelled against them in the name of witchcraft. So, witchcraft shows how jealously and hostility impact the unclear relationships within a society.

Confessions of witchcraft were documented in several communities. "Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande" by Evans Pritchard (1937) said that while conducting research, he witnessed allegations of witchcraft but never heard a confession (1937). However, there were cases where witches admitted to harming their victims using the chemical they used for witchcraft. To illustrate the point, child-witches have admitted to practicing wicked magic. The adoption of

aggressive methods during these trials, driven by the impulse to force the suspected witch to confess his crime, created an environment of communal unrest. As a result, the head of the tribe or village would often force the alleged witch and her children to labour for him, causing the women the most suffering. This exemplifies how the community's underlying tensions and conflicts originated in the practice and belief in witchcraft.

The practice of witchcraft in various cultures gives rise to a common set of assumptions and beliefs. Because it adequately explains why a bad thing happened, people in that culture believe in it. A society's social life is constrained by its ideals and conventions. It brings misfortune if disregarded. For example, breaking taboo. However, disease, death, and other forms of misfortune are all human-caused and can be attributed to witchcraft. What a guy does to another man is harmful. He may be a member of his own family, but more often than not, he will be a man from his neighbourhood. When ethnographer Evans Pritchard asked people in his fieldwork why certain bad things happened to them and not to others, they often argued that people's lack of attention to detail was to blame for their failure to complete a task. To them, it is the work of a wicked witch who brings misery via her spells. Therefore, these views in witchcraft caused societal conflicts in the relations between people. Christianity, which spread throughout Africa and South America during colonisation, reduced the prevalence of witchcraft beliefs, especially among the younger population. "Witchcraft and religion are the alternative modes of dealing with predicament of personal fate" (Pritchard 1937), to summarise.

References

1. Evans-Pritchard, E. E., & Gillies, E. (1976). *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande*. Oxford University Press.
2. Marwick, M. (1970). (Ed.). *Witchcraft and Sorcery*. Penguin UK.
3. Gluckman, M. (1944). The Logic of African Science and Witchcraft. In Marwick, M. (1970). (Ed.). *Witchcraft and Sorcery*. Penguin UK.
4. Polanyi, M. (1958). The Stability of Scientific Theories against Experience. In Marwick, M. (1970). (Ed.). *Witchcraft and Sorcery*. Penguin UK.
5. Horton, R. (1967). African Traditional Thought and Western Science. In Marwick, M. (1970). (Ed.). *Witchcraft and Sorcery*. Penguin UK.
6. Douglas, M. (1970). (Ed.) *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*. Routledge.
7. Thomas, K. (1970). The Relevance of Social Anthropology to the Historical Study of Witchcraft. In Douglas, M. (1970). (Ed.) *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*. Routledge
8. Macfarlane, A. (1970). Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart Essex. In Douglas, M. (1970). (Ed.) *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*. Routledge
9. Ardener, E. (1970). Witchcraft, Economics, and the Continuity of Belief. In Douglas, M.

ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 10, Iss 11, 2021

(1970). (Ed.) *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*. Routledge.

10. Brain, R. (1970). Child-witches. In Douglas, M. (1970). (Ed.) *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*. Routledge.

11. Jones, G.I. (1970). A Boundary to Accusations. In Douglas, M. (1970). (Ed.) *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*. Routledge.

12. Ruel, M. (1970). Were-animals and the Introverted Witch. In Douglas, M. (1970). (Ed.)

Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations. Routledge.

13. Beidelman, T.O. (1970). Towards More Open Theoretical Interpretations. In Douglas, M. (1970). (Ed.) *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*. Routledge.