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# PHDS, GOSPRENEURSHIP, GLOBALIZATION AND THE PENTECOSTAL 'NEW WAVE' IN ZIMBABWE

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**ABSTRACT**

*Researches on Pentecostal Christianity continue to grow in Africa studies. Much of the observation is that Southern Africa, in general and Zimbabwe, in particular has become the stronghold of a bourgeoning new Pentecostal wave today. The study situates this new religious phenomenon in the framework provided by the prophetic healing deliverances (PHDs) in light of the emerging "gospreneurship" and globalization. The paper posits that the Pentecostal Christianity is a response to a deep human crisis in society, whose spirituality calls for a mystical one-on-one relationship with the divine. This spirituality is behind the perceived efficacy of the PHDs that have sustained the miraculous riddles wrought by some of the high profile religious luminaries in contemporary Zimbabwe.*

**Key Words:** Globalization, Gospreneurship, Pentecostal Christianity, Prophecy, Healing, Deliverance

## Introduction

Following the death of the former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, known in political circles as the 'Iron Lady', two Zimbabwean news agencies ran a similar story of a 'prophecy' pertaining to her death. *The Herald* (9 April 2013) carried the banner 'Did Makandiwa foresee Iron lady's death?' Not to be outdone, the *Bulawayo24 News*, which is an

online news source, had the story under an insightful title 'Prophet Angel's prophecy on the death of Margaret Thatcher – video'. The story that was ascribed to the two youthful 'prophets' went as follows: he (Makandiwa or Angel) told his followers that he:

> saw something, because when you are praying you see people you see places and events at different times … I saw tears on the snow and I saw a woman's garment, very old garment coming down. When I looked at it, it turned into a flag and I saw tears on the snow, what is this, what is this snow, tears for what? Garment coming down and when I looked at it, it turned into a flag … I need to pray for other countries; prophets have to pray for other nations, I know what I am saying.

While the debate could easily centre on who prophesied the death of the Iron Lady, the aim of this paper is to discuss the profound impact that these two particular prophets and other Pentecostal 'prophets' have had in Zimbabwe as a predominantly Christian society, in particular and on the efficacy of religious belief systems, in general. Furthermore, the study seeks to problematize the foregoing endeavour through configuring the relevance of the tripartite notions of holy hustlers, globalization and prophecy in light of the careers of these controversial religious personalities. In order to make a full analysis, the study engages a genealogical approach to the evolvement of Christianity as well as the insurgence of Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe. In addition, the study discusses the influence of globalization to the spread of the new brand of worshipping, especially associated with the new generation of ministers of religion in Africa and even beyond. This is the milieu which has witnessed the materialization of the Pentecostal 'new wave' in the African continent and therein how Zimbabwe is increasingly emerging as the lacuna of Pentecostal Christianity.

## Religious landscape in Zimbabwe

In contrast to the increased secularisation in the West (Elphick, 1997: 347-369), religion occupies a central role in both the people's private and public lives in Zimbabwe. This, in some sense, speaks to the debate that Chakrabarty (2000: 16) has successfully articulated, regarding the issue whether the prevalence of religion and secularism relate to stages of human societal development. *Inter alia*, the study subscribes to the view that religious beliefs profoundly affect human activities, including people's occupations, dress code, morality, birth control, sexuality,

associations, world views and political affiliations (http://www.credong.org/influences-of-religion-on-daily-life.php).

A wide array of religions and religious beliefs litter the spiritual landscape of the country. This makes Zimbabwe a 'multi-religious country' (Chitando, 2011: 43). Despite intermittent reference to traditional ancestral beliefs as well as the secret consulting of traditional African healers by up to 80 percent of Zimbabweans (*Religion in Zimbabwe* 2012), the majority of Zimbabweans claim to be Christians. The minority percentage of the population differentially belongs to an array of other smaller religions. To this end, while there are no accurate statistics on the religious demographics in Zimbabwe, 84 percent of the population in Zimbabwe is Christian. In terms of typologies, 33% represent Apostolics, 17% Pentecostals, 16% are mainline Protestants, 10% Catholics and 8% are other Christians (*Religion in Zimbabwe*, 2012). The remainders of the country's religious beliefs are distributed as follows: African Traditional Religions: 3%; Islam and Other religions: less than 1%, and Non-religious: 12% (Ibid).

Furthermore, while the Zimbabwean constitution guarantees freedom of religion many of the nation's public holidays are Christian-based, notably Easter and Christmas. Again, at the occasion of most of State functions the religion that is foregrounded is Christianity, where the opening and closing prayers are given by Christian pastors. Moreover, the same observation is true on the swearing in of judges, presidents and members of parliament where the incoming are sworn in holding the Christian bible. Because of this preponderance, Christianity is perceived to be the religion of the land (Zimbudzana, 2011). This perception has also been further strengthened by the some key Zimbabwean politicians. For instance, the former Minister of Finance in the last Inclusive government, Tendai Biti, after allegedly receiving an envelope with a bullet, claimed that he did not worry for his security because 'God is my bodyguard' (*The Guardian*, 6 August 2009). In addition, President Mugabe has consistently professed his Roman Catholicism faith and engaged it to castigate homosexuals. Outside of the political arena, all state, and non-state, universities in Zimbabwe have an Ecumenical Chaplain's office responsible for the spiritual wellbeing of the universities communities. At another level, as the economic meltdown in the new millennium worsened ordinary Zimbabweans in both urban and rural areas visibly identified with Christianity. To demonstrate this, there was increased use of the lunch hours for worshipping, as well as the increased use of the spaces 'like parks, market places, bus

stations, in moving buses, even taxis [and] beer halls' (Machingura, 2011: 14) to spread the word of God.

**Early spread of Christianity in Zimbabwe**

The long trajectory of the growth of Christianity in Zimbabwe goes back to the intercourse between the classical Mutapa Empire and the Portuguese missionaries. The arrival of the Jesuit missionary, Father Goncalo da Silveira, in the 1561, who desired the conversion of the Mutapas to Christianity to ward off Islamic influence and increase the Portuguese trading to the extent that Mudenge calls him 'more or less a one-man army of invasion on behalf of Portugal and Rome' (Mudenge, 2011: 63-64) in a serious sense marked the genesis of a sustained interaction between Portuguese missionaries and the Mutapas. At another level, it marks the start of the continuous genealogy between the missionaries and indigenous Zimbabweans. While initially successful in courting the Mutapa rulers and others within a short space of time, da Silveira was killed especially for causing spiritual disharmony in the state (Ibid: 64). Following the murder, the Portuguese set out to avenge his death and sought to install their puppets as rulers and to try to be kingmakers of the kingdom (Mudenge, 2011). On the whole, through the confluence of the Portuguese missionary, trading, economic interests in Mutapa gold, political interests and military invasions starting with the Barreto-Homen invasions from the 1570s to 1630s which served to confirm the new Portuguese ideology over the Mutapa of the 'sword and fire' (conquest and colonisation) (Ibid: 2011; Beach 1984: 30), as well as the rise of the Rozvi, the collapse of the Mutapa State was sealed (Mudenge, 2011: 201-245).

The Portuguese missionaries did not have much success in converting or influencing religion or political life in the Rozvi state that 'succeeded' the Mutapa State as the dominant power on the Zimbabwe plateau. This was primarily hinged on the fact that the Rozvi had militarily defeated the Portuguese in 1685 whereupon they restricted Portuguese activities to the periphery of the State and in the north-eastern areas (Beach, 1984:34). In addition, Portuguese trading in the new State was channeled through the use of African middlemen (*vashambadzi*) who traded with the Portuguese at designated *feiras* (markets), which were again in the north-east (Beach, 1984:34).

Furthermore, the Rozvi capital was established far away from the coast, that is, in the South-Western area at Danangombe.

With the collapse of the Rozvi under the weight of the raids by several Nguni groups, the Ndebele state emerged. Again, the ambivalent relations between the state and Christian missionaries continued. While not preventing their subjects from interacting with the missionaries, the Ndebele rulers greatly circumscribed the activities of the missionaries. This included allowing only one mission station at Inyati to operate in the kingdom by the London Missionary Society (Zvobgo, 1986). Elsewhere in Shona-speaking areas Christianity spread slowly because it was perceived as a threat to the African traditional belief systems. As Helene Hugo, a daughter of one of the Dutch Reformed Church missionaries in Chivi district, asserts, this was the result of '[t]he inhabitants of Chibi [being] suspicious and hostile towards [Christianity] … they did not want to worship the "foreign God" of the white people, as they were quite happy with their own religious beliefs and rites' (Hugo cited in Mazarire, 2004: 7). While the explanation given referred specifically to Chivi, it can be extended to the other parts of the country, including Matebeleland.

**Colonial Christianity and African Independent Churches**

Christianity witnessed a tremendous advance in Zimbabwe after 1875, largely because it was a handmaiden of colonialism (Dube, 2007). Missionaries had played differing roles during the colonisation of the country and a political role in pacifying Africans to tolerate the exploitation and abuses of settler capitalism. As such it was little surprise that 'Christianity made significant inroads because of empirical colonization' because 'it was seen as the … the religion of the colonial master and as such subjects had to identify with the master' (Zimbudzana, 2011). Furthermore, many Christian missions were given free farmlands, which they were supposed to utilize to generate income and to demonstrate the benefits of European civilization in addition to the freedom to spread the gospel they were granted (Togarasei, 2009: 52). At another level, it is also necessary to point out that various churches apportioned themselves or began to work from different regions of the country. For example, 'the Anglican Church and the United Methodist Church concentrated their work in the eastern region of the country, the Evangelical Lutheran

Church concentrated in the southwestern part of the country, and the Dutch Reformed Church were in the southern part' apparently in an effort to reduce 'missionary conflicts' (Ibid).

This rapid Christianization was notwithstanding the strenuous efforts to resist the process by the locals. Among the residents of Matebeleland, especially the Ndebele-speaking and Kalanga-speaking, this was differentially resisted because the locals associated Christianity with colonialism, perceived Christianity alongside efforts to dissuade them from following their traditional beliefs through ancestors, and because it was averse to their practices of polygamy and the payment of bride wealth (*lobola*) (Zvobgo, 1986: 44-45; 49-50). Furthermore, there was fear among some Ndebele chiefs, like Tshitshi, who felt that converted subjects would be difficult to control (Ibid: 48). Thus, by trying to appease both missionaries who aimed at large-scale conversions and his subjects who were against conversion, Tshitshi ended up vacillating in order to retain his influence over the two opposing camps (Ibid). While chief Tshitshi vacillated and retained the old Ndebele ambivalent strategy of allowing subjects to hear the Christian teachings but simultaneously discouraging open conversion, chief Gambo Sithole openly invited missionaries to set up mission cum education centres in his area (Ibid).

While it can be seen that there were different strategies that local chiefs and rulers employed to deal with Christianity, it can be broadly argued that conversions remained below the expected levels for the missionaries. This, as Zvobgo above has demonstrated, was based on the key social reasons, related to the desire by the locals to hold on to the practices of polygamy and the payment of *lobola* both in Matebeleland and Mashonaland, that worked to militate against the conversion of locals to Christianity as many sought to hold on to these practices. Added to the above, one could also argue plausibly that some of the locals continued to worship their traditional religions for various reasons. As well, as Mazarire (2004: 13) posits, Christianity was perceived by many locals as a tool of colonialism. This perception was buttressed by the efforts by some churches or missionaries to be 'state[s] within the state' where in some instances the churches utilized compulsive and rather violent methods similar to those employed by the state which dispossessed Africans of their cattle, extracted taxes from Africans, employed segregationist policies or the forced abandonment of certain age old practices in their mission *civilatrice* (Mazarire, 2004: 11-18). Because of these failures to convert many locals to

Christianity, the missionaries looked up to the central government to use force to suppress the African practices (Zvobgo, 1986: 46) and to force conversion to Christianity. However, the government avoided that confrontational path for fear of instigating another war with the locals who had risen twice in a space of less than five years, in 1893 and 1896 (Ibid). On their part the Jesuits missionaries forcibly delisted polygamists from their churches by, for example, defrocking some polygamous congregants at Empandeni in 1902 (Ibid).

Partly because of the failure to convert Africans in Zimbabwe through force, there was established the Ministry of Preaching, which utilised indigenous personnel and languages in the spreading of Christianity to their peers from around 1898 (Zvobgo, 1986: 50-51). Some of the early black preachers were Njamhlope, who worked at Empandeni, Peter Mantiziba who was deployed in the Selukwe Methodist Circuit, and Andria Khumalo Mtshede who worked in Zambia as an evangelist and a preacher (Ibid: 51-52). Another strategy that bought many Africans into Christianity was the translation of the bible into vernacular languages, beginning with the new testament by 1907 (Ibid: 52-3). For the latter effort, there were varying undertakings at such centres as Old Umtali, St Augustine's, Chishawasha and Morgenster to produce [parts of] the bible and other Christian literature in indigenous languages (Ranger, 1989: 127). A key move was also the establishment of medical mission stations which combined facilities for healing the sick, educational centres and church facilities (Zvobgo, 1986: 54). On the whole, the medical missions had a three-pronged effort at converting Africans to Christianity, the sick who would be 'healed', the students who would be indoctrinated and the church goers would be converted at hospitals, schools and churches, respectively (Ibid).

Part of the resistance to white Christian missioning was the establishment of indigenous independent churches. These churches were a part of those that were 'autonomous from white control and [were] frequently spiritist' (Duke *et al*, 1995: 147). These churches emphasised the spiritual relationship with God, and were 'separatist, schismatic and anti-establishment' (Barrett, 1982 in Duke *et al*, 1995: 147). Due to their incorporation of the ideals of 'independence' an unresolved debate has raged on their precise character: did they vouch for political freedom in addition to the religious freedom for the Africans? However, this debate is outside the aim for this paper. It also has to be stated that most of these churches, like the Zion Christian Church and

various sects of the *vapositori* (African Apostolic Churches), accepted polygamy. Moreover, while acknowledging the Christian holy trinity, these churches, also incorporated Africans existentialist fears including beliefs and fears in witchcraft and spirits in their doctrines (Bourdillon, 1986: 73). These churches had the overall impact of helping to undercut the successes of white Christian missionaries in converting the indigenous Zimbabweans. They also helped to undermine government authority among Africans, including reducing attendance at schools (Mazarire, 2004: 19).

**Globalization and Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe**

The post-modern and multi-form problematic of globalization which emanates, roughly, after the 1960s and is driven by the seismic transformations in information and communication technologies, has profoundly altered global interactions. At the pedestrian level, it refers to the temporal and spartial compressions for doing things resulting in the emergence of a global village, the creation of worldwide interconnectedness, uniformity and standardization along Western liberal benchmarks in many spheres of life, including economic, political and social spheres (Tagarirofa and Tobias, 2013). Because globalisation is a process that is spread from the West, it has become a controversial phenomenon in the post-colony. The profound debate centres on the question, which, however, largely falls outside of the purview of this essay; does it signify a new imperialism? This question carries some religious importance if one considers the profound discussion that Machingura (2011: 13-14), for example, raised alluding to the 'Americanization' of Zimbabwean Pentecostalism when referring to the 'US-style of evangelism … complete with charismatic preachers and live bands that are accompanied by the faithful falling to the floor and speaking in tongues' as well as the increased adoption of information communication technologies, that is the television, the internet, compact discs, banners and car stickers in spreading the gospel.

From the above, Christianity in Zimbabwe has therefore not escaped the entrapments of globalisation, and recently it has had to contend with the resurgence of Pentecostalism. According to Maxwell (2005: 5), Pentecostalism, together with Evangelicals and Charismatics, falls under the genre of what has been dubbed as Born Again Christianity. The Born Again Christians are supposed to have undergone a spiritual revolution and acquired a new spiritual

relationship with God instead of focusing on scriptures as is dominant in the mainstream Christian denominations like Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism (Ibid).

Originating in the USA at the beginning of the twentieth century, Pentecostalism is a fast growing movement with between a quarter billion to more than half a billion adherents throughout the world. The majority of these live in the Global South, including in Africa, Asia, Oceania and Latin America (Robbins, 2004: 117-118). Besides the importance of information communication technologies, especially the internet and television, in facilitating the global spread of Pentecostalism, like the other phenomena of globalisation, the increased reach of Pentecostalism across the breadth of the world can be attributed to its form. In part, the spread of Pentecostalism has been helped by its adaptability to local cultures and vice versa, which has resulted in its permeation across many socio-economic groups including the rich, middle classes, the poor and the marginalised of the developing world (Ibid: 118). Moreover, Pentecostalism, like the other Born Again Christian movements, emphasises the literal 'infallibility of [the] scripture' and it also 'stress[es] the centrality of a conversion experience' and the 'possessing [of] the "gifts of the spirits": divine healing, *glossolalia*, exorcism and prophecy' (Maxwell, 2005:5).

In Zimbabwe, as Maxwell (2005) has shown, the ideals of the Pentecostal Christianity were initially limited to, and were mostly spread by, the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) and Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa- Forward in FAith (ZAOGA FIF). These churches started operating in the country during the colonial period around the 1950s and 1960s (Ibid). Over time, these churches have grown in stature to the extent that the ZAOGA FIF boasts of having established a university, the Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University (ZEGU) by 2012 in Bindura. ZAOGA FIF also boasts of having some church branches in 165 countries across the globe (Guti, 2012). However, a 'new wave' of Pentecostalism hit the country from the 1990s, which resulted in the widespread presence of Pentecostal churches in the country. Like the earlier Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe, and other Pentecostal movements across the world, the new wave Pentecostalism was led by charismatic leaders, who in some sense became the glue that kept the churches together and their personalities became synonymous with their churches. The latter was a function of the charismatics also being the founders and/ or chief 'prophets' of their churches.

It is to the development into dominance of this 'new wave' Pentecostalism that is described and explained in the next section that we turn to.

**Zimbabwe as the Epicentre of a Pentecostal Wave**

The Zimbabwe crisis which rocked the country from the 1990s and which reached its climax in 2008 helps significantly to account for the phenomenal spread of Pentecostalism in the country. On the whole, the crisis increased existential and spiritual insecurities in the country. This is in agreement with the insight of Werbner (2011) who posits that 'around the world, the quest for well-being and personal security brings new Christian churches and vast numbers of followers' often led by Charismatics who are thought to possess 'extraordinary spiritual gifts'. Following this mode, it was therefore little surprise that the two episodes that are associated with widespread economic challenges in post-colonial Zimbabwe have also been associated with the powerful [re]incarnations of Charismatics-led Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe. The one major moment of the revival of Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe was the period of the economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP) from the early 1990s, and secondly, the period of the Zimbabwe crisis starting from 1998 to 2008 (Maxwell, 2005:4-6). In a nutshell, economic hardships worsened, due to the political polarity, removal of educational and health subsidies, collapse of the local industry, worsening land shortages and other challenges, increased rural to urban migration, and, increased crime (Ibid: 7; Sachikonye, 2012). These woes sent some shock waves internationally so much that some western nations like the USA, UK, Germany, Canada and Australia imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe from 2002 which have helped to increase political polarization in the country. It is therefore of little surprise that at the start of the new millennium, adherents swelled in Pentecostal churches due to the further worsening of living conditions which led to increased homelessness and unemployment, that consequently resulted in increased labour unrest, strikes and militancy (Maxwell, 2005: 6). What drew congregants, again, according to Maxwell (2005), was that Pentecostalism dovetailed existential and survivalist needs of the congregants under economic, social or political duress to their sermons (Ibid: 4). In his words, Pentecostal religion:

> helps to create an acquisitive, flexible person better suited to coping with neoliberalism's economic agenda … [it also] provides believers with security in the face of state retrenchment, the capriciousness of global capitalism and growing levels of violence and crime. Pentecostal religion offers hope to those

> suffering from a sense of personal abjection created by the shattered hopes of independence and the elusive promise of modernity (Ibid: 4).

Primarily, the Pentecostal Christianity does this through focusing more on contemporary needs of the society it operates in than on preaching theology (Ibid: 8). As evinced by the two periods above of the high swellings of adherents, the contemporary issues were on raising people's hope, basically through a 'message of redemption', that promised the transfiguration of adherents from the wretched to 'new Royal[s] … members of the kingdom of God … a chosen people … holy, set apart and clean' (Ibid: 15).

Related as well is the fact that existential challenges also increase spiritual insecurity. Studies across the African continent affirm to this (Ashforth, 2005; & Geschiere, P and C Fisiy, 1994). To exemplify, Ashforth notes for example that poverty, violence, political oppression and the scourge of Human Immune Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) increased South African township dwellers insecurities which led them to increased belief in occult practices. Closer home, Ranger (1987) and Andersson (2002) have also established that increased reference to witchcraft in post-colonial Zimbabwe was as a result of increased insecurities among the locals. With this in mind, it is not very surprising that among other issues, the leadership of the emergent Pentecostalism, in addition to trying to inculcate visions of economic prosperity, more often than not, also attempt to offer 'faith healing …spiritual protection … visions or the interpretation of dreams, or … insightful counseling or moral guidance in everyday life' (Werbner, 2011; 1).

**New Pentecostal Wave: New Style globalization?**

A trend that is interesting is that Zimbabwe has become a centre for the global spread of Pentecostal Christianity in the new millennium. This trend runs counter to the normative spread global processes and trends in which new waves of both Christian and non-Christian phenomena spread from the developed into the developing countries. It also runs counter to the process of the spread of "original" Pentecostalism in the world. Generally, it is accepted that the Pentecostalism that spread from Topeka (USA) gave birth to the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), the 'originary' Pentecostal church in Southern Africa (Machingura, 2011: 15-16). Against this flow, the trend that has been followed by the new wave Pentecostal charismatic-led churches on

the new millennium Zimbabwean landscape is to minister and spread their doctrines into the Southern African region as well as overseas to countries such as the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA). To this extent, it was not uncommon to hear or read in the press, for example that a Zimbabwean prophet had performed miracles in, say, South Africa, Botswana, or the UK. On the one hand, however, one notes that this trend tends to follow the major patterns discernible in the distribution of the Zimbabwe people in the Diaspora, which is mainly located in South Africa, Botswana and the UK (Crush and Tevera, 2010).

The above trend is however, not a novel one. To this end, ZAOGA FIF led in this process by spreading its missioning into neighbouring African states like Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Rwanda, Ghana, Tanzania and overseas, particularly to the UK (Maxwell, 2005: 6). In total, ZAOGA FIF has spread to about one hundred and sixty-five countries. The AFM had also set up branches in Africa, Europe, the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, and Asia (Machingura, 2011: 18).

In addition to spreading Pentecostalism from Zimbabwe, there is increased interconnection of activities between the Charismatic leaders from Zimbabwe and the others from across Africa. Discussions in the streets of the major towns of Zimbabwe were awash with rumours that the Zimbabwean Charismatics had gotten their powers from TB Joshua, a Malawian *sangoma* and various other 'non-godly' sources. Not to be outdone, the press also gave its own versions. Among other allegations from the press, was that most of the Zimbabwean prophets, as well as 1 700 others from different parts of Africa were 'given' their powers by a Ghanaian traditional healer, Nana Kwaku Bonsam (*Myzimbabwe*, 19/08/13). The spread of Christianity from Zimbabwe starting with the ZAOGA FIF ministries in many countries can be attributed to the churches appropriating the beneficial tenets of globalisation. This therefore contrasts sharply with the rather negative perceptions that view globalisation through the skeptical eye of it being associated with new Western imperialism.

**PHDs and Mystical Power**

The deployment of mystical power in the terrain of miracle-making continues to grow amongst the high profile Pentecostal religious luminaries in Zimbabwe today. In this study, the

researchers borrow the notion of PHD from the Prophetic Healing and Deliverance Ministries led by Prophet Walter Magaya. However, this concept is extended to mean prophecy, healing and deliverance, the three cornerstones of most of Zimbabwe's Pentecostal churches. Prophesying, which can be defined simply as the ability to foresee and foretell the future, the ability to interpret dreams and other events in one's life, as well as the ability to diagnose problems in an individual's life is, arguably, the heartbeat of these churches. It is intricately linked with healing, and deliverance. This is because in most cases the prophecies 'diagnose in the words of the Holy Spirit about the source of the patient's suffering; they reveal its causes and remedies' (Werbner: 2011: 21). This is then followed by the healing and deliverance (therapy) that mostly involves 'demonic exorcism' which as stated by Werbner (2011:22) is a 'moment of prayer, song, and dance by a supportive church congregation and yet also a moment of wildly tearing things to bits, of attacking furniture and even walls and ceilings' meant to cast away demons that are accused of stalling individual successes in various endeavors of life.

In terms of deliverance, one can again refer to a plethora of cases from the media. *The Standard*, 28 July to 3 August 2013, points to three cases of deliverance from the Prophetic Healing and Deliverance Ministries. The first case is that of Sophia Njanina of Chitungwiza who had exceeded her expected date of delivery by a month. Once she attended the Prophetic Healing and Deliverance Ministries Church and was 'touched' by Prophet Magaya, she gave birth the following day. In the second case, Theresa Mandishaya from Nyazura was 'instantly healed' of breast cancer. And, in the third case, Shuvai Mavhondo was also 'cured' of a growth on her right leg, which had 'burst into a festering wound which emitted a horrible smell.' Elsewhere, there are other examples that litter the theological landscape of Zimbabwe of the PHDs. To this list have been rather startling allegations pertaining to Prophetess Beverly Angel, wife to prophet Uebert Angel, who allegedly claimed that her church had 'delivered' (raised) twenty-four people from the dead (*The Zimdiaspora*, 2013). Even more startling are the cases of the 'miracle baby', who was alleged to have been conceived in three days to a couple that had struggled for fertility, as well as the performing of pre-mature baby deliveries. To further exemplify, one of the eminent Prophets in Zimbabwe threatened to walk on the water at Kariba Dam, imitating the miracles Jesus Christ of the bible performed (*Nehanda Radio*, 2013). It must be reiterated that the notion of PHDs is also popular even outside Zimbabwean Pentecostal Christian claims. For

instance, Pastor Gilbert Deya of Kenya also claimed to be endowed with mystical powers that can be engaged to make infertile women bear miracle children (*The Herald*, 30 October 2013: 8). It has also a long genealogy in post-colonial Zimbabwe where former prophet now turned traditional healer, Boniface Muponda from Norton 'helped' many infertile women to conceive.

It must be noted that after performing what would ordinarily constitute miracles in the secular worldview in January 2013, which included healing the sick, 'raining' gold and diamonds on congregants, and further claiming that 'people with disabilities would be healed, bald heads fitted with hair with others developing new teeth' and others would receive fuel in their cars (*Newsday*, 21 January 2013), Prophet Emmanuel Makandiwa claimed that '[t]hese are not miracles [but] they are signs and wonders.' To him, 'God does them to prove a point' (Ibid). Furthermore, he alleged that miracles were for those who did not believe (Ibid).

**Gospreneurship or Gospel of Prosperity Abused?**

In this section the study turns to address the efficacy of the terms gospreneurship versus the gospel of prosperity. Primarily, this is necessitated by the fact that these two terms have become associated with the polarity of views in Zimbabwe regarding the operations and motives of the Charismatic church leaders whose number and influence seemed to grow by the day in the new millennium Zimbabwe.

Emanating from the works of Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland and Frederick K.C. Price in the 1970s and 1980s, the gospel of prosperity or prosperity gospel has spread popularly across the world (Falsani, 2013). On the African continent, prosperity gospel has also a long and somewhat pervasive existence from the late 1990s. Watching Zimbabwe Television (ZTV) in the late 1990s, one saw the entrance of this brand led by Mathew Ashimolowo and Kobus van Rensburg, among others. Recently, many Zimbabwe have been streaming in considerable numbers to Nigeria to receive 'anointing water' from Prophet T.B Joshua that allegedly has powers to cleanse socio-economic miseries and to "unlock" the doors to prosperity.

According to the Word of Faith, prosperity gospel "promises its followers health, wealth and happiness. Its defenders claim riches should be used for evangelism and church programmes" (christianity.about.com). At its centre, the gospel of prosperity teaches congregants to 'boldly

ask God for new cars, a bigger house, and nice clothes …' because 'wealth is a sign of God's favour' (Ibid). This is because 'God blesses those [He] favours most with material wealth' (Falsani, 2013). The above perception is succinctly captured in the letter Joel Osteen, leader of the Lakewood Church in Houston, wrote to his followers in 2005 that: 'God wants us to prosper financially, to have plenty of money, to fulfill the destiny He has laid out for us, (Osteen, 2005 in Falsani, 2013).

In his article in *The Herald*, 27 July 2013, Jonathan Mbiriyamveka introduced a profound term 'gospreneurship' in specific reference to the works of the emerging trend where Pentecostal churches were being perceived as lucrative financial ventures and where the 'prophets' and their wives who were also turning out as 'prophetesses' were exhibited opulence. Thus, from that article, gospreneurship can be taken to mean the setting of the gospel mission as a platform for profiteering as in a business venture that is as a 'latter day, money-spinning family enterprise' (Ibid). This occurs when 'street wise' (Werbner, 2011) charismatics who were driven by money, fame and fortune 'get into the ministry for money after observing how others have had a mixture of fame and fortune, having made lots of money' (Pastor Chitsinde in *Newsday* 1 January 2013). Such sentiments were articulated by many Zimbabweans, Christians and non-Christians alike. Pastor Chitsinde's sentiments on the work of some conspicuous Zimbabwean charismatic 'prophets' encapsulate, in a significant way, the negative views that have been proffered in many quarters. He, among others, alleged that these charismatics were driven by money, fame and fortune. He also accused them of using *juju*. To him,

> [t]his rising-up of prophets shows a pattern of people who get into the ministry for money after observing how others have had a mixture of fame and fortune, having made lots of money. It is very unfortunate that when you look at people like Angel, they use trickery to detect people's phone numbers. These are Nigerian games.

Further responding to miracle money that some congregants at an Angel sermon in Botswana got Chitsinde said:

> There is no God who operates like that because these are old Nigerian tactics to rob people of their cash. That was a stage-managed act just like TB Joshua's. The only difference is that TB Joshua is more sophisticated and smarter: If God

> wants to bless you, He uses people. There needs to be an investigation to establish where the money that people received came from. From which accounts did the money come? This is nonsense, rubbish (*Newsday* 1 January 2013).

Similar allegations were made by Pastor James Shoko of "In God's Hands Ministries" who alleged:

> It's pretty obvious. In Zimbabwe we have too many false prophets than any other country but the major ones are well known. Zimbabwe's false prophets are even more advanced, in terms of prosperity and even technology. They can do anything for you, but if you are so spiritual you will see that they are just modern day *sangomas* who wear suits and read the bible. We all know these false prophets, (*MyZimbabwe* 19/08/13).

Furthermore, the highly regarded Kenyan prophet, Maxillar Mumo, predicted that these popular Zimbabwean prophets would fall because they were *false* and *fake* (*MyZimbabwe*, 19/08/13 our emphasis). He also said: '[t]hese prophets will begin to be shamed soon in their work with scandals, court cases, and mass walkouts from their churches, falling down of their greatness, watch for these signs' (Ibid).

Elsewhere in Africa, the wave of the new Pentecostals has been met with mixed feelings. In Cameroon, for example, President Paul Biya's government banned some Pentecostals in 2013. Among other issues, the state alleged: '[w]e will get rid of all the so-called Christian Pentecostal pastors who misuse the name of Jesus Christ to fake miracles and kill citizens in their churches' (*The Zimdiaspora*, 2013).

The negative sentiments have not been helped either by the fact that some of the best-known of the Charismatics in Zimbabwe were reportedly super rich and led glitz and glamorous lifestyles. Among others, they have been famed for an appetite for flashy cars, expensive designer label clothes, and for living in the leafy suburbs of Harare. Regarding Makandiwa's wealth, it was said, for example, included an upmarket house in one of the leafy suburbs of Harare and the latest top-of-the-range of cars (*Myzimbabwe.com*). Similarly, Uebert Angel leader of the Spirit Embassy church flaunted his flamboyancy and wealth. He alleged that his wealth, distributed in several countries, including Zimbabwe, the United States of America and the United Kingdom,

amounted to sixty million USA dollars (*The Sunday Mail*, 20-26 October 2013). He is also rumoured to own top of the range vehicles including a Bentley and Mercedes Benz (Ibid). Angel also allegedly admitted to loving luxuries and money saying 'I have very expensive tastes that is why I am in business and make so much more money. Money makes me happy and I have lots of it' (Ibid). The case of Zimbabwean charismatics is, however, not different from that pertaining to international charismatics. As an illustration, the Word of Faith leaders have been found to have, among others, 'private jets, Rolls Royces, mansions, and custom-made clothes' (*christianity.about.com*).

It however, stands to debate whether these accumulations are intended to set the prophets as examples that their supporters have to follow. The question to answer therefore is: of what importance is this acquisitive desire and taste for luxurious 'earthly' goods to the congregants? Is it, as claimed in *Christianity.about. com*, that 'they hold up their own material gain as proof that they have tapped into God's riches'? Is it also an attempt to inculcate in their followers the same acquisitive desires and to dissuade them from seeking and receiving charity goods? Furthermore, is it, as Maxwell has highlighted, meant to help the members to cope with existential challenges? It would seem the trend has also cascaded to the ordinary followers who have also been witnessed to be eloquently dressed when they attend church service. On some of the videos that we have watched, many congregants were also not shy to express their earthly riches such as driving expensive cars and making huge donations to their churches. Also, many of the congregants were found to possess expensive cellphones, tablets and Ipads which they used to record church proceedings and/ or sermons. Again, many of the followers offer expensive gifts to their leaders, both at the local and national levels. At many businesses, formal and informal, in many cities, there were planted many stickers of how their God had been generous to them. Besides praising their Lord, these stickers also pointed directly at their success. They also linked them clearly to their churches and their leaders. It also stands to debate to what extent the lavish lifestyles led by many of the Zimbabwean charismatics could have acted as a spur to the others leading them to form their own Pentecostal churches that seemed to mushroom in quick succession by 2013.

On the other hand, one also sees a dissonance with the biblical prophets especially in the Old

Testament like Elijah, Amos, Samuel, Elisha and Hoseah, among others, who were humble and lived modest lifestyles, often shying away from public visibility. One recalls immediately Elisha who refused the gold and other expensive gifts that Naaman offered for being cured of leprosy (2 Kings 5 Verses 1-15). It does not also sit well with some teachings in the bible that are against prioritizing the accumulation of earthly riches. For example, 1Timothy 6: 9–10 clearly warns: '[b]ut those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. *For the love of money is a root of all evils*. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs.' To implore, people to 'fight a good fight' 1 Timothy 6: 11 says '[b]ut as for you, man of God, shun all this; aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.' The relationship between those who love money and Christianity is also clearly articulated in Luke 6:24 which states clearly that: 'But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation.' In Mathew 6: 24 it is said 'No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.'

The above taste for luxuries and the questionable ways through which the 'Prophets' have accumulated their riches fits them well into the Werbner (2011) billing of holy hustlers. According to Werbner (2011: 2), the concept applies to charismatics who use the church as a platform for self-aggrandisement and self-enrichment often through chicanery and/ or any other means necessary. The long quote below from Werbner (2011), clearly articulates the varying contours of holy hustlers. As he says, he uses holy hustlers:

> not to dismiss them, as if they were- and they are not- cynical charlatans or mere fakes. As streetwise hustlers, these young men push with impatient energy, when they dance ecstatically, diagnose affliction, treat patients, and exorcise demons. They sometimes say they are told by the Holy Spirit, by the Word … In youthful enthusiasm, charismatic prophets jostle and even batter their patients emotionally with fear of evil intent, death, and disease, and they may not always be 'nice' in that they exact excessive gifts or extort cash fees, contrary to their church rules for free healing services. Contrary to their church rules, also, some of the … prophets dare to hold consultations and healing sessions privately at home, and they are accused of stealing from the church the holy ash they need for treatment (Ibid: 38).

As a result, 'they are not surprisingly held by many to be manipulative and greedy individuals' (ibid: 2). While everything in the quotation may not exactly apply to the Zimbabwean context, one can draw some parallels especially regarding the youthfulness of the charismatic leaders and their propensity to accumulate wealth, arguably, mostly from the church brand and/ or from the ordinary church members themselves.

## Conclusion

The study has shown that Pentecostal Christianity continues to be popular in Africa and is particularly gaining a firm stronghold in the religious landscape of Zimbabwe. The spirituality of Pentecostalism is biblically-anchored and is germane to the macro socio-economic woes that societies experience at a critical historical era in the life of a country. As exemplified by the Zimbabwean experience primarily after 1990, the people went through some heart-rending challenges which were manipulated by certain high profile personalities to gather around adherents in the name of Christianity. This study confirms the old insight which has enduringly projected religion as an instrument sometimes for either oppression or liberation. In terms of gospreneurship, Pentecostal Christianity stands as a telling confirmation for the foregoing insight given the fact that gospel prosperity makes people to work hard to translate faith into action. Nevertheless, as articulated in Marxist perspectives, only a few people succeed materially whilst the majority of the adherents continue to struggle at the deep end of society and may, literally, end up 'dying before their time'.

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