

THE INDIGENOUS EWE SHRINE AS A SPIRITUAL STOREHOUSE FOR HEALING, IN GHANA

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ABSTRACT

Many people in Ghana have very negative perception of indigenous Shrines. They have the idea that any spiritual activity associated with indigenous shrines is satanic or devilish and therefore must be condemned. Even some enlightened people have such frame of mind that is built on their religious faith, even though the spiritual power of the indigenous shrine could be used for healing the sick, among a lot other useful contributions. The various types of indigenous shrines of the Ewes, attempts made at showing the acquisition processes, sources of shrine power and the healing potentials in the spiritual shrines will be discussed. The shrine, being a representational art work will remain an integral part of the people's culture. There are many shrines that have been inherited from ancestors in the locality. Not less than three patients are diagnosed and healed within a year, of illnesses ranging from mental derangement to spiritual charms by medicine men that are associated with the "Weto" deity and other individual shrines of the Goviefe traditional locality. More support therefore should be given to the Traditional medicine centres that have been established at some government hospitals, to supplement the contributions of western medicine. In this regard, cases that are beyond solution through the orthodox medical system could be referred to the spiritual shrine medicine men for effective treatment and eventual cure. As a result citizens will benefit greatly from the expanded medical system in Ghana.

Keywords: *Shrine, Ritual, Medicine men, Efficacy Believed*

INTRODUCTION

A shrine, to the indigenous Ghanaian, is not just an altar as perceived in the Christian and other religions, but many other activities are associated with it. The shrine could be described in the Ghanaian traditional context as either an enclousure or even a room that is made to contain artefacts that are used for religious activities. They are believed to be charged with spiritual power that could be employed for diagnosis and healing of ailments. In spite of the values that are inherent in the traditional shrine ritual practices

for medical advantages, many people including some educated elite do not have faith in the potentials of the indigenous spiritual shrine. They regard them as devilish and therefore condemn them.

Notwithstanding these negative notions about traditional spiritual power derived from shrines in Ghana, most towns and villages in the country still practise traditional healing activities. The fact that these practices have persisted through the ages may be a pointer to the fact that traditional medicine and its exploration for spiritual power through shrines for the cure of ailments has something good to offer the society. As a result of the benefits that people derive from this phenomenon, various ethnic groups, communities, families, individuals and many traditional rulers create their own shrines. An example is the "Weto" shrine of the Goviefe Traditional area that is highly perceived to be in support of the stool of the paramount chief. Togbe Adzimah, the Boto Loko shrine and Togbe Ahiave are but a few very potent individual shrines of the area.

There are various reasons apart from healing purposes why people possess these shrines. Their considerations may include security or protection, good luck, good health, charm, prosperity in life, defence, vengeance and sometimes to harm adversaries. A case study of the situation around the peoples of the central part of the Volta Region of Ghana and other ones in Ashanti and in the North of Ghana confirm this activity.

The above cited considerations of insecurity, charm and vengeance among others are ample evidence that could generate the religious activities that resulted in the erection of shrines in the society, in homes and exteriors for consultation by owners in times of need. It is strongly believed that the insecurity of the traditional African and his achievements led to ancestral worship, (Field, 1960) and therefore spiritual power may be sought from the ancestors through shrine

rituals for the fulfilment of one's needs, such as for healing of illnesses. In this case, with libation prayer, the ancestral spirits may be invited through the ritual shrine for purposes of fulfilling their personal needs as mentioned earlier.

Medicine men are known to have employed the use of shrine spiritual power effectively in areas of spiritually based ailments and mental derangement. Twumasi (1975) is cited in agreement with this position.



Pate 1: Bamboo fenced shrine with its attendant

The ritual activities associated with the diagnosis and healing by the help of the shrine's spiritual power are the necessary ingredients that are made to attract and protect the efficacy of the spiritual power. Therefore the individual and the sick are psychologically tuned in readiness for the healing exercise, as confirmed by Herskovits (1948) in Tawei (1975). An example is the libation prayer that is performed to invoke the ancestral spirits for the healing processes and to protect the efficacy of the herbs and other healing agents so administered to the patient. Any meaningful use of shrine power from its storehouse therefore requires that a shrine should necessarily be erected by or for the medicineman or the individual. The necessary rituals associated with it are obeyed to the letter so as to protect its potency before healing could be embarked upon. The scope of research work cov-

ered the north of central Ewe land in the Volta Region of Ghana. Specifically interviews of medicine men that include the traditional priests and priestesses, shrine and deity keepers were conducted in and around the Goviefe Traditional area.

Types of Spiritual Shrines and Their Uses

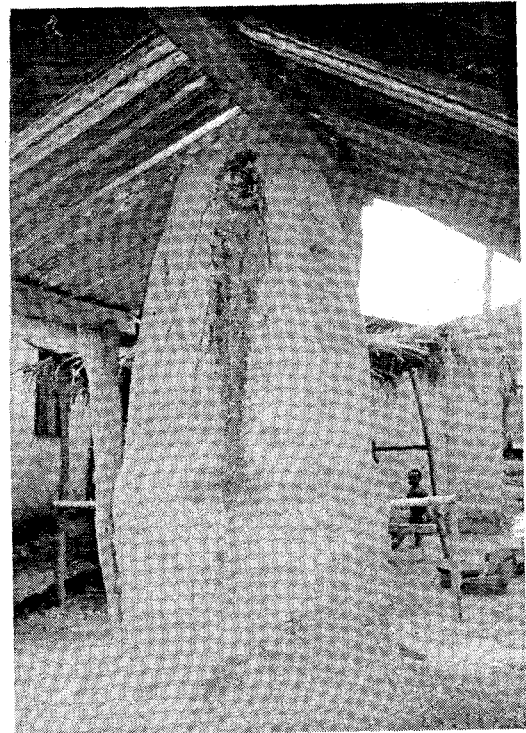
Generally there are two main types of indigenous shrines that are found among the Ewes of the Volta Region of Ghana and in other parts of the country. They are the benevolent or the benign shrines as well as the malevolent shrines (Field, 1960). The former being the peaceful one, whilst the latter whose spirits are manipulated to cause pain and harm to the individual, the community or the entire people of a particular settlement. On the other hand as an act of malevolence, sorcerers may be employed by a client to bring disease or death to bear on his enemy Myers (1937) Hastings Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics confirms this.

The benevolent spiritual shrine may however be procured for purposes of good luck and prosperity and good harvest in the community.

The Community Owned Benign Shrine

This type of shrine is that which is usually erected in the name of the Village. It is either sited in the heart of the town or at a strategic point or some times advertised at the entrance routes to the village where incomers can see it. Generally the shrines are believed to have been instituted as a land mark of the town or village. Among other ethnic groups such as in Ashanti there is the "Drinking Shrine" that accommodates the "Abosom Brafo" gods. Other benign ethnic gods such as the "Bosom Tano and Bosom Pra which, according to Field (1960), were concerned with positive blessings that attracted good things such as rain, health, fertility, ethnic peace and the general well-being of the people. It is also believed that, there is the link between the shrine gods and successful farm crop harvests and as a result, festivals are insti-

tuted to thank the gods for ensuring good harvest. The "Weto" shrine of Goviefe-Todzi is a good example of community owned benign shrines. Hence the celebration of yam, cassava and corn festivals by most farming communities of the central and southern parts of the Volta Region and in other food crop farming regions in Ghana.



**Plate 2: The frontal view of the "Weto" shrine.
Height : 181cm**

The Stool house Shrine

In Ghana, most traditional rulers have spiritual stool houses whose powers are tapped to protect and defend the royal family and the ordinary citizens at large in times of war and in cases of diseases and poor harvest. The chief is believed to derive his power source from the stool house where the stools and other paraphernalia of the

ancestors are kept and venerated on special occasions. Items kept in the Stool house in some cases are the blackened miniature state stools. All stool houses have keepers who are better known as medicine men and who are expected to keep and adhere to the strict taboos associated with the rituals that govern the stool house. This phenomenon is purposefully instituted to retain the efficacious powers of the stool house shrine for use at all times. The stool of every township is revered for the sacred roles it plays in uniting the community. Hence the strong belief that the stool is the embodiment of the soul and spirit of all citizens of the town or village. As a result, citizens sometimes come to swear allegiance to the stool in times of need, especially when one is sick and needs spiritual intervention or deliverance. Others looking for the improvement of status at their work places and in life make pledges to the power of the Weto shrine, of Goviefe and expect the fulfilment of their requests in a good time. The spiritual power may also be tapped by the State medicine man for the protection of the chief and for healing the sick generally through prayers in addition to the herbal medicines that are administered. Amponsah (1977) says for example, that in the protection of the spiritual power from the stool shrine, strict taboos such as the prevention of menstruating women from partaking in any ritual activities associated with the stool house is established. Only the royal women who have reached their menopausal status and the very elderly ones that are permitted to come near or partake in the shrine rituals because such menstruating women are deemed as unclean before the gods. Furthermore, among the people of Goviefe-Todzi in the central Ewe land, it is a taboo for the keeper medicineman to sleep with a woman within a period of three days before having contact with the ritual shrine objects. This view held by the traditionalists, is believed to protect the sanctity of the spiritual shrine and the subsequent efficacy of its powers for healing.

The Individually Owned Shrine

Nothing prevents both sexes from owing shrines. Among the Ewe people of the Volta Region in particular and in other parts of Ghana, possession of spiritual power is left to the choice of the individual in the society, be it benevolent or malevolent. Ancestral worship and its veneration is very popular among the Ewes generally and it is a phenomenon that generates most spiritual shrine rituals, since it is believed that the ancestral spirits that are represented are believed to act as intermediaries between God and Man; and Amponsah (1977) mentions this as the belief of many Africans. Names of some individually-owned shrine in the area include, Togbe Ahiave shrine of Kpeve, Mama Tutu shrine of Todzi, Mama Ayelenor's Togbe Adzimah shrine of Goviefe-Todzi and others.

To this therefore, a man or woman may own a shrine for the purposes of protecting his or her family from the evil intentions and machinations of other people, to attract blessings and good luck from the ancestors, since they are believed to be ready always to assist in promoting the welfare of the family they left behind, so long as their laws and wishes are observed. Sometimes spiritual powers that radiate from shrines are used as charms to attract the opposite sex for amorous relationships.

There could be many shrine figures in front of a family home. They are believed to be charged with defensive spirits to ward off malevolent spirits from interfering and entering to harm the inmates of the house. A part from these shrines outside the house, there could be another shrine in the owner's bedroom, or elsewhere closer. This shrine is easily accessible at all times for secret consultation in times of emergency. The single shrine in the bedroom is believed to be more powerful than the nine in front of the house.

In addition to these, there are the ancestral spirits that are represented by shrine objects and they are believed to act as intermediaries between

God and man. Sacrifices are therefore made and libations performed to the Supreme Being (God) through the gods for protection and the general welfare of the individual. Sometimes the individual may have the promptings to swear to the ancestors through the gods for the fulfilment of a personal wish. Healing powers may be derived from the ancestors through their intermediaries for a recourse to, in times of need. Ancestral spirits and deities are believed to direct the use of potent herbs for specific illnesses. Gelfand (1973) hinted that in East Africa, potent herbs are believed to be "Shown" to the medicineman in a dream. The spot where to obtain them and their uses for specific cure are also mentioned. To corroborate this, Opoku (1978) indicates that even after life, the dead are not cut off from the living and therefore are known to reveal themselves in dreams or appear to their living relatives to give instructions, warnings or information that may lead to cure. As a result of this, relatives go in for spiritual powers to guard, guide and protect themselves in their daily activities of life.

Establishment of a New Spiritual Shrine Storehouse

The establishment of a shrine is also referred to as "erection" of shrine or of a spiritual power house in our indigenous setting. It does not take a single mode of operation. The process evolves around two main forms of art; the environmental and the verbal arts of the Ewe people.

There are several types of medicinal objects like herbs and sculpture figures that are charged with spiritual power. These have been handed down to the present generation by their ancestors. Such, objects could be hung in the shrine enclosure or buried in the soil at a particular strategic place of reference and for easy access. All these, including the fence enclosure itself, constitute the shrine.

Four main personalities are normally involved in the processes of establishing a medicinal shrine. They are the officiating medicine man who is

referred to as the priest, the spiritual linguist, who performs the libation, the recipient of the new shrine and spiritual power and his guarantor.

The medicine man or "tronua", as is known and called among the Ewe speaking people, is the one who performs the necessary nocturnal rites associated with the transfer of the spiritual power in secrecy. This ritual activity starts off late at midnight. The process begins with the performance of libation prayer. This activity is probably one of the most valued ingredients in the ritual processes. It precedes all major activities and ends them. Initially, plain and clean drinking water is used for the libation so as to ask permission from the gods, ancestors and other deities all of the land and God, the Almighty, to enable them achieve the task of creating a new shrine. In some cases especially under the situation being discussed, a hole of about forty-five centimetres deep may be dug at a selected spot, either within the premises of the client's house or outside it but within the vicinity for the purpose of an easy reach. Just after this, another libation is performed, but this time using water mixed with corn flour for the purpose of seeking permission and peace in the home from the gods. This artistic verbal libation presentation is normally poetic in character such that names of several important deities and ancestors are mentioned so as to draw from them, attention and blessings towards the solemn ritual. In this regard, reverence is paid to God the Omnipotent by either mentioning his name first or last, but strictly not in between the names of the lesser gods. This is because the traditionalists believe that the supreme God is not found among the lesser divinities. Amponsah (1977) also agrees with this assertion.

Late at midnight, as the ritual progresses, the recipient of the spiritual power is made to strip naked while the linguist performs another round of libation prayers to invoke the gods for their presence and blessings for the ceremony. Strong alcoholic drinks such as schnapps and the locally

brewed Akpeteshie are used for the libation prayer. Still under the cover of darkness, various powerful herbs that have been identified as efficacious are laid into the hole that was dug earlier on. A chicken is then killed through strangling till its head is severed from the body. The resultant blood is sprinkled on the herbs in the ground. The medicine man does all these amidst murmurings of some inaudible words of incantations and finally, the carcass of the chicken is laid on the herbs in the hole, the head of the chicken is made to project out of the hole. This placement is believed to symbolise victory over evil and therefore success in their ritual activities.

Finally, the recipient of the new shrine power who will soon become an owner is made to cover the dug-out hole using his bare buttocks as he remains naked. After successfully accomplishing this task, he then becomes a proud owner of a spiritual shrine. From that time on, the ritual spot becomes the shrine spot where libation prayer is performed to the gods. Clay human figure may be built at the spot to indicate reverence and to prevent the spot from defilement by individuals and in so doing advertise the owner and his spiritual powers. Sometimes, a type of stone that is known as "hliha" and in some cases, bottles are buried half way at the spot to serve as altars upon which blood and other sacrifices are made and libations poured to invoke the spirits of the gods into action to answer the shrine owner's wishes.

In order to ensure the efficacy of the powers charged into the shrine, taboos are instituted in connection with the shrine. A popular taboo established in association with such spiritual activities as mentioned earlier is the issue of preventing menstruating women from touching objects or coming closer, and in contact with the shrine. Any contravention of this rule may mean defilement and therefore the resultant reduction in the efficacy of spiritual powers if steps are not taken to appease the gods. This may account for most medicine men not patronising local restau-

rants or "Chop bars" for fear of eating foods prepared by women who are in their menstrual period.

Spiritual healing power from the stool house shrine

The stool house is a very important source of spiritual power among the Ewes and its powers are used for healing diverse diseases. In the stool house may be found such artefact as miniature stool that is believed to be an embodiment of the soul and spirit of all citizens of the town. Some oath swearing metal and wooden swords known locally as "atamakayi", linguist staff that is symbolic of authority, calabashes, fly whisks, talismans, amulets, cutlasses, war gowns and other forms of artefacts that are created for use in promoting the spiritual power are found in the stool-house.

The "Weto" deity is linked to the paramontcy of the people of Goviefe in the Volta Region of Ghana. The spirit of this deity is believed, can be traced, to "Hogbe" their ancestral home at Notsie in the Republic of Benin. Periodic cleansing of the stool through ritual practices is therefore carried out to protect its spiritual potency. As a follow-up to this phenomenon individuals resort to the stool house for spiritual healing of divers ailments including "tukpui" disease, madness, asthma and chronic ankle sores among many that are believed to be inflicted on a victim spiritually. It is believed that no other spiritual power source in the town is mightier than and therefore can outclass that of the State stool in spiritual healing. Individuals therefore make sacrifices and pledges in form of animals and unspecified sum of money to the stool in anticipation of fast and steady cure for their diseases. In the peoples avowed responsibility to protect the efficacy of the power of the stool house, strict adherence to taboos is enforced. In this regard, measures are taken to prevent the citizens from defiling the ancestors who are believed to be the healing spirits behind with the stool. Therefore in support of the stool is the ancestral cult. This is

widely practised in many parts of West Africa. Amponsah (1977) mentions that Traditional beliefs by the people themselves induce healing generally as among the people of Dahomey, now Benin and within other ethnic groups of Ghana.

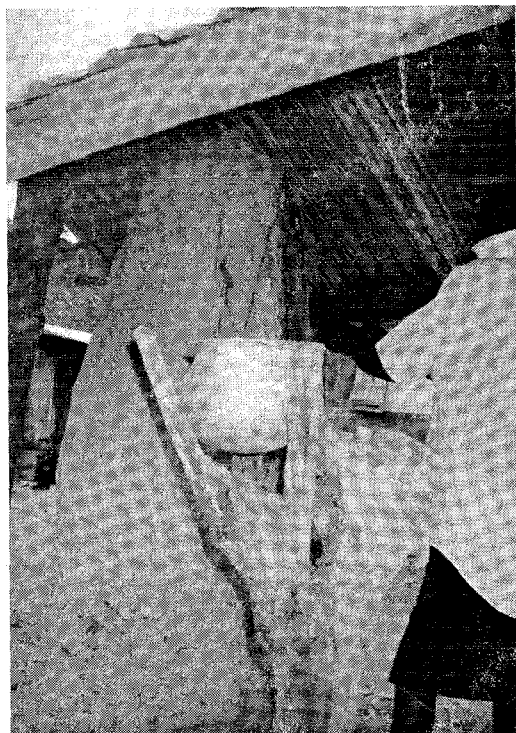


Plate 3: The "Weto" deity or the Agbikpo shrine that supports the Royal stool of Goviefe Todzi and its attendant priest

Herbal Healing Power

Long ago, even before the advent of modern medicine, Africans plucked and used various efficacious herbs for healing many sicknesses. Herbs such as "madze" "wodoegbugbor", "Afla" and others were known to possess super-natural powers and are prepared into medicines. They were therefore used either to heal or prevent sicknesses of both physical or spiritual nature. Some of the potent herbs are believed to react favourably to speeches when the herbs are the first to be contacted with speech at dawn. The

deities are believed to direct the use of such herbs for specific illnesses and others too are believed to be shown to the medicine man in a dream including where to obtain them and their uses for specific cures. The "eti" powder medicines are charged with spiritual powers through verbal incantations. Field (1961) is in support of this and therefore the prominent roles played by herbs in the building and acquisition of new shrines cannot be over emphasised.

Some of the herbs are prepared in black powder charged through verbal incantations. Sometimes, the medicine man may remove his talisman, amulets, beads or other artefacts from his body and place them on the herbs before charging them with the roles that they are to perform, and this is done through incantations.

Power from Spiritual Dwarfs

Spiritual dwarfs are known to live chiefly in thick forests. They are believed to possess limitless powers. Among them is their healing power. Some of the powers are sometimes described as elusive. The Ewes call dwarfs: "adiekpoe" whilst the Akans name it "aboatia". Field (1960) made reference to Rattray as the one who was the first collector of Akan lore on dwarfs and the dwarfs were referred to as traditional ministering figures. They are believed to be able to kidnap and take human beings into their abodes deep in the forest for several years. There, inside their abodes, the captives are detained and taught various types of medicine and the corresponding healing act. The captives are also made to undergo their magical tuition involving herbs and the arts of healing through possession, incantation, dances and "tukpui" disease, madness and barrenness may be carried out through the powerful works of the spiritual healing agent, which is the dwarf. Also it is believed that the medicineman may come across a herb alone in the bush and the spirit may direct him to pick and use a particular herb for curing a specific ailment. Just as Field (1961) revealed in his research experiences in Southern Africa.

Power from Spirits of the Dead

Some spirits for healing are sometimes acquired from dead relations. It is believed that the spirit of the deceased relative may come up to earth once more to stay with the living. According to Opoku, (1978), the dead are not cut off from the living, they are known to reveal themselves in dreams or appear to their living relatives to give instructions, warnings or information that may lead to a cure.

Such spirits are mostly known to come from people who died under mysterious circumstances and in accidents involving bloodshed. Under circumstances like this, the spirit of the deceased person may suddenly come upon a relative and afflict him with a protracted illness. The sick person may later recover if the sickness is diagnosed by a medicine man and the necessary rituals performed to appease the possessing spirit. From the day of recovery, the treated person becomes a member of the cult of medicinemen known as "Holusi" (for females) or "Tsator" (for males). From then on, the formerly sick person, turned healer, may start to carry out diagnosis and healing activities in the name of the deceased person's spirit. Healing is believed to be directed by the spirit of the dead relative in which case the spirit directs and shows all the potent herbs and healing processes. Mama Fia Bra Agbokpoe a popular priestess of Goviefe-Todzi is known to have acquired her diagnostic and healing powers through her deceased brother who died through snake bite. Generally, healing spirits of dead relatives are known to be benevolent and they protect the family and the society in general. The number of patients available to her depends upon the number of the afflicted in the society in a particular year, but certainly more than one person is healed within a year. Mentally deranged and barren women seeking assistance visit her shrine often.

Spiritual Power Acquired from the Cemetery

There is the mystical belief that the cemetery is a

repository of spiritual powers. Special days are therefore reserved for contacts with the Spirits. Wednesday is believed to be very ideal for contact with spirits in the cemetery because it is believed to be the day that such spirits are full of kindness and therefore desirous to assist humanity.

In the cemetery at midnight a circle is drawn by the recipient on the ground in the process of inviting the needed spirits. The circle indicates the operational area without which the spirit may not identify his guest. The recipient of the powers is made to stand in the circle courageously. It is believed that strange and frightful images may appear to frighten whoever is in the circle. Any attempt to escape out of fear from the circle may be disastrous to the aspiring recipient of the power from the cemetery. The cemetery visit may be done for twenty-one consecutive nights after which power is believed to be handed to the recipient in the form of talismans dropped for him with the necessary instructions and taboos that are associated. The spirits are known to speak the language of the applicant. The power received could be used to heal ailments such as chronic ankle sores and asthma. Some of the spirits acquired from the cemetery could be both malevolent and benevolent.

DISCUSSION

Most traditional medicine men often choose to attach their "chapel" or shrine to their main houses for purposes of having close contact with their spiritual images for quick consultation, diagnosis and healing. Especially in cases of mental derangement, where constant observation of the patient is critical, the nearness of the shrine to its owner is very necessary, because, healing periods are sometimes protracted. This situation, in some cases, is to enable the medicineman enough time to arrive at an effective cure. The patient therefore, depending upon the seriousness of the ailment may be detained as an in-patient for a longer period, especially in mental cases. Most of the time charges for the heal-

ing are deferred to after the patient is cured. Items demanded as charges range from fowls, goats to some minimal amount of money.

Medicine men often appear before their patients in peculiar outfit, usually is brow smock that is studded with beads ablate corries and talismans which in itself psychologically tunes up the faith of the sick person directly towards developing the needed confidence in the healer. To promote this phenomenon, various aspects of the body arts are employed to attract the attention of the spiritual forces which are able to identify and respond to the dictates of their master, the medicine man, or the traditional priest or priestess, during the period of preparation for diagnosis and the main healing activity itself. Therefore, the wearing of anklets, beads around the neck and wrist and sometimes tattoos on the body adorned with patches of white clay on the body are all the necessary artistic presentation made to attract the spiritual forces into believing that their master indeed is ready to perform and therefore they must assist him.

It is a widely held religious opinion among the indigenous African circles that if religion is worth its name, then it must be beneficial to man on earth. It is also well known that traditional medicine derives its source from religious practices. As a follow-up, since the human race is religious, then those medical practices that are religion based should also be beneficial to people on earth. This may be one of the good reasons why traditional medical practices cannot be wished away. Highly relevant may be the notions that before the advent of modern medical practices, medicine men, were to a very large extent, responsible for the medical care of the society, using herbs and herbal concoctions. They diagnosed ailments with the assistance from their shrines to cure most of the ailments, if not all, but are largely successful as far as spiritually based ailments are concerned. Mostly mentally deranged and "tukpui" remote controlled diseases, and other minor diseases are treated.

It is clear from this point that the coming of Christian religion and its high propaganda alone is not enough to relegate traditional medicine into the abyss on account of conflict of doctrines. Rather, there should be vigorous advocacy for the lasting co-existence of the two medical systems; the traditional and the modern to supplement each other, as is the case in some of the hospitals in Ghana, so that where the Western medical practices fail; there could be recourse to traditional practices backed by the spiritual shrine for effective cure.

Charms generally are known to be related to the spiritual power from shrines. Conway (1972) confirms this belief that charms are magic spells that promote the wearing of amulets and bracelets with the aim of the wearer attracting good omen to himself or herself. It is an open secret that the Akam, the Dagombas, Ewes and other paramountcies in Ghana use the power from the stool house and magic to support their rule especially in times of war. In this regard, no wonder most chiefs appear in their gorgeous moments in public wearing conspicuously, bracelets and ornaments by way of edifying the people. Furthermore, ritual sacrifices may be performed periodically to invoke the power of the gods and other guardian spirits from the shrines to protect and defend the chief, the stool and for the collective welfare of the community in which the shrine is located.

CONCLUSION

It is very significant to note that the Ewe people and other ethnic groups in Ghana culturally benefit from the various traditional medical practices that evolve around ritual shrine practices. Twumasi (1975) buttresses this point by mentioning the efforts made by the Traditional Healers Association of Ghana in researching into mysticism as used by some medicine men and the traditional medical practitioners to promote healing. Akator (1988) opines that Traditional medicines are believed to be doing well in the psychic sector. In this sector, according to him,

ailments are spiritually based, and that symbiotic and the parasitic forces account for the psychic ailments and therefore need the traditional spiritually induced healing, which may be more effective.

Fervent efforts are being made in both formal and informal health care delivery sectors all over the world to find a cure for the dreadful Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome disease (AIDS). However, the traditional sectors are least encouraged to perform because they are derogatively looked down upon. But this is an area where, herbal cure for the people through the help of the spiritually assisted ritual shrines could be employed.

Even though, the traditional medical system has made salient contributions to the medical system in Ghana, it has been threatened by doctrinal influences of the Christian religion.

This situation unfortunately could result in a draw back to our medical delivery capacity if this doctrinal issue is left to pervade the unsuspecting society to our disadvantage. On the other hand, the traditional medical practitioners should also do well to remove all doubts surrounding the arts of healing. Since the traditional medical practices are mystified, they are perceived as unchristian and devilish, even by some literate persons. But to change this perception for the better, effective practitioners of traditional medicine could organize regularly, free practical healing sessions in form of displays of their healing abilities at public fora.

There is the need to establish Traditional medicine clinics attached to all modern hospitals in the country. Therefore the perception that only pagans and sorcerers practise traditional medicine is not only wrong, but an unexamined thought. Countries like China and Nigeria are known to benefit immensely from the practice of both the Western and the traditional medicines to suit their cultural needs and they even export their arts to Ghana and other parts of the World.

Ghana can therefore emulate the practices to reap the benefits endowed us from own cultural environment. Gradually, but steadily then, the erroneous perception about traditional medicine that is promoted by spiritual shrine activities could be eroded for the benefit of the larger proportion of the Ghanaian Society.

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