

SOCIAL DISABILITY AND THE DIAGNOSIS OF SATANISM

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ABSTRACT

This article argues that in contemporary Zambia, becoming a Satanist is taken to be a spiritual affliction, rather than a religious conversion or a meta-commentary on changes effected by modernity. This point is made through a close reading of ethnographic materials collected in neo-Pentecostal settings such as church services, deliverance sessions and radio programmes. These materials show that testimonies of ex-Satanists should be heard in the context of spiritual warfare theology and the search for spiritual healing. This quest for healing is placed in the light of contemporary ideas about health and illness in Africa, more especially Christian faith healing. One important symptom contributing to the diagnosis of Satanism is introversion: quietness, stubbornness and a desire to be alone instead of spending time with friends.

1. Introduction

Since the 1990s many people in Zambia have heard about Satanists, and in contemporary Zambia, the threat of Satan and Satanism is everywhere: in school, hospitals, on the road, in the market and even in churches. Satanists may cause illness and death, sell your blood and organs, cause road accidents and try to get you in their thrall by selling you seemingly innocent Satanic products. Satanism is portrayed as an organization of evil in which people can be initiated knowingly and unknowingly, willingly and unwillingly. The stories about Satanism are shared as rumours and legends, and spread through radio trottoir, literally 'pavement radio' – the rumour mills that abound in African cities (Ellis 1989:321). The most extensive and detailed accounts of Satanism, however, come from testimonies given in religious settings by self-proclaimed ex-Satanists. These ex-Satanists confess that they have been agents of evil in the past, and often take responsibility for deaths in their families. Where legends tend to happen to 'a friend of a friend', Satanism in Zambia is something that quite a few adolescents know from their own experience.

This article discusses the wider context in which testimonies are delivered, and also how these testimonies are primarily interpreted by the audience. The analysis is based on ethnographic methods, such as participant observation and interviews. A close reading of these materials gives insight into the context in which Zambian Christians place narratives about Satanism in their lived religion. The article consists of three parts: the first part gives an ethnographic description of a neo-Pentecostal church service and argues that testimonies take place in a context of overcoming problems or spiritual healing. The second part of the article explores spiritual healing as an African and Christian practice, using the ethnographic description of a deliverance session. The final part elaborates on the diagnosis of Satanism, and is based on testimonies of ex-Satanists and interviews with pastors and ex-Satanists.

2. A testimony in its context

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What is the context in which testimonies are made and heard? Unlike the rumours about Satanism that are shared in many places, testimonies have a specific, religious setting. The following is a description of an afternoon service in one of Lusaka's mushrooming neo-Pentecostal churches. The pastor of this particular church is known in the media for ministering to ex-Satanists. The afternoon service is called the 'deliverance service' – a common designation in neo-Pentecostal churches. Like an ordinary service, it starts with worship and a sermon. After that, there is space for testimonies; and then people are called to the front to be prayed over. People come to deliverance services to find a solution for their problems. The timing of the service – in the afternoon – makes it easy for members of other churches to visit the morning service in their own (mainline) church and then go to the deliverance service of a neo-Pentecostal church to find healing.

The deliverance service starts at 14:00 hrs. with time for worship. The praise team is singing, accompanied by keyboard and drums, and the hall in one of Lusaka's more expensive hotels where the service is held slowly fills up. This is a young church, founded only three years ago. A few weeks before this service, the pastor who founded the church was ordained as bishop. I estimate that in every row of about eight chairs there are one or two men, the rest are female. There is a number of children as well. Worship is a combination of singing songs of praise and songs of prayer. During prayer, the choir leader and others in the congregation speak in tongues from time to time. I can see the bishop in the first row, kneeling in prayer. A woman with a professional camera seizes the moment and takes a picture. After a while, the bishop comes up on stage, takes the microphone from the choir leader and leads the congregation in another worship song. Then the music softens as the bishop leads the congregation in prayer. He urges the listeners to take this moment to enjoy the presence of God, to forget about everything else and focus on the Lord. Around me, I hear people softly praying. –Take this moment to sun-bask in His presence. Don't mention your problems now. Just feel His presence. He is your lover, for now just love him! Some members of the praise team kneel down, most of the congregation is still standing. –There is a stillness now, something is happening. When there is a stillness like this, it means that burdens are lifted. The prayer blends into a song: –There is a stillness in the atmosphere, come lay down your burden, He is here.

The start of this service is similar to Tanya Luhrmann's description of the American evangelical experience (2012): worship is about an intimate, intensely personal relationship with God and/or Jesus. This relationship can be described in terms associated with romance, like the bishop describes God as 'your lover'. The church service soon shifts focus from worship to receiving prosperity. According to prosperity or 'faith' theology, Christians are entitled to material blessings. Brouwer, Gifford & Rose (1996) state that the prosperity gospel is one of the core beliefs of what they describe as the 'American gospel'.

With some background music, the bishop starts to quicken the pace of the service. –Somebody shout to the Lord!! he orders, and the congregation cheers. –Celebrate your miracle today, before it comes. Celebrate your marriage! Celebrate your engagement! Celebrate your car! Celebrate your home!! The congregation responds with enthusiastic amens. –Maybe it makes you look crazy, yet the Bible says God speaks things there are not, and they are there. Create something this afternoon!! The two girls sitting next to me take this moment to finally rise from their seats; one of them seems to be crying.

After this prayer, the music stops and the bishop starts his sermon. The idea of the afternoon

service is that there is time for deliverance, while in the morning services the message has a more central space. The topic this afternoon is 'The secrecy of evil inheritance'. Some people have a secret evil inheritance that causes them to be in poverty, disease or have problems in relationships. Numbers 14:18 (King James version) is projected on a screen: –The Lord is longsuffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.¶ The bishop explains that if someone in your ancestry does something wrong, a generational curse is laid over the family. –Some people say this doesn't exist,¶ he says, –but it's right here in the Bible.¶ He continues explaining that God doesn't look at a person's past, but at the future. –You are not a prisoner of your past, but a pioneer of your future! God relates to you based on what you are destined to become. Shout 'I receive it!'¶ The congregation shouts. Even so, the actions of grandparents do affect people today. Divorce runs in some families, in others it is barrenness, or polygamy, or almost everyone dies of AIDS.

The sermon combines ideas from several neo-Pentecostal preachers. The congregation is encouraged to celebrate their prosperity even before it has materialized – that is how certain their entitlement to miracles is. This power of positive thinking is often invoked, not only by neo-Pentecostal theologians, but also by writers in business spirituality and alternative medicine. That anyone can choose to be either a prisoner of their past or a pioneer of their future is a view attributed to the author and motivational speaker Deepak Chopra (1997:170). Another, slightly conflicting, notion is the 'generational curse', the idea that involvement with magical practices is satanic and leaves a psychic injury that can be inherited by children and grandchildren. This notion was developed by Kurt E. Koch (1913-1987), a German Lutheran pastor with a profound influence on American neo-Pentecostal theology. Koch's emphasis on the satanic makes him one of the forerunners of the ideology behind the Satanism scare in the 1980s (Ellis 2000). The idea of the generational curse finds wide acclaim in African neo-Pentecostal churches, where it possibly resonates with the traditional conviction that the ancestors are able to act in a person's life, bestowing blessings or harm. It can also be used as an explanation for poverty in Africa, claiming that the involvement of (great)grandparents who were not yet converted to Christianity in occult practices still curses their descendants with deprivation. In his sermon, the bishop uses testimonies – of finding wealth, of healing, and of involvement in Satanism – as cases to illustrate his sermon.

–Last week,¶ the bishop says, –we heard the man here who testified that he killed his four children, his business did not yield and the other children left him. That is evil inheritance.¶ He calls the man who gave his testimony last week to the front together with his wife. He reminds the congregation that in the previous week they prayed that the children might come together with their parents. The children were told by another pastor that if they would help, or even speak to, their parents, they would be sacrificed by the father who was a Satanist. Now, last week's prayer is answered, because the children are here in the church. The bishop asks them to come to the front, and six young men and women come. The mother says: –That child, the youngest, she would wake up in the night, and she would start to dance, without waking up. She would say: 'I'm not going where you are going. I would rather kill myself'¶ The bishop looks searchingly to the congregation. –Where is Dora?¶ he says, –she was also initiated at a young age. That is what happens in the underworld. When a child seems to be dancing in her sleep, she is actually dancing in the underworld. It is not normal for a child to be so stubborn.¶ Now that the whole family is gathered in front, the bishop wants to pray for them. He invites the whole congregation to stretch their arms towards them and pray. He starts a prayer that the father has to repeat word for word. –Lord Jesus, today I repent of witchcraft and Satanism. I repent for the death of four

children. May their blood be cleansed from my hands. Today I break every curse.¶ The prayer proceeds haltingly, as the father doesn't really speak English and obviously doesn't know or understand every word he has to repeat. –Every altar, every witchdoctor, I renounce them. Let every evil altar break. The graveyard I went to, I disconnect. Let the life of Christ...¶ Here the prayer stops: the father cannot say 'Christ'. This is a meaningful moment, and the bishop asks the whole congregation to pray for the father, to loosen his bonds with the devil. After a few moments, the father is able to continue: –Let the life of Christ set me free. I renounce Satan. I refuse you. Heal my life. Heal my family. Heal my wife. Father, set me free. Heal me. I bless my children. May all be well with them.¶ The bishop continues praying for the father, saying God will deliver him today, and declaring him whole. Finished with the father, the bishop starts to anoint the children. –You are not the next to die. You shall blossom. I break every curse. May God open doors for you.¶ Coming to the girl who used to dance in her sleep: –I disconnect this girl from all evil. I dedicate her to God. Let every initiation be broken. May she no longer dance in the underworld. Make her sweet. Remove her bitterness.¶ Meanwhile, a part of the congregation is praying together with the bishop, while another part is sitting back, maybe waiting for the altar call and their chance of deliverance.

In the previous week, the father gave an extensive testimony about his involvement in Satanism. He claimed responsibility for the death of four of his children, who all died in the month of September. It seems that another pastor had already interpreted these tragic deaths as caused by Satanism, and warned the remaining children to break off all contact with their parents. Today, the family is together again, which the bishop interprets as a process of healing and restoration. In his prayers, he emphasizes healing and wholeness. Healing is an important theme as well in the remainder of the service, where members of the congregation are invited to come to the front to be prayed over.

The bishop first calls those to the front that suffer from problems in their menstrual cycle, and mysterious discharges that may be related to an illness. Women and men come to the front, and the bishop, an assisting pastor and other deacons go from one to the other, touching them briefly on the head or shoulder. The music has started again, and the bishop sings his prayers. Then he says: –I see someone who has a slight paralysis on the left side. Maybe it was a small stroke. If it is you, come to the front.¶ A woman comes, and the bishop prays for her. –I see a woman who has been told there is a cervical incompetence. She even miscarried.¶ After some urging, two women come, and he prays for them. –I see a man with a problem with his testicles. I know this is a sensitive issue, but please don't be ashamed, come to the front if I'm talking about you.¶ Three men come. –Now this is a difficult thing to say. I want to pray for those who think they may be involved in blind Satanism. Those who say that maybe these stories about Satanism are about them.¶ Young people, at least thirty, including the girls sitting next to me, flock to the front to be prayed over. A few fall to the floor and manifest, but not many. After the prayers, the bishop remembers that he has blessed oil for the members of the congregation who brought plastic containers, and almost everyone goes to the front to receive this. After this, the congregation dissolves – by now it is after 17:00 hrs.

The first altar calls are not clearly related to topics touched by the bishop in this service. The bishop presents himself as a prophet, who spiritually sees or discerns that there is someone in the audience with a particular problem. The notion of prophecy in Zambia is of growing importance. Many church leaders are called prophets and practice prophecy in some form. Although there are different opinions on what prophecy actually means, it is often connected to the idea that God is actively involved in the world. He still speaks to his chosen people, and miracles have not ceased to happen.

Prophecy in contemporary Zambia has roots in Christian theology as well as in traditional practices (Kroesbergen-Kamps forthcoming). Like a traditional healer, a prophet is able to discern what is wrong with someone without hearing his complaints. The bishop's final altar call, for those who may be involved in 'blind Satanism', is the most popular. A blind Satanist is not aware that he or she is actually initiated into the ranks of evil, and may be causing harm to his relatives. The considerable response to this altar call shows that many – mainly young – people think this may be happening to them.

In this deliverance service, two elements stand out. First, the prominence of neo-Pentecostal theology with American roots. This 'American gospel' is of fundamental importance in the development of the discourse of Satanism in the US as well as in Africa. The description of this service shows how these ideas are deployed in contemporary Zambia. Second, the importance of healing in a deliverance service is unmistakable. Testimonies are used as evidence for God's healing powers, and those searching for healing take the opportunity to be prayed for. Of course, this emphasis on healing is not surprising in a deliverance service. However, even in more neutral settings the link between testimonies and healing is evident. The bishop of this church is more well-known as the host of a radio programme in which different kinds of testimonies are delivered. Some focus on overcoming barrenness, miraculous healing, or even coming back from the death. Others emphasize the dangers of traditional ceremonies and visiting traditional healers. Still others report about having spiritual husbands and wives. Some testimonies are specifically about Satanism – although Satanism is mentioned in some of the other testimonies as well. Between January and March 2015, over the course of several episodes, a guest named –Mr. X|| gave a testimony about his involvement in Satanism. What makes these episodes especially interesting is that listeners had the opportunity to call and send SMS messages with their questions. This makes it possible to establish how an audience hears a testimony. What does it make them think of? The following is a list of the questions asked during one of the episodes of Mr. X's testimony⁴⁸:

- The Bible says that money is the root of all evil. But we need money every day. So what can we do?
- I often dream that I am getting married.
- My niece, who is two years old, often wakes up at midnight. She cries and starts vomiting. This happens up to three times a week, but only when she is sleeping alone. When she is with her mother, it never happens.
- How should I preach?
- I have never slept with anyone, but now I have an STD. How is that possible?
- I often dream of women, and of getting married. And at the end of 2014 I dreamt about a snake entering my stomach.
- I am dreaming about a snake, it always bites me. Even when I'm in a big group, it comes to me to bite me. And one time the snake shouted: I am your wife.
- I am a pastor, and I fail to understand these things. Sometimes I pray for people, but the situation stays the same. I want to meet you.
- I have a problem in the night with my legs, they are twitching.

Of these questions, the first, about money, directly engages the topic of the testimony. Testimonies often explain how Satanists are rewarded with money for sacrificing people. Does that mean that money is always evil? But don't you need money to survive? Two questions seem to be by aspiring

⁴⁸ Most of the questions were asked in Chinyanja; this is my abridged translation.

pastors who want to learn from the host. The other seven questions all have the same underlying concern: What is wrong with me or my close relative? In all of the episodes where listeners have the opportunity to ask questions, this is the major concern. For the audience, hearing a testimony triggers questions about their own state of well-being. Academic literature often interprets testimonies of Satanism as reflecting the political and economic situation. This is not how a testimony is interpreted by its Zambian audience. For the audience, testimonies do not offer an abstract explanation about how the world works. Rather, upon hearing a testimony, people look at their own life and the lives of those close to them and wonder whether a similar thing could be happening to them. What they are looking for, in short, is spiritual healing.

3. Healing in Zambia

In Zambia (as in other African countries) physical health is seen as closely related to other aspects of well-being. According to Laurenti Magesa (1997), the essence of traditional African cosmology is maintaining or reviving the force of life. If this vital force flourishes, families enjoy good health, are relatively prosperous, and their children survive to adulthood. A disturbance in this life force – caused by moral transgressions or a malevolent human or spiritual entity – may cause problems in different spheres of life. From this perspective, physical illness and poverty may have a common cause. This means that the distinction between religious and medical specialists is not always evident, and that a health problem is not seen as merely a personal, medical issue, but as having a social and spiritual dimension as well. Compared to this holistic view of health, the Western, biomedical paradigm is limited, and it is often criticized for addressing symptoms but not the cause of an illness.

The difference in approach between traditional healing and Western biomedicine means that in many African countries two health care systems co-exist (Stekelenburg et. al., 2005:68). For a common, mild illness like a cold or a sore throat basic treatments are well known within the population, and no health specialist is involved (Steinforth 2008:66). For serious ailments treatment is sought in hospitals (Sugishita 2009), although in rural areas traditional medicine is often more accessible and affordable (Stekelenburg et. al., 2005; Van Rensburg 2004:33). The choice to visit a traditional healer is also made if the physical symptoms are unusual or persist even after a visit to the clinic (Sugishita 2009). Unexplained and lingering symptoms indicate that more is going on than just a medical problem, and the wider expertise of a holistic, traditional healer is required. Besides biomedicine and traditional healers, Christian faith healers form a third alternative for a person seeking healing and an explanation for his illness (Manglos & Trinitapoli 2011). In Zambia, the immensely popular archbishop Milingo was an early example of Christian faith healing. From 1973 to 1982, Milingo offered healing to people suffering from spirit possession (TerHaar & Ellis 1988). Like the traditional healers, Christian faith healers are receptive to non-biological causes of affliction. Although some faith healers discourage the use of biomedicine (Togarasei 2010), most accept the biomedical diagnosis of illness (Manglos & Trinitapoli 2011). Faith healing is commonly associated with mushrooming neo-Pentecostal churches like the one we started this article with. However, along with the rise of neo-Pentecostal churches a 'Pentecostalization' of mission churches has taken place as well. Manglos & Trinitapoli (2011:110) state that in Malawi –[a]s expected, Pentecostal congregations are most likely to be practicing faith healing and to score very high on our index of faith healing indicators. Yet the Mission Protestant churches closely follow Pentecostals as the most actively engaged in faith healing, and they are followed by African-independent

congregations, [and] Catholic parishes.¶ This is in accordance with my own observations in Zambian mission churches, especially in the Reformed Church in Zambia.

According to Christian faith healers, illness – as well as poverty and other problems – is caused by spiritual forces, for example through demon possession and witchcraft. These forces need to be expelled in deliverance. Deliverance can take place during a church service, as was the case in the service described above. During the service the pastor makes an 'altar call': he invites the members of the congregation who are suffering from afflictions to the front. The pastor and his assistants go from person to person, praying and laying their hands on them. In these services there is little time for any individual case; and often people are asked to come back later for an individual deliverance session. Many pastors offer individual deliverance at a fixed time during the week. In mainline churches like the Reformed Church in Zambia it may be a group of intercessors or 'prayer warriors', rather than the pastor, who pray for the afflicted. What happens during a deliverance session? This is a description of a session I observed:

Pastor Jere⁴⁹, who founded his Pentecostal church a few years ago, opens his house every Friday for anyone who needs healing. In the living room people are waiting for their turn, while pastor Jere is praying for a family in a spare room. The room is not big, maybe three by four meters. Apart from three plastic garden chairs, there is no furniture in the room. When I arrive, the pastor is praying for a young woman. Her mother and aunt are there as well. An assistant pastor records the proceedings on a tablet. The pastor's wife, his three year old son and two female helpers are in the room too. Soon the prayer for the daughter is finished, and it's the mother's turn. Both mother and daughter come from a provincial town in Zambia. They are visiting the mother's sister, who lives in Lusaka and visits pastor Jere's church. In their home town, mother and daughter go to one of Zambia's mainline churches.

Since it is her turn to be prayed for, the mother moves hesitantly to the centre of the room. –Don't worry, God is able, he will break every chain in your life,¶ pastor Jere says reassuringly. The woman nods and whispers –yes¶. –Okay, raise your hands. What's your name?¶ –Monica.¶ –Okay. Come two steps forward.¶ Pastor Jere touches Monica's forehead briefly, sighs, and starts to pray: –Father we bless your name that you are God... – close your eyes,¶ he tells Monica, and then he lays his hand on her forehead. –Every power of darkness that has held your life bondage. The spirit of blood pressure.¶ Still with her eyes closed, Monica lifts her head as if she is looking up. –Satanic invasion in your blood!¶ pastor Jere shouts, –I command you to go.¶ Monica tilts her head further and further backwards. –Loosen. Something is happening. Loosen, in Jesus name,¶ Pastor Jere says as Monica collapses to the ground.

The helpers arrange her neatly on the floor, taking care that her legs stay covered. Monica has her eyes closed and doesn't move. –Every demon that has held her children and have followed her family, I command you today to leave this bloodline and go. Your time has expired in the name of Jesus! Every sickness and disease,¶ the pastor says as he kneels next to Monica. At first she lies very still as the pastor commands the demons that she suffers from to go. Then she starts breathing heavily. –Something is happening. Get out of her! Get out of her! Get out of her! This body is under fire!¶ Every sentence the pastor says is accompanied by the –yes, yes!¶ saying helpers. –Yes, it's under fire!¶ –Under fire!¶ the helpers repeat. Monica groans. –I command you, open her mouth, surrender and leave this woman and go. You have been hiding in her blood, trying to kill this woman, but God wants her to live. I command you: go! Take your luggage! Take your sickness. Get out of her! Loose your hold! You spirit of a dead person! Your season is over, leave her.¶ Monica lets out a long moan, while Pastor Jere says: –Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go

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The names in this description have been changed.

out!! -In Jesus' name!! responds a helper. -Get out, right now! Leave her, you have no longer power over her soul. All of you devils, people that have died in the bloodline, I command you move. Leave her. Go back to the graveyard. Human spirits, leave her now, by the fire of the Holy Spirit, go!

Monica is moaning almost continuously now. Pastor Jere and a helper stand on either side of her head. -Get out of her. -Now. -Get out of her. -Now. -Get out of her!! -Now!! Monica's moaning turns to shouts. -Leave her now! I command you go!! -Aah!! -I command you go!! -Aah!! -I command you go!! -Aaaaah!! Monica's screams get louder as Pastor Jere continues to command the demon to get out. -Fire!!-Ai!!-Fire!!-Ai!!-Fire!!-Ai!! Monica shrieks, high and loud, and her body contorts. Helpers quickly cover her with a spare chitenge cloth. -By the fire of the Holy Spirit! Leave this woman! Go out! Go!! Monica rolls over from one side to the other. The screaming has stopped. -Go. This marriage is over! Get out! Leave her children!! Monica lies still. -Never come back in this body and go. This body belongs to Jesus. All devils are broken. Generational curse, your marriage is over. She'll never die of HIV, she'll never die of sugar, diabetes, she'll never die of blood pressure! I command you to take all the diseases out of her blood. Because God has come to heal her. I break every witchcraft disease. As Pastor Jere continues praying for her, Monica's muscles tighten. She seems to lift her hips from the floor and her arms are flailing and threshing. -I set you free. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, I declare freedom is your portion. It's over, in the name of Jesus. Then, suddenly, she lies still, and it is over. -Can you stand up? the pastor asks. Monica gets up with difficulty. Her hair is in disarray, and she looks exhausted. -Chains have been broken. She was married to the spirit of a big man. Demonic forces held her life and wanted to kill her. All the symptoms in your life will die. Your health will revive, and God will give you strength and power. You are healed, just now. With a soft voice, her head shaking, Monica says: -Thank you. -How are you feeling in your body right now? asks the pastor. -I'm just feeling light, Monica whispers. -Amen! Something heavy has been moved from you. The devil has left you. From today, you will feel different, your body is healed.

Monica is not a member of Pastor Jere's church, and he probably doesn't know much about her background. During the deliverance session, Pastor Jere mentions different causes of her problems almost as synonyms: (high) blood pressure, witchcraft, an ancestral spirit, a spiritual husband, Satanism – the pastor switches from one to the other sometimes within one sentence. Pastor Jere accepts a biomedical diagnosis like high blood pressure, but claims that the cause of this affliction lies elsewhere, in the spiritual world. In the deliverance session, the pastor addresses this deeper cause, and expels it. In the end, he promises Monica that from now on she is healed of high blood pressure, diabetes and HIV. The pastor doesn't explicitly tell Monica that she should stop taking medications, but it is conceivable that she might do. Researchers have found that faith in God and visiting healing sessions are among the reasons for people living with HIV to stop antiretroviral therapy (Musheke, Bond & Merten 2012).

Within the spiritual world, the differentiation between possession, witchcraft and Satanism seems not quite clear. For this reason, Opoku Onyinah (2004), a theologian from Ghana, suggests the term 'witchdemonology' as overarching concept. This doesn't necessarily mean that witchcraft, possession and Satanism are not seen as distinct phenomena. In a first deliverance session, different causes are possible. Eventually, Pastor Jere diagnoses Monica with possession by the spirit of a 'big man'. This diagnosis is supported by Monica's symptoms and responses: sometimes she moans in a deep, manly voice. She doesn't seem to respond to mentioning of Satanism or witchcraft, while she seems to moan louder when the pastor refers to a male spirit possessing her.

Scholars of religion have pointed at the theatrical quality of deliverance. David Frankfurter (2006:173), for example, notes: –Demonic deliverance is always a process of acting spontaneously and in response, shaping a demonic personality out of one's own impulses, and exorcist's demands, the responses of others, and some larger sense of what demons do.¶ The ritual of deliverance is a complicated interaction between the pastor, his helpers and the client. There is a rhythm in the call and response between pastor and helpers, and between the pastor and the possessed client. The client enacts the demons that the pastor has discerned in her through moaning, moving like a snake, or speaking in a different voice. When the demon is expelled, the client is quiet and relaxed again. This enactment affirms both the reality of spiritual forces and the power of the pastor who is able to dispel them.

4. Satanism as a diagnosis

Possession, witchcraft and Satanism are three spiritual causes of affliction. In their analysis of letters sent to Archbishop Milingo, Gerrie terHaar (1992:110f) gives a pathology of possession: –Physical symptoms commonly considered to be caused by spirit possession include many complaints with no obvious physical cause [...]. General aches and pains fall into this category. So does the mysterious sensation of a lump travelling round the body. Bad smells, lack of concentration, obsessive behaviour, impotence, infertility, social strife and disturbing dreams are also typical symptoms of spirit possession.¶ Although witchcraft may cause similar complaints, typically witchcraft is associated with sudden, severe illness (Van Binsbergen 1981:141), and misfortune in general (Sugishita 2009:440). Swollen legs, claimed to be caused by stepping on a charm, are also attributed to witchcraft (Stekelenburg et. al. 2005:74ff). In deciding whether problems are caused by possession or witchcraft not only the symptoms are relevant. The response of the client during deliverance is important too, as is the assessment of the client and her family. Bernard Udelhoven has interviewed many people suffering from spiritual afflictions, and provides more than twenty specific cases in his book on dealing with spirits, witchcraft and Satanism (2015). In some cases a relative has been accused of witchcraft before, and witchcraft becomes the main frame of interpretation. Other families have a history of spirit possession, and interpret problems in that way. This discussion of the diagnoses of witchcraft and possession shows that symptoms, the response of the client and the context of the client all help in establishing what the problem is. In what situation is Satanism the preferred diagnosis? Bishop Sakala is another founder of his own church, in a town in Northern Zambia. His nephew had an experience with Satanism, which led to the involvement of Bishop Sakala⁵⁰ both as a family member and as a pastor.

My nephew Chisomo is the son of my younger brother, who lives in the Copperbelt. He used to walk to school everyday, a two hour walk. His father didn't have money for his lunch, but he had a friend who invited him to his home to have lunch with his family. One time they exchanged school uniforms – later we realised that this was how Chisomo was initiated. At another time the friend brought a packed lunch to school, and told Chisomo, –Today we'll have very special food!¶ Later Chisomo understood that the soup was actually blood. I had the feeling that there was something wrong with my relatives on the Copperbelt. I had to persuade my brother to send Chisomo to me, so I could have him close for a while. When he was staying with me he showed some strange behaviour. He wouldn't talk. He would sit in the yard where the chickens are, and he would stay there all afternoon. Once we found him there lying on the ground, unconscious. At

50 The names are changed.

the hospital they said it was malaria, but I think it was something from the underworld. Later he confessed that he had an altar there, which he used to fly to Chingola. He said that Chingola is the headquarters of the Satanists in that region. Another strange thing: while he was staying in my house, he used to eat soap. I called his father, and he confirmed that Chisomo ate soap at their home as well. Then a pastor from Tanzania who was visiting us told me that this is a sign of demon possession. So we prayed over him, and he manifested. He even confessed that he had pledged my daughters for sacrifice. During exorcism the demon said that the first daughter would be sacrificed that evening at 21 hrs – and promptly one of my daughters had trouble breathing. We prayed and prayed and she survived. The next day I continued praying for Chisomo. This time the demon said: 'Now the contract is broken, but Satan can mend it again.' We prayed more, binding the demons and finally the contract was gone. Chisomo confessed that he had sacrificed more than five hundred people, including a pastor in Kenya and a pastor in Namibia. After this, his father took Chisomo back to the Copperbelt. I doubt whether he is really delivered. His father now denies that his son ever was involved with Satanism, and because of this we don't speak any more.

Satanism occurs mainly in young people. For older clients visiting a Christian faith healer a diagnosis of possession or witchcraft is more likely. Often the youth and/or his family have a feeling that there is something wrong. There may be abnormal behaviour. Eating soap, like Chisomo, is an isolated example. More frequent are strange happenings related to sleep: a girl who goes to sleep in her bed and is found somewhere else every night (Udelhoven 2015:237ff), or the little girl from the deliverance service we started this article with, who dances in her sleep. Disturbing dreams – although absent in Chisomo's story – may enforce the feeling that something is happening. Dream-images that many ex-Satanists recount in their testimonies are dreaming of eating and dreaming of getting married or nursing a baby. These dreams are an indicator that something is not right. Dreams are seen as messages from the spiritual world; and disturbing dreams are often interpreted as symptoms of an affliction with a spiritual cause. This cause can still be diverse. As one family told Bernard Udelhoven, –we don't know really what it is: ngulu [a type of disturbing spirit known in Bemba tradition], or something from the dead, or witchcraft, or Satanism.]

Vague complaints and suspicions like these are often enough to call on the help of a pastor. If, during prayer, demons manifest (that is: the client falls into a trance and moves or speaks in a strange way) the feeling that something is wrong is confirmed. The behaviour of the client during the healing prayers may point specifically to Satanism, for example if the client obviously avoids religious symbols like the Bible or the name of Jesus Christ. During deliverance the client may also say things about Satanism that he or she later doesn't remember. When he is prayed for, a demon speaks through Chisomo, confessing that Bishop Sakala's daughters are next in line for sacrifice. On a website about Satanism and the deliverance ministry, a concerned young woman writes: –Usually I am not going to other churches. My friend asked me to come. She had manifested during prayer with a certain pastor and said something about me. The pastor told her to bring me for prayers. So I went with her, though I felt uncomfortable. [...] I was scared cause [the pastor] told me that he saw something wrong with me. When he prayed, I collapsed. I don't know what I said. They say I manifested demons. They also say I talked about my family. He said I should bring my aunt about whom I had revealed something, though I don't even know what I said.¶ The pastor is an important figure in the confirmation of the diagnosis of Satanism. Bishop Sakala is convinced that his nephew Chisomo was – or may even still be – a Satanist. However, the father did not accept that his son might be a Satanist. The diagnosis of a pastor needs to be accepted by the client and his or her

family.

A sign that points specifically to Satanism is anti-social behaviour. A Satanist who kills those whom he should care for the most is the quintessence of an anti-social character. The suspected Satanist generally doesn't show outright criminal or aggressive behaviour, but is anti-social in the sense of being solitary and wilful, and feeling unaccepted by their peers or relatives. Gideon Kabila, one of the most well-known ex-Satanists in Zambia, describes his youth as follows:

-My mother and father divorced when I was young and mum decided to go and stay in Namibia where I was taken with her. One thing that surprised me a lot was that I had no friends at school, and every time I wanted to contribute in class, they could laugh at me. This made me develop bitterness and I stopped contributing in class.¶

Ex-Satanists often describe themselves as 'stubborn', not wanting to accept the authority of their parents. Escaping from their parents' control is often not so difficult, since many of the ex-Satanists describe growing up in broken and unstable homes. They live with a single parent, or are moved from a parent to a grandparent, to an aunt. Some ex-Satanists remember that they used to prefer to be alone, rather than hang out with friends. Like Chisomo, they were quiet, introverted kids. One ex-Satanist expresses it like this: -I was very quiet. I never had friends, and I never liked being around people. I would lock myself in my bedroom; I would stay there the whole day.¶ A social disability like introversion is seen as abnormal. Abnormal behaviour points to a spiritual affliction, and social disabilities such as being stubborn or introverted are interpreted as a sign specifically of Satanism.

5. Conclusion

In Zambia, audiences hear testimonies in the context of spiritual healing. Afflictions like physical illness, mental problems, but also problems in relationships and poverty are widely believed to have a spiritual cause. Christian faith healing is one of the ways to deal with these afflictions. Satanism is one of the possible spiritual causes for trouble. Other causes are possession and witchcraft. Which of these phenomena is identified as cause depends on several factors: the symptoms and responses of the client, the suspicions of relatives and the frame of interpretation preferred by the pastor. Factors that encourage a diagnosis of Satanism are youth, disturbing dreams, typical behaviour during deliverance, and, especially, social disabilities.

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