

ISSN: 1597-8893

ANYIGBA JOURNAL OF ARABIC & ISLAMIC STUDIES

**A Publication of the Department of
Arabic and Islamic Studies,
Kogi State University, Anyigba**

Vol. 6 No. 1, 2013 (1434)

UNIVERSITY OF ILE-IFE LIBRARY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Instruction to Contributors	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Contributors	vi
Dr. Kamil Adeleke, ADEYEMI	
The Role of Arabic Language in a Cosmopolitan Society: Yorubaland as A Case Study	
Rafiu A. Mustapha	
The Growth and Spread of Islam in Eastern Nigeria: Challenges & Achievements	
PARAMOLE, ABDUL-KABIR OLAWALE, Ph.D	
Leadership And Islam: Matters Arising In Nigeria	19
ADAM TOYIN JAMIU	
The Muslims And The Society In Nigeria: Challenges, Problems And Prospects	27
SALMAN A. YUNUS,	
<i>Badi'</i> phenomena in al-madh al-nabawi During the mamluk period: <i>dhat al-qawafi</i> as a case study.....	35
GANIYU ADEBAYO ALABI	
Justice and the Problem of Peace and Security: The Relevance of Ahmad Suwaylim's <i>Al-Majhul Alma'luum</i> to the Nigerian State	44
Bello, Mufutau Olusola	
Islam and Dress Code in Tertiary Institutions in Ekiti State	52
MUJAHID HAMZA SHITU	
A Dimension of Christian Missionaries' Views of Islamic Philosophy in Kenny's <i>Philosophy of the Muslim World: Authors and Principal Themes</i>	61
DR. SULAYMAN ADENIRAN SHITTU	
A Contrastive Semantic Connotation of <i>as-Sihr</i> (Magic) in the Qur'an and African Context.....	72

A CONTRASTIVE SEMANTIC CONNOTATION OF *AS-SIHR* (MAGIC) IN THE QUR'ĀN AND AFRICAN CONTEXT

DR. SULAYMAN ADENIRAN SHITTU

General concept of the *as-Sihr* (Magic) in Islam

Magic: The new Encyclopaedia Britannica defines magic as "a ritual performance or activity believed to influence human or natural events through access to an external mystical force beyond the ordinary human sphere".¹ From this definition, we see that magic is a practical affair. It is a human art which involves the manipulation of certain objects which are believed to have power to cause a supernatural being to produce or prevent a particular result considered not obtainable by natural means.

Miracle, in the biblical sense has been defined as 'an event which happens in a manner contrary to regularly observed process of nature'.² This definition is similar to that of the Qur'ānic notion which says: **Miracle** is a supernatural intervention in the life of human beings.³ According to this definition, miracles are present "in a threefold sense: in sacred history, in connection with Muslim scripture and in relation to its revelation."⁴ "The Qur'an does not use the technical Arabic word *Mu'jizat* literally meaning miracle."⁵ contextually: *Mu'jizat*; "that by means of which [the Prophet] confounds, overwhelms, his opponents". It rather uses the term *Ayah* literally meaning sign.⁶ The term *Ayah* is used in the Qur'an in threefold sense: it refers to the "verses" of the Qur'an (believed to be the divine speech in human language; presented by Prophet Muhammad as his chief miracle); as well as to miracles of it and the signs (particularly those of creation). And the word *al-Haqq*, literally meaning the truth.⁷ The term is also used in the Qur'an in a threefold sense: miracle given to the prophet appeared super magic to the unbelievers'. The Qur'an (truth words of Allah not fabricated and the truth messages of Allah sent through the earlier Prophets (particularly those of miracles presented by Prophet Musa and 'Isa as their chief miracle. Therefore, *Sihrin* the Qur'ān as applicable in African connotation can be classified into three major categories:

1. **Mu'jizat:** Miracles carried out by prophets. To deny these actions can lead to *kufr* (infidelity).
2. **Karamat:** Supernatural actions carried out by pious people. One can accept them, one can reject them. And,
3. **Istidrāj:** Miracles/Magic carried by evil people, they will cure some ailments, make others sick, and transform objects to their wish.⁸ Both sorcery and illusionisms are unlawful in Islam. Sorcery can only be performed with the aid of devils whose help is attained when the performer attributes them as partners to Allah in worship. Illusionism does not involve polytheism, but may none-the-less lead astray. It is a sin because it implies an act of disobedience. Magic is a destructive act, and therefore Islam warns against it. Believers should avoid magic and magicians; take precautions to heed the danger they represent and attempt to expose their false allegations. Fortune-telling is the belief that some

people possess the ability of telling people what will happen to them in the future by using magical or mystical methods'. These rulings also apply to the people who claim knowledge of the unseen such as geomancers, palmists and shell-diviners and so on.

A fortune-teller uses devils who eavesdrop in the Heavens as Allah says in the Qur'an:

'Shall I inform you (O people!) Upon whom the devils) descend'

They descend on every lying, sinful person. Who lends an ear (to the devils and they pour what they may have heard of the Unseen from the angels), and most of them are liars.' (Q26:221-223)

This knowledge of what the angels may have said is then passed to the people who are often prepared to believe what the fortune-teller says. The problem is that what people believe is true, has been embellished or changed, omitting the truth. Fortune-telling is considered 'Shirk Akbar' (the major and serious form of polytheism) for two reasons. First, it implies the acquisition of knowledge of the Unseen, which is unique to Allah, (alone).

Allah says:

'Say: 'None in the Heaven and the Earth knows the Ghayb (unseen) except Allah, nor can they perceive when they shall be resurrected.'(Q 27: 65).

This means that anyone who believes that he possesses such knowledge is certainly claiming the acquisition of a Divine attribute that Allah (alone) possesses. Second, it involves using devils and holding fast to them, a ritual that can only be perfected when the performer is in complete submission to an act which is regarded as a form of polytheism. In the light of the above definition, Islam considers magic to be an act of blasphemy.

Semantic Connotation of *al-Sihr* in the Qur'an

The word *As-Sihr* is a verbal noun in Arabic could be literally interpreted as miracle, supernatural actions and magic. The word occurred in the Qur'an in twenty one (21) times. *As-Sahratu* which could be literally implied as magic, fortune-telling and sorcerer occurred in the Qur'an nine (9) times and *As-Sahr* (another derivative word of *al-Sihr*), which occurred once simply means- last hour of the night.

The use of *al-Sihr* in the Qur'an. The Holy Quran says in (Q2:101-2):

"And when there came to them a Messenger from Allah confirming what was with them, a party of those who were given the scripture threw away the book of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know. And they followed what the devils gave out falsely of magic of the reign of Solomon; for Solomon did not disbelieve but the devils disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels Harūt and Marūt, but neither of these two (angles) taught anyone (such things) until they had said: we are only for trial, so don't disbelieve. And from them (magicians) people learn that through which they would cause separation between a person and his spouse, but they

could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's leave; and they learn that which harms them rather than profits them. And indeed they knew that its practitioner would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves if they but knew"

10

Although, Solomon was the Prophet and Messenger of God, he was accused by some of his opponents to be practicing magic. Those who claimed this could not distinguish between magic and miracles. Almost all messengers of God were granted miracles as a proof of their authenticity. To name only a few: Moses was granted the staff by which he could divide the sea and make water gush from rocks. Abraham was flung in the middle of a huge raging fire, which Allah made cool and peaceful to him. Jesus Christ could heal the blind and the leper and bring back the dead to life.

If we contemplate these acts we find that miracles are totally different from magic. While magic is always harmful, miracles are useful¹¹. Magic is from devils while miracles are from God. When these divine miracles are rejected other miracles are imposed to inflict severe punishments on rejecters. On the other hand, miracles are real while magic is sometimes deceptive as the Qur'an claimed "And from them (magicians) people learn that through which they would cause separation between a person and his spouse".

(2)The Holy Quran says in (Q 5: 110):

(Remember) when Allah will say (on the Day of Ressurrection): "O Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)! Remember My Favour to you and to your mother when I supported you with *Ruh-ul-Qudus*[Jibrail (Gabriel)] so that you spoke to the people in the cradle¹ and in maturity, and when I taught you writing, *Al-Hikmah* (the power of understanding), the Taurat (Torah) and the Injil (Gospel); and when you made out of the clay, a figure like that of a bird, by My Permission, and you breath into it, and it became a bird by My Permission, and you healed those born blind, and the lepers by My Permission, and when you brought forth the dead by My Permission; and you (when they resolved to kill you) as you came to them with clear proofs, and the disbelievers among them said: "This is nothing but evident magic".¹²

The above verse explains the miraculous acts of prophet 'Isā right from his infant, which non believers regarded as a magic under the influence of evil spirit. The Word *al- Sihr* in the context means *mu'jizah* (miracle)but mis-understood by the disbelievers to be a conventional magic.

(3) The Holy Quran says in (Q6: 7)

And even if We had sent down to you (O Muhammad (SAW) a Message written on paper so that they could touch it with their hands, the disbelievers would have said: "This is nothing but obvious magic!"¹³

The word *Sihr* in the context denotes magic which anybody can acquire through isolation as the

habit of the prophet in the *Gār Hirā'* under the influence of spirit as he (the prophet)claimed .But the prophet was un-lettered person who received the revelation through an angel in a piece meal as a miracle.

(4) The Holy Quran says in (Q 7: 116)

He [Musa (Moses)] said: "Throw you (first)". So when threw, they bewitched the eyes of the people, and struck terror into them, and they displayed a great magic.¹⁴⁴

The word *Sihr* in the context denotes the real magic as in Africa context because, people could have been fascinated through Magic, awed or fearful at the unknown and mystical being heedless of the dangers and harm that they inflict. As it used to happen to an audience for the first appearance of their magical objects as in the verse.

(5) The Holy Quran says in (Q 10: 76)

So when came to them the truth from Us, they said: "This is indeed clear magic".¹⁴⁵

The word *al-Haqiq* which literally means 'the truth' denotes miracle given to the prophet but appeared super magic to the unbelievers. Therefore, *Sihr* in the context denotes the real magic they possessed.

(6.) The Holy Quran says in (Q 10: 77)

Musa (Moses) said: "Say you (this) about the truth when it has come to you? Is this magic? But the magicians will never be successful".¹⁴⁶

This verse reaffirmed that the unbelievers still assumed the miracle given to prophet Musa is a magic. Therefore, the word *Sihr* connotes magic in its interpretation.

(7) The Holy Quran says in (Q10: 81)

Then when they had cast down, Musa (Moses) said: "What you have brought is sorcery; Allah will surely make it of no effect. Verily, Allah does not set right the work of *Al-Mufsidin* (the evildoers and corrupters)."¹⁴⁷

The word *Sihr* denotes sorcery in this context and prophet Musa tried to show his people the authenticity of Allah's miracle to their mere magic even cursed the magicians in order to clarify his own stuff as miracle.

(8) The Holy Quran says in (Q11: 7)

And He it is Who has created the heavens and the earth in six Days and His Throne was on the water, that He might try you, which of you is the best in (good) deeds [i.e., these good deeds should be totally for Allah's sake and not to show off, and according to the ways and traditions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) (*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*). But if you were to say to them: "You shall indeed be raised up after death", those who disbelieve would be sure to say, "This is nothing but obvious magic".¹⁴⁸

The word *Sihr* denotes deceit or a mere cajole from the prophet in this context. The unbelievers' disbelief in any life hereafter, reward or punishment for their deeds in this world.

(9) The Holy Quran says in (Q20: 58)

"Then verily, we can produce magic the like thereof; so appoint a meeting between us and you, which neither we nor you shall fail to keep, in open

place where both shall have a just and equal chance (and beholders could witness the competition)"¹⁹.

The word *Sihr* means signs of Allah (miracle) which was likened to a conventional magic by the fir'aon subordinates when prophet Musa used the signs as a proof of his messenger ship from Allah.

(10) The Holy Quran says in Q20: 71

[Fir'aun (Pharaoh)] said: "Believe you in him [Musa (Moses)] before I give you permission? Verily, he is your chief who has taught you magic. So, I will surely cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides, and I will surely crucify you on the trunks of date palms, and you shall surely know which of us [I (Fir'aun – Pharaoh) or the Lord of Musa (Moses) (Allah)] can give the severe and more lasting torment"²⁰

The word *Sihr* means signs of Allah (miracle) which was likened to a conventional magic by the fir'aon himself, when prophet Musa used the signs as a proof of his prophethood and put fir'aon into shame for conquering the magicians and their evil and frightening display. This wonderful occurrence prompted other magicians – quick subjugated and believed in the prophethood of Musa. This act provoked fir'aon and vehemently promised his people a very severe punishment.

(11) The Holy Quran says in (Q20: 73)

"Verily, we have believed in our Lord, that He may forgive us our faults, and the magic to which you did compel us. And Allah is better [as regards reward in comparison to your Fir'aun's Pharaoh's) reward], and more lasting (as regards punishment in comparison to your punishment)"²¹

The word *al-Sihr* in this context means signs of Allah (miracle) on which fir'aon compelled his people to disbelieve. Despite his threat, they were resolute to stick at the truth.

(12) The Holy Quran says in Q21: 3

With their hearts occupied (with evil things). Those who do wrong conceal their private counsels, (saying): "Is this (Muhammad (SAW) more than a human being like you? Will you submit to magic while you see it?"²²

The word *Sihr* in this context means (miracle). The non Muslims challenged their people for not intellectually reasoned along with them. They believe that the prophet's claim of receiving divine revelation is false. Therefore, an intelligent person can produce similar literary output.

(13) The Holy Quran says in (Q26: 49)

[Fir'aun (Pharaoh)] said: "You have believed in him before I give you leave. Surely, he indeed is your chief, who has taught you magic! So verily, you shall come to know. Verily, I will cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will crucify you all"²³

The word *Sihr* means signs of Allah (miracle) which was likened to a conventional magic by the fir'aon himself, when prophet Musa used the signs as a proof of his prophethood and put fir'aon into shame, he blamed the magicians for not waiting for his order before

they quickly subjugated and believed in the miracle as a sign of prophethood of Musa. This act provoked *firaon* and vehemently promised his people a very severe punishment.

(14) The Holy Quran says in Q27: 13

But when Our *Ayat* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) came to them, clear to see, they said: "This is a manifest magic".²⁴

The word *Sihr* had been clearly interpreted by the Quranic exegetes as (miracle) signs, revelations. With manifestation of these evidences as Allah's proof for his messengers but still regard it as magic.

(15) The Holy Quran says in (Q28: 36)

Then when Musa (Moses) came to them with Our Clear *Ayat* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they said: "This is nothing but invented magic. Never did we hear of this among our fathers of old."²⁵

The word *Sihr* had been also clearly interpreted by Allah in the verse as (miracle)-obvious sign. But with the manifestation of these evidences as Allah's proof for his prophet, they still regard it as magic fabricated by prophet Musa.

(16) The Holy Quran says (Q43: 30)

And when the truth (this Qur'an) came to them, they (the disbelievers in this Qur'an) said: "This is magic, and we disbelieve therein".²⁶

The word *Sihr and al-haqq* became synonyms according to the usage of the Qur'an. It was interpreted as miracle in the context. But due to the stubbornness of the disbelievers, they were obstinate to regard it as miracle.

(17) The Holy Quran says in (Q 46: 7)

And when Our Clear Verses are recited to them, the disbelievers say of the truth (this become their enemies and will deny their worshipping).²⁷

The word *Sihr* was interpreted as a conventional magic despite the obvious signs that manifest in everything.

(18) The Holy Quran says in (Q52: 15)

Is this magic or do you not see?²⁸

The word *Sihr* was interpreted as a conventional magic on which the Quran rebuked them.

(19) The Holy Quran says (Q54: 2)

And if they see a sign, they turn away and say: "This is continuous magic".²⁹

The word *ayatan* means sign rather miracle. Due to the stubbornness of the disbelievers, they were obstinate to regard it as miracle, but still regard it a mere magic (*Sihr*).

(20) The Holy Quran says in (Q61: 6)

And (remember) when Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), said: "O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah to you, confirming the Taurat [(Torah) which came] before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad".² But when he (Ahmad, i.e. Muhammad (SAW)) came to them with clear proofs, they said: "This is plain magic".³⁰

The word *sihr* here means plain magic instead of accepting the Qur'ān as an ultimate miracle which earlier prophets had hinted the Israelites.

(21) The Holy Quran says in (Q74: 24)

Then he said: "this is nothing but magic from that of old"³¹

The word *sihr* here means ordinary magic as that of earlier magicians inflict on the people, instead of accepting the Qur'ān as an ultimate miracle.

As-Sahratu; another derivative word from *al-Sihr* could be literally implied as magic, fortune-telling and sorcerer. But the word is conceptually and specifically used in the Qur'ān as the sorcerer and magician. These interpretations could be found in the following nine verses of the Qur'ān:

(1) The Holy Quran says in (Q7: 113)

And so the sorcerers came to Fir'aun (Pharaoh). They said: "Indeed there will be a (good) reward for us if we are the victors".³²

(2) The Holy Quran says in (Q7: 120)

And the sorcerers fell down prostrate³³

(3) The Holy Quran says in (Q10: 80)

And when the sorcerers came, Musa (Moses) said to them: "Cast down what you want to cast"!³⁴

(4) The Holy Quran says in (Q20: 70)

So, the magicians fell down prostrate. They said: "We believe in the Lord of Harun (Aaron) and Musa (Moses)".³⁵

(5) The Holy Quran says in (Q26: 38)

So, the sorcerers were assembled at a fixed time on a day appointment.³⁶

(6) The Holy Quran says in (Q26: 40)

"That we may follow the sorcerers [who were on Fir'aun's (Pharaoh's) religion of disbelief] if they are the winners".³⁷

(7) The Holy Quran says in (Q26: 41)

So, when the sorcerers arrived, they said to Fir'aun (Pharaoh): "Will there surely be a reward for us if we are the winners"?³⁸

(8) The Holy Quran says in (Q26: 46)

And the sorcerers fell down prostrate.³⁹

The word *Sahar* is the last derivative word from *al-Sihr* appeared once in the Qur'ān: contextually means the last hour of the night which Muslims regard as the appropriate hour for eating in preparation for *Ramadān* or voluntary fasting which is popularly known as *Sahūr* (the last hour of the night meal).

(1) The Holy Quran says (Q54: 34)

Verily, We sent against them a violent storm of stones (which destroyed them all), except the family of Lut (Lot), we saved them in the last hour of the night⁴⁰

In a nutshell, magic is mentioned on several occasions in the Qur'ān, but always with disapproval and condemnation. The Qur'ān mentions that Pharaoh, who opposed the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), had under his command a large group of magicians, and it describes their tricks as 'great magic. But it also makes clear that there was no

substance to what they did. It was simply pure deception, making people see what was not there. Hence, in the challenge put by Pharaoh to Moses, victory was clearly to Musa because God transformed his staff into a large snake, but this was a real snake, not imaginary, and it ate all that the magicians produced by their false tricks, which was only a matter of false deception. Therefore, Magic is emphatically forbidden. To learn it is forbidden, and to practise it is considered similar to disbelief in God according to the dictates of the Qur'an.

Magic in African Context

Through the Qur'anic interpretation of the word *Sihir*, we discovered that miracles are totally different from magic. Magic is always harmful while miracles are useful. Magic is from devils while miracles are from God. In the reality of magic and its derivatives and connotation share some things in common with African concept but equally differ in many cases with the Qur'anic connotations of the term.

Therefore, Religion and magic are so closely connected that it is difficult to say when one passes from one realm to another. In African Traditional religion, 'the offices of the priest and of the magician are sometimes held by one and the same person, and ceremonies are something's performed with an admixture of religious and magical elements'.⁴¹ they set pattern that things must be done in one way and not in any other way if worship it to be acceptable – songs must be sung in appropriate paces, dancing steps must not be missed, one type of offering and not the other must be given for a particular occasion⁴².

The Africans (Yoruba) believe in the reality of the super sensible world, in the existence of powers causing and controlling the phenomena of nature and in the possibility of establishing contact with these mysterious powers. As we have indicated above, they employ both religion and magic to achieve their goal. The practitioners of magic use incantations, amulets, spells, enchanted rings, horns, small gourds, padlocks, alligator pepper and many other objects for the purpose of tapping and controlling the supernatural resources in the universe.

Africans (Yoruba) believe that magic has been employed in a practical way for good and for evil. For example, magical preparations have been used for personal protection against attacks by witches, adversaries or bad medicine or as a means of warding off evils.⁴³ They have also served as a means of securing invulnerability from or protection against gun-shot or matched cut. Magic has been used to bring rain to the crops or game to the nets; to win the love of a lover, to give skill in war, speed in travelling or to win in sporting activities. Besides personal protections, we have examples of evil magic. Dangerous burglars are equipped with magical preparations which enable them to burgle houses easily and without molestation; by the sue of enchanted rings men have been rendered baling; charmed alligator pepper has been used to bring incurable diseases on victims of circumstance; the hair or nail parings, chewing sticks or articles of clothing of people have been used in preparing offensive charms against them.

Kinds of Magic in African Culture

One of the magical preparations which have been classified as both good and evil is the 'Magun' ('Do not mount'). According to Awolalu; 'It is a means of controlling sexual immorality, and thus making the marriage bed honourable'. When an African (Yoruba) man discovers that his wife is no more faithful and is fond of running after other lovers, he therefore devises a magical preparation which makes it deadly for another man to have love affairs with his wife. According to information supplied by Awolalu in his work described the magic of Magun as thus;

This involves putting an enchanted string or a spring of broom in the woman's path – possibly in the entrance to her room. She unknowingly crosses the enchanted string. Right from that moment, she bears a mysterious 'power' in her genitals. The husband who sets the trap does not approach her during the 'dangerous' period. If anybody has an affair with her will give up the ghost. This is why people call this type of magical preparation 'magun; meaning 'Do not mount' (another man's wife) separated from the woman. Their genitals are locked together, and both of them are caught in the very act and are exposed to the ridicule of the whole community. After much appeal to the husband, an antidote (*ero*) is offered and the two are separated, but looking helpless and completely ashamed.⁴⁴

In any society this kind of taboo exists, it is a difficult (perhaps unpleasant) way of controlling extramarital sexual relations: but it injects sanity into the society in a very hard way: we should mention, however, that some clever men who want to engage in adulterous practices have procured anti-Magun rings which they wear to counteract the Magun trap or apply other means. And sometimes a man who has set the trap, expecting that its task might have been done, may be caught in his own trap. We choose to elaborate this type of magical practice because we regard it as among the classical examples of the mysterious power in the Africa (Yoruba) belief.

In Africa, a magical act has almost always three elements:

- (a) There are words to be uttered according to a formula or set order. Any slip, omission or alteration of wording deprives the magic of its power.
- (b) There is a set of actions to be carried out. For example, if there is a plan to kill an enemy from a distance, the preparation may include the following actions: the sorcerer will procure water in a bowl and have ready a cudgel or matched or a loaded gun; then he summons, by magical means, the spirit of the enemy to appear in the water in the bowl; then the sorcerer hits, cuts, or shoots the figure that appears. As a result of this, the person whose spirit has been so summoned will receive an actual wound or gun-shot wherever he may be.
- (c) Other acts may involve pulling out an enchanted needle stuck into an enchanted horn, or spitting ritually upon a magical preparation, or sticking needles into the effigy of an enemy to cause him incessant pain, or locking an enchanted padlock to make it impossible for an accuser to speak against one in the law court.⁴⁵

Other magical acts that seem to be similar to the Quranic interpretation of the word *Sihir* is a magic performed by;

- (a) The priests for ceremonial purpose. For example; during Sango festival (One of the traditional religious group) in Oyo, Nigeria, the priest commands some quantity of ordinary pebbles to turn into merriments like sweet and biscuits. This will be thrown into the spectators as refreshment. Likewise, during the masquerade festival, a masquerade can be turned into three or any number the priest (or he who leads) wishes. They also turned into artificial python. (The author of this article witnessed \ watched it several occasions during the masquerade festivals in Oyo town in the late sixties and early seventies)
- (b) Means of livelihood as a Profession. For example; in the early sixties and late seventies ,there was a popular professional magician called-Laisi Alijonnu (hailed from Oyo Town, Nigeria) who used to slaughter his only daughter, butcher her as animal before the spectators. This action instilled fear into the mind of the spectators, while some will be crying. It is at this juncture the magician made an appeal to the spectators for fund raising to revive the daughter .Having gathered substantial amount, he will now command the butchered lady to appear in her earlier complete form by calling her name three times. The lady will now suddenly appear from an angle in the mist of the spectators. This kind of magical acts was modified by a re-known magician called Professor Pellar (died in the recent years hailed from Iseyin, Oyo State Nigeria) but settled in Ibadan, Oyo State Nigeria. This might sound fantastic to readers who are strangers to the Yorubaland and to Africa, but it is the whole truth that exists till today.

Mystical Miracles or Herbalist in Africa

Some people around the globe called their group Mystical Miracle claim to have specialized in extremely powerful and effective Spell Casting, Real Voodoo Spells, white magic, love spells, removing negative thoughts, spiritual psychic and chakra healing.⁴⁶ Even claim to have successfully been helping people since 1986; to restore love, passion, trust & commitment. Some would like to stop a separation, divorce or breakup. Some would like to reunite or rekindle a past relationship. Others came for clearing from Black magic, Wicca, Dark Entities, Witchcraft, Negative Blocks, Curses and so on. This kind of act is performed by Herbalist in Africa, who is not necessarily performing magical acts.

Witchcraft & Magic in African Context

Witchcraft is 'the art or craft of the wise, as the word "witch" is allied with "wit" (to know)'. Although, it is the use of supernatural means for harmful and evil ends."⁴⁷ Thus, a witch is a wise person supposed to possess supernatural powers in consequence of forming a league with the devil or evil spirits, and through such an evil alliance and co-operation the possession of the craft which enables her to perform supernatural acts which, in most cases, are destructive. Hence witches are seen as the personification of evil. The witches are capable of their nefarious deeds through their possession of mysterious powers unknown and unavailable to ordinary people.

There is need at this point, to distinguish between witchcraft and magician\ sorcery. A sorcerer\magician uses charms, incantations, spells and magic knowingly and

with premeditation. 'A witch', as Evans-Pritchard said; 'performs no rites, utters no spell and possesses no medicine'⁴⁸. Awolalu also submitted that; 'a witch projects her evil through directly from her mind, invisibly, and without cursing and invoking a sorcerer manipulates some tangible materials to carry out his devilish 'business'. Since an act of witchcraft is a psychic act, African therefore, disregards the act of witchcraft as magic, because he/she has an inherent and intangible power for harming others. He cannot boast or display of his/her action as magician in the public.

Conclusion; in the mental and social attitudes of the Africans in general, there is belief in the existence of witches (*aje*). The prophet of Islam also confirmed as thus; 'The witches are real'⁴⁹. All strange diseases, accidents, untimely death, inability to gain promotions in office, failure in examinations and business enterprise, disappointment in love, barrenness in women, impotence in men, failure of crops and a thousand other evils are attributed to witchcraft.

In consequence of belief in magical power, many African traditionalists are found of wearing all kinds of charms – copper rings, amulets preparations sewn up in leather girdle as belt. Although, we may condemn evil magical preparations because they are anti-social, but we also need to advocate the exploring the use and control of healthy magic to aid modern scientific inventions and improve the standard of living of the people. Such as incantation recited on someone who had a snake's bite and the poison instantly gushed out as a magic. The study is in contrary view to the opinion of E. Bolaji Idowu on the use of magic by saying 'the aid of magic is sought by those who are not sure of their character or those who are positively wicked.'⁵⁰ His suggestion would be acceptable if all magical preparations were evil as in the Qur'anic interpretation which is full of deception. But the study revealed that magic among the Africans/Yoruba are both good and evil magical preparations. There can be no wickedness, for example, in employing magical means to escape from imminent danger, or to ward off evil spirits, or to stupefy burglars and discourage them from their evil deeds, or to caution people against vices as in *magun* and alike, or to improve upon agricultural products and the like.

Notes and References

1. The new Encyclopaedia Britannica vol.6 1974 p.483
1. Oloyede, I. O. "Magic: A Misunderstood Aspect of African Traditional Religion". Journal of Arabic and Religious Studies (JARS) Department of Religions, University of Ilorin Nigeria 1985 p.90
2. Abdurrahman, Abdullah K. Magic and Fortune-Telling; Islam and Magic; [Contact IslamAwareness@gmail.com](mailto:ContactIslamAwareness@gmail.com) for further information Oct. 2010 retrieved on 27 \12 \2013
3. Abdurrahman, Abdullah K. Magic and Fortune-Telling; Islam and Magic; [Contact IslamAwareness@gmail.com](mailto:ContactIslamAwareness@gmail.com) for further information Oct. 2010 retrieved on 27 \12 \2013
4. Munir Ba'albaki al-Mawrid: A Modern English-Arabic Dictionary Beirut:Dārul –'ilmil-Malāyin 1986 p.582
5. Abdurrahman, Abdullah K. Magic and Fortune-Telling; Islam and Magic; [Contact IslamAwareness@gmail.com](mailto:ContactIslamAwareness@gmail.com) for further information Oct. 2010 retrieved on 27 \12 \2013)
6. Munir Ba'albaki: *al-Mawrid* ; 1986 p.995

7. Abdurrahman, Abdullah K. 2010
8. Abdurrahman, Abdullah K. 2010
9. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, in the English Language, "A Summarized Version of At-Tabarī, Al-Qurtubī and Ibn Kathīr with Comments from Sahīh Al-Bukharī" (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Darussalam Publishers and Distributors. :2007 p.31
10. I.O Oloyede: "Magic: A Misunderstood Aspect of African Traditional Religion"1985 p.87
11. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.178
12. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.181
13. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p. 228
14. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an p. 292
15. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'anp. 292
16. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p. 293
17. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p. 298
18. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an p.423
19. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an p.424
20. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.424
21. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p 433
22. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.494
23. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.506
24. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.521
25. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.586
26. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.676
27. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.707
28. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.716
29. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.749
30. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p.787
31. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an, p. 228
32. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an,p.229
33. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an,p.293
34. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an,p. 424
35. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an,p. 493
36. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an,p.493
37. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an,p.493
38. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an,p.493
39. M .T Al-Hilali and M.M Khan: Interpretation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an p. 718
41. Lucas, Religion of the Yorubas, p.267 as in Awolalu, J. Omosade (1979) Belief in Mysterious Powers as in Yoruba Belief and Sacrificial Rites Ibadan; University Press 74-84
42. Awolalu, J. Omosade Belief in Mysterious Powers as in Yoruba Belief and Sacrificial Rites Ibadan; University Press 1979 p.76
43. Awolalu, J. Omosade Belief in Mysterious Powers 1979 p.77
44. Awolalu, J. Omosade Belief in Mysterious Powers 1979 pp.77-78)
45. Awolalu, J. Omosade Belief in Mysterious Powers 1979p.79
46. Thomas, Keith: Religion and the Decline of Magic. London: Penguin Books, Publisher Ltd, 1973 p. 303
47. Awolalu, J. Omosade Belief in Mysterious Powers, 1979, p.79

48. Evans Pritchard, E.E. "The Notion of Witchcraft ; Explains Unfortunate Events." In *Perspectives on Africa: A Reader in Culture, History, and Representation*. New York: The Free Press, 1997p.22
49. From comments of At-Tabarī on Q 5 verse 110 extracted from *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī* (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Darussalam Publishers and Distributors 1963 p.234.
50. Idowu , E. Bolaji : *African Traditional Religion- A definition*, London :SCM Ltd. 1978p.197

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY