

**RESPONDING TO THE HIV AND AIDS EPIDEMIC IN THE CONTEXT OF
UNJUST SOCIAL STRUCTURES: A CHALLENGE TO THE BURUNDIAN
PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES' THEOLOGY OF MISSION**

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Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Masters of Theology and Development in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

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Abstract

That the HIV and AIDS epidemic is fuelled by structural injustices is not a new discovery. Several studies reveal the link between the HIV transmission and the spread of the epidemic and the structural inequalities created by human beings themselves in terms of economic and political structures sustained by the patriarchal socio-cultural and religious beliefs systems. In most African rural contexts, faith communities have the potential to alter the course of the epidemic given their moral authority in community and their direct connection with people. However, they are seldom theologically equipped to address the structural inequalities that fuel the spread of HIV and AIDS.

This study critically analyses the specific factors driving the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Burundian context and the challenge that they pose to the Burundian Pentecostal churches' theology of mission. The study argues that Burundian Pentecostal churches are not responding the epidemic as they should because their responses are informed by a theological framework of mission that was elaborated in the early years of the 20th century and which was responding to theological and social questions quite different to the questions raised by the current HIV context.

To overcome this theological irrelevancy that has led to a failure to respond to the political, socio-economic, and cultural factors that fuel the spread of HIV infection, the study suggests that there is a need to adopt a theological framework rooted in a holistic understanding of the mission of the church in the world as defined by the concept of *missio Dei*. The practical implication of this theological framework is that it challenges faith communities in general and Burundian Pentecostals in particular to become transforming agents not only interested in right relationships between God and humans but also committed to the transformation of political, economic, socio-cultural and religious structures that sustain unequal relationships between humans and between humanity and the rest of creation.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to those affected by the HIV and AIDS epidemic, and to those who suffer with them in the struggle for social justice to make their communities, their countries, their continents, and the whole world a place that is closer to God's vision of *shalom*.

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List of Abbreviations

ACORD	Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARV	Anti Retro-Viral/ Anti-Retro-Viral Therapy
CEFORMI	Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Médecine et Maladies Infectieuses
CEPBU	<i>Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte au Burundi</i>
CSLP	<i>Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Lutte contre la Pauvreté</i>
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FHI	Family Health International
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IMPACT	Implementing AIDS Prevention and Care Project
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
MLS	<i>Mission Libre Suédoise</i>
MTCT	Mother-to-child transmission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PNLS	<i>Programme National de Lutte contre le VIH/ SIDA</i>
UN GA	United Nations General Assembly
UNGASS	<i>Session spéciale de l'Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies sur le VIH/sida</i>
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

Chapter One

General introduction

1.1 Introduction

Christian churches have always intervened enthusiastically whenever there is a crisis within the societies they serve. Their interventions occur within existing Christian and social values or beliefs systems and much of the time, they are relevant. However, since the emergence of the HIV and AIDS, epidemic with all its complexities, traditional ways of intervention have been challenged. As Beverley Haddad has affirmed,

Yes, we live in a critical and dangerous time and our HIV positive world challenges our theology, our traditions, and our cultures. It forces us to look for new understandings of God and God's work in the world and find ways of living as "church" that are redemptive to both men and women (Haddad 2006:81).

As far as the HIV and AIDS crisis is concerned, the churches' response has been disappointing. They have been incompetent in addressing the root causes of the crisis, which are unjust political, socio-economic, cultural, and religious structures. Not only have they failed to address the root causes of the crisis, but they also legitimatise these structures by interpreting the Bible in a traditional literal fashion. In other words, churches have failed, to use the Kairos document's words, "to read the signs of the time" (1986:17). As result, they cannot address the challenges posed by the epidemic. According to Chitando churches which are in a better position to tackle the complexities of the HIV epidemic are churches not only with "quick feet, long arms, warm hearts and loud voices" but also and more importantly with "sharp minds" (2007b:1). He rightly maintains that it is the 'theological rigidity' that has limited the churches' effectiveness in responding to the HIV epidemic (Chitando 2007b:1). This study explores to what extent this is the case for the theology underpinning the ministry of Burundian Pentecostal

churches¹. It then suggests a theological model that can enable them to effectively address the factors driving the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

1.2 Background to the study

The fact that low and middle-income countries carry the main burden of the HIV epidemic is not debatable. Several studies affirm that the epidemic is currently most severe in sub-Saharan Africa where the problems of poverty, disempowerment, gender inequality, poor public services, hunger, conflicts, and inadequate infrastructure are endemic (Barnett and Whiteside 2006; Holden 2004). In 2008, there were an estimated 33.4 million people living with HIV and an estimated 2.0 million AIDS related deaths worldwide (UNAIDS 2008). The same data indicate that Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region most affected by HIV. It is estimated that in 2008, sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 67 percent of HIV infections worldwide, 68 percent of new HIV infections among adults, 72 percent of the world's AIDS-related deaths and 91 percent of new HIV infections among children (UNAIDS 2008:21). It is also estimated that more than 90 per cent of children living with HIV acquired the virus during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding (UNAIDS 2009:23). Earlier data suggested that among an estimated 270 000 HIV-infected children younger than 15 years who died of AIDS-related causes, more than 90 percent occurred in sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS 2008:37). In this region as a

¹ Scholars of Pentecostalism distinguish various forms of Pentecostalism. Anderson distinguishes between denominational or 'classical' Pentecostalism on the one hand, and those other movements like Charismatic movements within the older churches, autochthonous prophetic churches in the non-Western world and the neocharismatic independent churches on the other (2004:1). In a more precise way, Walter Hollenweger, known as "founding father of academic research into Pentecostalism", distinguishes three forms of Pentecostalism in the global context namely, "Classical Pentecostals, the Charismatic renewal movement, and Pentecostal or 'Pentecostal-like' independent churches in developing world (quoted in Anderson 2004:13). The Burundian Pentecostal churches described in this study can be classified under the category of classical Pentecostalism. In Burundi, the terminology "Pentecostal church" is applied to each of the local churches that developed from the first Pentecostal churches founded by Swedish missionaries who arrived in the country in 1921. For instance, a local church situated in Bujumbura is called "*L'Eglise de Pentecôte de Bujumbura*" [The Pentecostal Church of Bujumbura]. All Pentecostal churches are united under one community called "*Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte au Burundi*" [Community of Pentecostal Churches in Burundi] and they still have close links with Pentecostal churches in Sweden.

whole, the report women are disproportionately affected. At the end of 2008 women represented nearly 60 percent of people living with HIV (UNAIDS 2008:22).

As one of the sub-Saharan African countries, Burundi is no exception. A recent study confirms that it is among the most affected countries in central Africa and that the HIV prevalence remains high in general (UNGASS 2010:5). While the prevalence has stabilised in urban and semi-urban area, (UNAIDS 2009:28), what is striking about the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Burundi is the way it has continued to spread dramatically in the rural areas since the early 1990s (WHO 2005:37, UNAIDS 2006:3, UNGASS 2010:5). There is evidence that this continual rise in prevalence in the rural areas is linked to the effects of the civil war. Study has shown that the displacement of the population, the increasing number of widows or widowers, and the separation of many families as well as the limited access to information and to health facilities are the main factors contributing to this rise (UNAIDS 2006:3). The same study has also revealed that women, especially those living in rural areas, are increasingly vulnerable to HIV infection because of being economically dependent on and culturally submissive to their husbands, having a low education level and frequently being the victims of gender-based violence (UNAIDS 2006:3).

While the linkage between HIV and socio-economic and cultural structures is obvious, Holden (2004:5) as well as Barnett and Whiteside (2006:5) reveal that there still a tendency to view the epidemic as a bio-medical and behavioural problem which can be tackled through medical interventions and education campaigns. However, studies have shown that this approach is not efficient if it is not combined with interventions at “macro-environment” and “micro-environment” levels (Barnett and Whiteside 2006:83. This has also been confirmed in the Burundian context. Studies conducted by *le Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Médecine et Maladies Infectieuses (CEFORMI)* and *le Programme National de Lutte contre le VIH/ SIDA (PNLS)* between 1990 and 2001 have shown that knowledge does not always lead to behaviour change (CEFORMI 2001:9, 42). It was observed that while the level of knowledge concerning prevention of and the mode of transmission of HIV was relatively high, risky sexual behaviour and practices

were not decreasing (CEFORMI 2001:73). The main cause of this contradiction is the prevailing socio-economic context combined with cultural and religious values that lead people into risky sexual behaviour. This implies that HIV and AIDS should not just be treated as a bio-medical issue, but that it needs a more holistic response that addresses political, economic, social, cultural, and religious structures. As we have seen previously, the UNAIDS report has pointed out that many people become vulnerable to HIV infection due to the situation of civil war, especially women who become exposed to sexual violence and exploitation. It indicated also that the situation is worsened by the Burundian culture in which women are dependent on men for financial support. Consequently, women have limited control over their sexual lives.

Despite this context of vulnerability to HIV infection, religious leaders persist in their moralistic discourses by preaching that abstinence and fidelity are the only means of avoiding infection (ACORD 2004). As this study has demonstrated through the analysis of locally composed songs on the HIV and AIDS epidemic, this kind of discourse has a considerable impact on the way ordinary believers interpret HIV infection and on their attitude towards people who are HIV positive. It is for this reason that the HIV and AIDS epidemic poses serious ethical and theological challenges to the Burundian Pentecostal churches. Instead of continuing their moralising preaching while people remain vulnerable to HIV infection because of unjust structures of patriarchal society, it is time for these churches to realise, to use de Gruchy's words, that,

Debates about individual sexual morality should not obscure the fact that the pattern of infection, and the exploitation, abuse and violence against women and children, points to the radical implications of patriarchy and lack of gender equity in our cultures, churches and society (de Gruchy 2006:3).

Thus, given that the social arrangement plays an important role in spreading the HIV epidemic, this study asserts that churches are challenged to rethink the theological vision that informs their involvement in society in general and their response to the HIV epidemic in particular. But this requires a clear vision of the world as it should be. In

fact, as Jacobsen has pointed out, if this vision is lacking, then the church “has abandoned its calling, its mission, and its Lord” (2001:11). In other words, if the church’s activities are not informed by a clear and holistic vision of the mission of the church in the world, Christianity runs the risk of becoming “the civil religion that engages the public arena to promote, not the ethical imperatives of Jesus, but the enterprise of the nation” (Jacobsen 2001:17). Being the second largest denomination in the country after the Roman Catholic Church (Oskarsson 2004:14), there is no doubt that Burundian Pentecostal churches can contribute enormously to transforming Burundian society. In view of this it is unfortunate that Burundian churches have never had an adequate holistic theological vision to guide their intervention in the public arena, in particular in this era of HIV and AIDS.

Apparently, the Burundian churches have often acted as proponents of a civil religion whose role is to legitimate the status quo. According to Longman (2005:83), the church’s social engagement has not been driven primarily by a higher vision of its purpose in society. Instead, “the two primary guiding principles have been: gaining popular support and avoiding conflict with political authorities” (2005:83). This means that the churches cannot be agents of social transformation due to the lack of an adequate theological vision that motivates their activities. As far as the Burundian Pentecostal churches’ response to HIV epidemic is concerned, their interventions are inspired by the government programme in this regard and not by a theological vision. As their 2009 annual report indicates, the Burundian Pentecostal churches’ HIV and AIDS programme is based on that of the government. Likewise, the manuals used in training community workers or in awareness-raising programmes have been produced by the Ministry of Health (CEPBU 2009). In fact, as the report states, they work in partnership with the government in response to a governmental appeal to civil society and interfaith organisations to be involved in tackling the HIV epidemic. While there is nothing wrong in working in partnership with the government, it is unlikely with this motivation driving them that Burundian Pentecostal churches will address the political, socio-economic, cultural, and religious factors that contribute to spreading HIV infection, because these issues are also not being critically examined by the Burundian government. This is the key reason that motivated me to undertake the present study.

1.3 Objectives of the study

This study has a three-fold aim: firstly, to identify the factors driving the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Burundi. Secondly, to investigate whether the theology of mission underpinning the Burundian Pentecostal churches' ministry can enable them to respond effectively to the epidemic in terms of addressing the above-mentioned driving factors. Thirdly, to draw on the holistic understanding of mission as defined by the *missio Dei* concept to suggest a theological framework that can guide the Burundian Pentecostal churches' response.

The hypotheses underlying this study are that the Burundian Pentecostal churches are not effectively responding to the ethical and theological challenges raised by the HIV and AIDS epidemic because they have an inadequate theological vision of the mission of the church. The study also presupposes that a holistic understanding of mission provides an important theological and ethical vision that can guide the Burundian Pentecostal churches to address unjust social structures that fuel the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

1.4 Key research question and sub-questions

It therefore follows that the research question of the study is: ***Given that the HIV and AIDS epidemic is fuelled by unjust social structures, what is an adequate theology of mission that the Burundian Pentecostal churches should adopt?*** To respond to this main question, four sub-questions were formulated:

1. What are the unjust social structures that fuel the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Burundi?
2. What is the theological framework of mission that guides the Burundian Pentecostal churches' response to the epidemic?
3. What are the principles of a holistic theology of mission as defined by *missio Dei*?
4. What are the implications of a holistic theology of mission for the Burundian Pentecostal churches, particularly in the current HIV context?

1.6 Theoretical framework of the study

The *hermeneutical circle* as it has been described by Juan Luis Segundo (1976) is the theoretical framework informing this study. Segundo (1976: 8) defines the hermeneutical circle as “the continuing change in our interpretation of the Bible which is dictated by the continuing changes in our present-day reality, both individual and societal.” According to Segundo (1976:9), two preconditions are necessary for accomplishing the hermeneutical circle in theology:

The first condition is the emergence of profound and enriching questions and suspicions about our cultural and social reality. The questions rising out of the present should be “rich enough, general enough, and basic enough” to force us to change our usual manner of interpreting ideas concerning life, death, knowledge, society, politics, and the world as a whole (Segundo 1976:9). That is so because only a change of this sort or a pervasive suspicion about our ideas and value judgements concerning these matters will “enable us to reach the theological level and force theology to come back down to reality and ask itself new and decisive questions” (Segundo 1976:9).

The second condition is the need for a new interpretation of the Bible to answer the new questions that arise from present reality. According to Segundo “if our interpretation of Scripture does not change along with the problems then the latter will go unanswered; or worse, they will receive old, conservative, unserviceable answers” (Segundo 1976:9). If these two preconditions are not fulfilled, theology will become conservative and therefore irrelevant because it will lack “any here-and-now criteria for judging our real situation” (Segundo 1976:9). In so doing it will become “a pretext for approving the existing situation or for disapproving of it because it does not dovetail with guidelines and canons that are even more ancient and outdated” (Segundo 1976:9).

For Segundo (1976:9), these two preconditions imply four steps in completing the hermeneutical circle. First, the hermeneutic circle begins with the social question, which is the experience of reality, and which leads the theologian to ideological suspicion. Second, suspecting that the prevailing theology is not adequate, the theologian takes this

growing suspicion and applies it to the whole ideological superstructure and to the prevailing theology. Third, the theologian moves to a new experience of theological reality with the realisation that the prevailing interpretation of the Bible has not taken important pieces of data into account; what Segundo calls the “exegetical suspicion of the prevailing interpretation of the Bible” (1976:9). Fourth, the theologian has a new way of interpreting the source of his or her faith with the new elements at his or her disposal.

Two reasons have made this theoretical framework valuable to this study. Firstly, as it has been clearly argued by both Maluleke (2001:133) and Haddad (2006:81) HIV and AIDS raises questions that require Christians to change the way they used to understand and respond to everyday life’s opportunities and challenges. Thus, the two preconditions of the hermeneutical circle are fundamental to this study because they inspired the researcher to carry out an analysis of the social structures that fuel the HIV and AIDS epidemic in order to see whether or not the theological and ethical questions that they raise require a new way of theologising. Secondly, the four steps or factors of the circle were crucial in responding to the research question of this study because they respectively match with the four sub-questions mentioned above. Thus, the first factor corresponds to the first sub-question. This first sub-question aimed at exposing the issues that the Burundian Pentecostal churches need to address if they are to be relevant in their response to the epidemic. The remaining factors of the hermeneutical circle – suspicion about the entire prevailing ideology and theology, as well as about the current biblical interpretation, and the new way of understanding all of these - are used as a framework to deal with the three remaining sub-questions of this study. “Ideological suspicion” is used to explore how the historical background of mission and structural relationships in Burundian society influence the Pentecostal churches’ theology of mission. This exploration is enriched by Bosch’s work *Transforming Mission: paradigms shift in theology of mission* (1993). Bosch comprehensively shows how the mission of the church in the world has been influenced by ideological and theological visions that prevailed at different periods of human history. He also demonstrates the meaning of participating in God’s mission. His insights are useful in understanding the theological vision that is currently underpinning the response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic. In light of these

insights, the prevailing Pentecostal theology is critically analysed and found wanting. Using Bosch's understanding of the *holistic theology of mission*, a new way of interpreting a Pentecostal theology of mission is developed and its implications for Burundian Pentecostal churches' ministry in the current context of HIV and AIDS are outlined.

1.7 Research methodology

This study is based on a literature review as well as on an analysis of hymns and songs. As stated earlier, the main objective of this study is to suggest an adequate theological framework that can assist the Burundian Pentecostal churches to address the factors driving the HIV and AIDS epidemic. To reach this objective, this study attempted to answer the sub-questions listed in the section 1.4. While a literature review was able to answer sub-questions 1, 3 and 4, it was unable to answer sub-question 2. This is due to the non-existence of written sources that focus specifically on the theology informing the praxis of Burundian Pentecostal churches. Oskarsson (2004), the only known author who has produced academic work on the theology of Burundian Pentecostal churches, has identified basic theological themes thereof². However, she did not explain in detail how these theological themes have been contextualised by Burundians, and how they inform their daily life.

To overcome this dilemma, the researcher decided to analyse twenty four congregational hymns from two official hymnals³ used in Burundian Pentecostal churches as well as

² As far as I am aware, Gunilla Nyberg Oskarsson (2004) in her book "*Le mouvement pentecôtiste – une communauté alternative au sud du Burundi, 1935-1960*" is the first and maybe the only scholar who provides comprehensive academic information on the establishment and development of Pentecostal churches in Burundi and who tries to decipher at a certain extent the main themes dominating the Burundian Pentecostals churches' theology.

³ The first official hymnal is titled "*Indimbo zo Guhimbaza Imana*" [Songs for Praising God] is a collection of 354 songs arranged by themes such as Praise, Prayer, Invitation, Atonement, Testimony, Consecration, Love, Christian life, Conflict, Heaven, Christmas, The Cross, Easter, The Holy Spirit, Second Coming, Morning, Evening, Missionary, The Bible, Children, , and many others. For the purpose of this study, the focus was on songs under the Missionary theme (from 280 to 288). The second one is the

three locally composed songs, one from an audio cassette⁴ and two from a digital video disc (DVD)⁵ produced by two Burundian Pentecostal churches' choirs. These three songs were selected because they talk explicitly or implicitly about the HIV and AIDS epidemic. Beside the lack of written sources on Burundian Pentecostal theology, another motivation for analysing songs is linked to their role in transmitting Pentecostal teaching. In her research, Oskarsson (2004) discovered that songs were important tools used by Swedish missionaries to convert Burundians to Christianity. Generally, the role of songs in the contextualisation of theology is well recognised among scholars. For instance, Mugambi maintains that Christian faith in general can “be effectively expressed and communicated only in culturally designed media” (1989:87), which implies that music is one of these media because in it is a constituent factor of African culture. For Triebel, songs and hymns are “a better approach to doing African theology than just writing papers” (1992:237). In this same perspective, Pass maintains that music is one way of contextualising the gospel in a form that resonates with hearers. He then argues that since music is a medium through which truth about God is expressed, “it is a theological category” because people learn their theology in part through the songs and hymns they sing (2007:251). Pass’s argument has particular resonance in a country like Burundi where the majority of people are illiterate. As the analysis has demonstrated, most of the

French hymnal *Chants de Victoire: Recueil des Cantiques pour réunions d'évangélisation, d'édification, missions de réveil and class d'enfants*. This hymnal contains 311 hymns subdivided into seven main themes: praise, the person and acts of Jesus-Christ, evangelisation, Christian life, Christian hope, occasional hymns and hymns for children. This study has focused on seventeen songs, fourteen under the evangelisation theme and three under the Christian life theme.

⁴ The full title of this cassette is: *NGAHO NI MUHUNGE SIDA* Vol.3. Chorale Dushime –Kigwena. Ishengero Rya Pentekote, Tel: +257 79916287. Tresor Production. Tel: +25779986124. While the title gives impression that the songs in this cassette mainly deal with HIV and AIDS, only one song in fact expressly focuses on HIV and AIDS. Usually, since one the objectives of recording songs is to make money, it is a custom in Burundian Pentecostal choirs to name the whole album after the most popular song, meaning that “Ngaho nimuhunge Sida” is the favourite on this cassette.

⁵ Full title of the DVD is: *Uguhunga kw' abo mw'isi kuzoherera hehe?* Injili Choir, Pentecostal Church, Mtabila Camp, Kigoma- Tanzania. Email: injili_choir@yahoo.fr. Simu: 0753 532 725, 0752 650,887. 0754 243 718. RECORDER AND DISTRUBUTED BY HOSSANA PRODUCTION, DAR ES SALAAM. TEL: 0715 939. This DVD was produced in 2008 by *Injili* Choir whose members are refugees from Burundi and who have been living in Mtabila refugee Camp in Tanzania since 1993. In this camp, as in other refugee camps in Tanzania, Pentecostals from Burundi have kept their Pentecostal religious traditions and have established vibrant Pentecostal churches. In fact, this is not surprising because among the refugees were many ordained pastors and evangelists.

hymns and songs reflect the theological themes identified by Oskarsson (2004:269) as dominant in Burundian Pentecostal churches.

As far as the methodology of the analysis of hymns and songs is concerned, this was informed by the four stages in analysing hymns as developed by Fergus King (2000). These are:

1. The identification of the biblical passages or themes used in hymns or songs

In this stage the analyst uses various tools such as different versions of the Bible, biblical commentaries or biblical concordances in the attempt to identify the biblical passages or themes cited or alluded to in the songs or hymns to be analysed (King 2000:364). As far as this study is concerned, the twenty-four congregational hymns are classified by themes. Concerning the songs composed by ordinary choir members, they are a reflection of biblical texts that are often used during preaching in Pentecostal churches. By using the biblical concordance, it was easy to find the biblical texts on which they are based.

2. The incorporation of texts into the words of the songs

Here, the concern is to examine how the biblical texts have been used in the hymns songs. King (2000:364-365) distinguishes two methods. The first one is thematic. This is when the composer uses a biblical theme as the basis of a hymn rather than using a specific text. In the second method, the biblical text is more directly the basis of the hymn. This stage allows the analyst to see how biblical texts are used literally or how they are altered for metrical or interpretative reasons. In most of the hymns and songs analysed in this study, the alteration of biblical texts for interpretative reasons is clear.

3. The type of interpretation prevalent in the hymns

In this stage, King (2000:366) suggests that different kinds of interpretation are used, such as literal, allegorical, contextual, paraenetic, political and practical interpretation. This implies that hymns or songs can be put in different categories depending on the interpretive approach that the writer has employed. Thus for instance, a hymn or a song is contextual when it reflects the situation of the composer or his/her listener. But as King (2000:367) points out, contextualisation is often a generalisation about one's spiritual state (and not one's life conditions) such as the need for salvation, the need to resist the

devil and so on. This insight was crucial in understanding how the Bible has been used in hymns introduced by missionaries and in songs that deal with the current context of HIV and AIDS. While they show a practical and contextual character, biblical principles are the starting point of reflection on Christian praxis and not on people's experience. The deductive method,⁶ which is not liberating is used in these songs and hymns.

4. The identification of factors which might influence an interpretation

This last stage allows us to find out not only the factors influencing an interpretation but also the reason why these factors are influential. As identified by King (2000:367), these factors may come from either Christian or African traditions. They may also be the result of the harmonisation of African and biblical traditions. Drawing on Mbiti's work, King (2000:367) maintains that the Bible, which is seen as God's gift to God's people, is the key factor because it is a source of material from which theological reflection begins and it has an exalted place in many people's thinking.

The contribution of this last stage in the process of the analysis of songs is to make us aware that the songwriter may often uncritically use the Bible as the starting point to transmit his or her message. This is to be expected in Burundian Pentecostal churches in which, from the time of their foundation by missionaries, the Bible has been considered as the infallible word of God and the main source of theological education (Oskarsson 2004:25). However, it does not mean that songs composed by ordinary Christians are not important in terms of offering a particular perspective. As King (2000:372) has insisted on the value of hymns in Tanzanian context, it can be argued that in Burundi songs should be seen as a true Burundian African Christian school of interpretation, which speaks to its people in a familiar voice. The present analysis was undertaken with this awareness in mind.

⁶ According to Nolan "the deductive method starts from ideas, principles or doctrines and then deduces or draws conclusions from these about the worlds around us" while the inductive method "starts from experience and develops ideas and principles from our experience of life in the world" (1987:21). In Nolan's view, it is the latter that is biblical because the biblical writers did not formulate the word of God on basis of "principles and doctrines" but "rather upon the experience in faith of the signs of times" (1987:22).

1.8 Outline of the study

In the second chapter, structural factors driving the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Southern Africa and in Burundi particularly are explored. Focusing on the Burundian context, the chapter argues that the spread of the epidemic is closely linked to unjust and oppressive economic, political, socio-cultural, and religious structures.

Chapter three is an attempt to understand the theological meaning of the *missio Dei* concept, its contribution in the understanding of the mission of God in the world and its implications for the church's ministry. The chapter concludes by arguing that the purpose of God's mission is to set things right by transforming unjust relationships into just ones and that consequently, to be a missionary church is to be an agent of social transformation.

The fourth chapter discusses the main themes that are fundamental to a Pentecostal theology of mission. More specifically, the chapter critically analyses the theological paradigm of mission brought by the Swedish Pentecostal missionaries to Burundi. Then, through the analysis of missionary hymns, the chapter reveals the kind of theology transmitted by the missionaries to Burundians.

Chapter five, firstly, discusses the influence of songs and hymns on the indigenisation of theology. Secondly, the chapter analyses three locally composed songs that deal with the HIV and AIDS epidemic directly or indirectly in order to explore how the Pentecostal theology taught by missionaries has been indigenised and its implications for the way Burundian Pentecostals are responding to the challenges posed by the epidemic.

Chapter six draws on the findings of previous chapters to outline the meaning of being a missionary church in the current Burundian context. Taking into account the fundamentals of the Pentecostal faith and in light of the theological vision provided by the holistic theology of mission, the chapter suggests an alternative theological

framework of mission that the Burundian Pentecostal churches need to adopt if they are to be agents of social transformation. The chapter then suggests some practical actions that can be undertaken by the Burundian Pentecostals churches in order to respond effectively to the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

Chapter seven summarises the findings of the study and suggests some recommendations for further study.

Chapter Two

Setting the context: the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Burundi

2.1 Introduction

Despite millennia of epidemics, war and famine, never before in the history have death rates of this magnitude been seen among young people adults of both sexes and from all walks of life (Barnett and Whiteside 2006:3).

Life is and has always been filled with challenges. It is influenced by various occurrences – some good, others bad – compelling human beings to adjust their way of thinking and acting. Nowadays, the HIV and AIDS epidemic is one of the negative occurrences that oblige people to rethink their ways of living if they are to cope efficiently with the effects of the epidemic on their wellbeing. The epidemic has now been fully recognised as a threat to humanity and life as a whole, mainly because the numbers of people who die as result of AIDS-related illnesses each year surpass the numbers of deaths caused by any war that humanity has experienced. The epidemic is opposing life as a whole. It causes hopelessness, suffering, and misery as it attacks and weakens the human body and eventually destroys it after exhausting the meagre households' resources. It affects negatively the socio-economic and political spheres of human lives. It intensifies poverty as those with limited economic means to deal with it, are especially vulnerable to infection and its aftermath. Some writers rightly describe the epidemic as “a slow genocide or holocaust eliminating the most productive members of the society and leaving devastation never seen in the past” (Bongmba 2007:19). Although it is difficult to evaluate the exact impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic on people's well-being in each country, researchers from various disciplines reveal how the epidemic is likely to have (and indeed already has had) an impact on nearly every aspect of life especially in Southern Africa. Several studies (Barnett and Whiteside 2006:24-26; Brummer 2002:1) indicate that the region will be (and is) faced by great personal emotional suffering, a remarkable decline in life expectancy, a great loss of both skilled and unskilled labour;

increased costs of health care, social and economic disruption at the family and community level; a reduction of human and financial resources and even a social and political instability.

For people who believe that living abundant life is the will of God for all human beings, the current situation is a crisis that requires people of faith, particularly theologians and religious leaders, to reflect constantly on their beliefs in order to explore the effects of these beliefs on people's attitude towards this epidemic that denies the fullness of life to so many. Such reflection is urgently needed especially in the current growing awareness of the link between the transmission and the spread of the epidemic and the prevailing socio-economic and political structures (Barnett and Whiteside 2006:71). Sadly, these structures are created by human beings themselves. They are mainly rooted in the economic and political ideology of globalisation and sustained by patriarchal socio-cultural and religious beliefs systems.

This chapter presents a brief overview of situation of the HIV and AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa in general and Burundi in particular. With a special focus on the Burundian context, it critically analyses the link between the socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts and the spread of the epidemic. The chapter concludes by arguing that the epidemic embodies an ethical and a theological crisis that requires the churches in general and the Burundian Pentecostal churches in particular to adopt more holistic responses if they are to remain relevant.

2.2 Brief overview of the epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa

The HIV and AIDS epidemic is a global threat to life and to wellbeing as whole not only because there is not vaccine for the HI virus or because AIDS is fatal and incurable but also because it affect all aspects of human life and because its consequences will be felt for many years to come (Gillespie and Kadiyala 2005:1). While it is true that there is not a single country in the world that is not touched by HIV and AIDS, it is undisputable that poor countries, particularly sub-Saharan African countries, are the worst affected. A brief

historical overview of the evolution of the HIV and AIDS epidemic from 2001 to 2009 may help to illustrate this fact.

In 2001, approximately 29 million people were HIV-positive globally; 19.7 million were living in sub-Saharan Africa. Almost 3.2 million people were infected that year, with sub-Saharan Africa accounting for 2.3 million. Moreover, amongst the 1.9 million people who died of HIV/AIDS related diseases during that year, 1.4 million were from sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS 2009:11). At the end of 2001, there were 3 million children below the age of 15 living with HIV, 800,000 new infections, and 580 000 AIDS deaths worldwide. Among these numbers, Africa alone accounted for 2.6 million of the children living with the virus, 700 000 new infections, and 520 000 AIDS-related deaths for that year (UNAIDS 2002).

In 2004, three years later, close to 5 million people became infected and 39 million people were living with the HI virus. More than 25 million of these people lived in sub-Saharan Africa. During the same year, more than 3 million people died of AIDS-related causes, bringing to more than 20 million the number of people who have died since 1981 when the first case was reported. Among these 39 million people living with HIV, 26.6 million were in sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS/WHO 2004 in Gillespie and Kadiyala 2005:1).

By comparison, in 2007, 33 million people were living with HIV, 2.7 million people became infected with the virus and around 2 million people died of HIV-related causes, bringing to an estimated 25 million the deaths worldwide (UNAIDS 2008:16). It was estimated that two thirds (67%) of the global total of 33 million people with HIV were living in the sub-Saharan Africa region, and three quarters (75%) of all AIDS deaths in 2007 occurred there (UNAIDS 2008:32). The UNAIDS report for that year also indicates that women accounted for half of all people living with HIV worldwide, and nearly 60% of HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa.

In 2008, people living with HIV numbered roughly 33.4 million. The estimated number of new HIV infections in 2008 was 2.7 million while the number of deaths due to AIDS was 2 million (UNAIDS 2009:6). As the report points out, it is obvious that sub-Saharan Africa remains the region most heavily affected by HIV because in 2008, this region alone accounted for 22.4 million (67%) of HIV infections worldwide, 1.9 million (68%) of new HIV infections among adults and 390 000 or the equivalent of 91% of new HIV infections among children. The region also accounted for 1.4 million (72%) of the world's AIDS-related deaths in 2008 (UNAIDS 2009:21).

Nevertheless, at global level in general, there are some apparent signs of major progress in the HIV response. The UNAIDS 2008 and 2009 reports' statistics compared with previous reports show that the annual number of new HIV infections declined from 3 million in 2001 to 2.7 million in 2007 and 2008. It is also argued that while "the overall number of people living with HIV has steadily increased as new infections occur each year, HIV treatments extend life, ... as new infections still outnumber AIDS deaths" (UNAIDS 2008:34). As far as the number of people who died due to AIDS is concerned, it has slightly decreased from an estimated 2.2 million in 2005 to 2 million in 2007 and 2008, in part as result of the substantial increase in access to HIV treatment in recent years (UNAIDS 2008:17; UNAIDS 2009:21).

Despite this progress, there are disappointingly high levels of new HIV infections and AIDS deaths in the sub-Saharan region of Africa. As UNAIDS (2009:21-22) has indicated, women and children, particularly girls, continue to be disproportionately affected by the epidemic. The striking fact is that the number of children living with HIV and AIDS has continuously increased from an estimated of 1.6 million in 2001 to 2 million in 2007. According to the estimation of the UNAIDS 2008 report, nearly 90% were living in sub-Saharan Africa and "more than 90% of children living with HIV acquired the virus during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding—forms of HIV transmission that can be prevented" (UNAIDS 2008:37). An estimated 430 000 new HIV infections occurred among children under the age of 15 in 2008 (UNAIDS 2009:6) and yet again sub-Saharan Africa was the most affected area globally with 390 000 children who were

infected (UNAIDS 2009:35). What is deplorable is that most of these new infections are believed to occur through mother- to- child transmission, and are hence preventable (UNAIDS 2009:35).

Another striking fact is that in sub-Saharan Africa, HIV-related illnesses remain the main cause of death, with many long-term consequences. Apart from the fact that the pandemic has decreased life expectancy from 62 to 47, it has also continuously produced vast numbers of orphans. The 2008 UNAIDS report indicates that in 2001 more than 6 500 000 children in sub-Saharan Africa were orphans due AIDS compared to 8 million worldwide.. In 2007, the global number had already reached 15 million with 11.6 million in sub-Saharan Africa alone (UNAIDS 2008:218). In 2008, more than 14.1 million children in sub-Saharan Africa were estimated to have lost one or both parents to AIDS (UNAIDS 2009:11). As we shall see in what follows, most of the features of the epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa are also observable in Burundi.

2.3 Brief overview of the epidemic in Burundi

Situated in sub-Saharan Africa and as one of the poorest countries in the world⁷, Burundi has one of the highest HIV infection rates in Central Africa. Since 1983 when the first case was detected in Burundi, HIV prevalence increased continuously before it started to decrease in 2000. In urban areas, the estimated prevalence was less than 1% in 1983 but it was already 6% in 1986, 15% in 1989 and had reached 18.6% in 2000. In 1989-1990⁸, the estimated HIV prevalence was 1.5% nationally while it was only 0.7% in rural areas (WHO 2005:36).

⁷ According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2003, Burundi ranked 173rd out of 175 countries (ACORD 2004:29).

⁸ It is important to note that the first national survey on HIV prevalence in Burundi was conducted in 1989-90. The second one took place in 2002 (UNAIDS 2006:2). There was no national survey between 1990 and 2002, a period that was characterized by political unrest. This means that data on HIV prevalence during that period are not based on rigorous study and must therefore be treated cautiously.

By 1999 Burundi was ranking 13th among 28 countries worst affected by HIV and AIDS (Drimie 2002:4). The estimated prevalence rate was 11.3% of the general adult population (Drimie 2002:4). In rural zones, UNAIDS' estimation shows that HIV prevalence had increased from 1% in 1992 to 7.5% in 1999 (WHO 2005:37).

A national survey conducted in 2002 estimated that 5.4 percent of the general population between 15 and 49 years old was HIV-positive. The estimated prevalence rate was 9.4 percent in urban areas, 10.5 percent in semi-urban areas, and 2.5 percent in rural areas (UNAIDS 2004:2; FHI/IMPACT 2002:6). At the beginning of 2004, the average prevalence rate for adults aged 15 years and over was estimated at 6%, making Burundi the 16th among the most affected countries in the world (UNAIDS 2004:2; USAID 2005:3). In 2005, the prevalence fell to 4% at national level (UNAIDS 2006:1). Two years later, in 2007 the HIV prevalence in Burundi stood at 3% (UNAIDS/WHO 2009:19). Recent data suggest that 2.97 percent of general population are HIV positive (UNGASS 2010:5).

By analysing these data, it is obvious that HIV prevalence has progressively declined since 1999. Even in urban and in semi-urban areas where it remains high, studies have shown that the rate of infection has stabilised. However, what is striking about the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Burundi is the way it has shifted from urban to rural areas since 1993 (WHO 2005:37). Data from population-based surveys conducted between 1989 and 2009 demonstrate how HIV prevalence has progressively increased in rural areas from 0.7 percent in 1989 to 2.5 percent in 2002 (WHO 2005:37, UNAIDS 2006:3) and to 2.89 percent in 2010 (UNAIDS 2009:28, UNGASS 2010:5). Various studies also show that women are the most affected whether in urban or in rural areas (FHI 2007: 6; UNAIDS 2006:3). As more than 90% of Burundians live in rural areas where they practice subsistence farming (WHO 2005, IRIN 2002), this implies that the epidemic is affecting not only the area where the most of the population reside, but also those who are least equipped to deal with its consequences. Moreover the overwhelming majority being affected are poor women, living mainly in the rural areas where the rate of illiteracy is high and where reliable means of communication and effective health care facilities are

lacking. Since more than half of those living with HIV work in the agricultural sector, FHI's study has rightly concluded that the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Burundi "has brought significant social, demographic, and economic consequences to communities, as those most affected by the epidemic are of productive age" (FHI 2007: 6).

While the situation of HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and in Burundi, as described above, shows that some parts of the world or of the continent are more affected than others; it also reveals that within more localised contexts some categories of people are more affected than others. Different researchers from various backgrounds concur that the rapid spread of the epidemic is fuelled by poverty⁹ and inequality generated by unjust global and local social and economic structures. Barnett and Whiteside (2006:4) argue that it is linked to the "the massive acceleration of communication, the rapidity with which desire is reconstructed and marketed globally, and the flagrant inequality that exists within and between societies". More explicitly, they maintain that "with the exception of its first manifestation in the US, this disease is linked to poverty and inequality and the way that globalisation exacerbates these. Its consequences will be felt for decades to come, and its origins lie far back in time and deep within the structures of social, economical and cultural life " (Barnett and Whiteside 2006:30).

From the perspective of those involved in development and humanitarian activities, HIV is a development problem as it "flourishes where the conditions of under-development in terms of poverty, disempowerment, gender inequality and poor public services makes societies susceptible to HIV infection and undermine efforts to prevent its transmission."

⁹ Poverty is a very complex phenomenon that should not be simply equated to being without money. In this dissertation, poverty is defined not in terms of GNP per capita but in terms of deprivation of freedom to make decision on one's life. Thus, poverty here includes the following issues identified by Graaff (2003:8): being subjected to physical abuse and violence, being subjected to humiliation and indignity, being subjected to exploitation by the powerful and the wealthy and which may also involve experiences of helplessness, of ill health, of indignity, of rejection and denigration, of powerlessness and insecurity, of fatalism, of being trapped in a terrible bleak place, and a deep injustice. This understanding of poverty seems to agree with the way ordinary Burundians define poverty. According to a 2004 report produced by *Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Lutte contre la Pauvreté (CSLP)* [Strategic Framework for Growth and Fight against Poverty] – an official plan of action produced by the Burundian government in 2006 – in a sounding out of Burundian's opinions on poverty, the majority of the participants asserted that the first symptom of poverty is the incapacity to feed one's family, followed by the absence of decent shelter and the difficulty to cover the medical expenses of one's family members (CSLP 2006:24).

Furthermore, those same factors of under-development make societies vulnerable to the impacts of AIDS (Sue 2004:5). This view is echoed by Gillespie and Kadiyala who have elaborated on how the HIV and AIDS epidemic and nutrition insecurity are entwined in a vicious cycle. They argue that on one side food insecurity increases people's susceptibility to HIV exposure and infection while on the other HIV and AIDS worsen vulnerability to food insecurity (Gillespie and Kadiyala 2005:4).

All these authors associate the spread of HIV to physiological, cultural, social, or economic factors that increase people's susceptibility to HIV infection and their vulnerability to the impact of AIDS. These includes factors such poverty, hunger, discrimination and social marginalisation, war, gender violence, unemployment, land scarcity and others. These various factors are maintained by endemic unjust structures prevailing in the sub-Saharan African region. Barnett and Whiteside have adequately summarised this link in the following statement:

Our argument is that there are social and economic characteristics which make an epidemic grow more or less rapidly. They determine whether the epidemic is concentrated in few 'high risk' or 'core' groups or whether it becomes generalised to the wider population. These determinants, which make a society more or less susceptible to epidemic spread, are closely tied to the characteristics which make that society more likely to suffer adverse consequences resulting from increased illness and death (2006:51).

Much has been written about the influence of these factors on the various modes of HIV transmission as well as on the success of different programmes targeting HIV and AIDS prevention and impact mitigation. In addition to those mentioned above, there is a large amount of literature on this topic. It is beyond the scope of this study to do a comprehensive analysis of what different authors have said about the relationship between the above-mentioned socio-economic and cultural factors and HIV and AIDS. Nevertheless, using the first factor of the hermeneutical circle outlined in 1.6 as a framework, the next part of this chapter will draw on these authors' insights to analyse

the driving factors of the epidemic in Burundian context and to eventually lay the groundwork for rethinking a theology of mission that may guide the Burundian Pentecostal churches in their responses to the epidemic. Focussing on Burundian context, the factors driving the HIV transmission are thus now examined, followed by a summary of the challenges that these factors poses to the churches.

2.4 Factors driving the HIV transmission in Burundi

From an epidemiological perspective, it is well known that HIV can only be transmitted through the contaminated body fluids such as blood, semen, vaginal secretions and breast milk (Barnett and Whiteside 2006:41). However, commenting on Webb's theory¹⁰ on the social epidemiology of HIV, Brummer (2002:4) and O'Donnell (2004:8) argue that although HIV and AIDS is perceived as a medical condition restricted to only those few modes of transmission, it is crucial to acknowledge that culture, individual action and socio-political factors create an environment that induces transmission. In other words, the spread of HIV is determined by a complex interplay of psychological, sociological, economic, political, and historical factors.

¹⁰ According to Brummer (2002), Webb distinguished two distinct but complementary approaches within the social epidemiology of HIV. The first one is *the structuralist approach* and it is characterized by an emphasis on the importance of structures or macro issues. Leaning on the works of Web (1997) and Lurie (2001), Brummer (2002:4) argues that this approach stresses that economic and political processes (e.g. the debt crisis, poverty, urbanisation, and government policy) influence the AIDS epidemic. This approach situates epidemiology in a historical, economic, and political context and has a strong focus on power relations within societies. The structuralist approach emphasises that individual human behaviour is partially determined by global economic and political structures that act on an international and national level, but also locally (Lurie, 2001; Webb, 1997). The shortcoming of this approach is that it implicates that in any given area with the same structures, people should develop the same behaviour patterns. The second one is the *anthropological approach*. As Brummer (2002:5) has described it, this approach examines the heterosexual spread of HIV from a bio-anthropological point of view with a special focus on cultural variables, sexuality, and the psychology of individual (sexual) behaviour. It is in this context that some theorists speak of "the promiscuity of African men and the tolerance of African societies towards multiple sexual partners". The danger of this second approach is that it "can easily lead to ethnocentrism and universalism that will lead to the simplification of the real life situation or the denial of the heterogeneity of African societies. Moreover, the biased focus on cultural and psychological elements of societies ignores the importance of political and economic structures and their impact on the spread of HIV/AIDS" (Brummer 2002:5). While both approaches can assist us to understand the HIV and AIDS epidemic at a certain extent, neither of them is capable of explaining local and regional diversity in sexual behaviour (Brummer 2002:5).

In Burundi, as was shown above, the HIV infection has dramatically increased particularly in the rural areas since the political crisis of the 1990's. Studies conducted by ACORD in 2004 and by FHI in 2007 and the 2006 UNAIDS annual report agree that this was due to the effects of armed conflict on the population, such as the displacement of rural populations, the destruction of infrastructure, and the deterioration of the economic and social situation. As the study by ACORD indicates, these various political, economic and social problems faced by the country, added to existing cultural factors, have provided a fertile breeding ground for the spread of HIV/AIDS (ACORD 2004:29). The 2006 UNAIDS country-specific information on Burundi reveals that in Burundi women, especially those living in rural areas and in refugee camps are increasingly vulnerable to HIV infection because of their poor economic status, high rates of illiteracy and the prevalence of gender-based violence (UNAIDS 2006:3). What these studies are indicating is that the HIV and AIDS epidemic is linked to various interconnected factors.

In what follows, we shall see how the political, economic, social and cultural factors render Burundian individuals and communities vulnerable to the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

2.4.1 Socio-cultural and religious factors

While initially most cases of HIV infection were reported to be among homosexual men (Barnett and Whiteside 2002:38) studies over a number of years show that in Africa heterosexuality is the main mode of HIV transmission accounting for more than 80% of infection (Abdool Karim 2005:243). Burundi is not an exception. The analysis of the qualitative data of a study conducted by the *Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Médecine et Maladies Infectieuses* (CEFORMI)¹¹ in 2001 shows that unprotected sex

¹¹ Established in 1997, *Le Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Médecine et Maladies Infectieuses* (CEFORMI) is a local research institution based within the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Burundi, CEFORMI. The CEFORMI's document referred to in this dissertation is titled "ENQUETE SOCIO COMPORTEMENTALE SUR L'INFECTION PAR LE VIH/SIDA AU BURUNDI" [Socio-behavioural survey on HIV infection in Burundi]. It was compiled by a multidisciplinary team comprising 4 medical doctors specialist in different medical fields, 3 specialists in psycho-pedagogy, a sociologist and a specialist in information technology. I have extensively made use of this study mainly because it is the only reliable wide-ranging survey I managed to find that documents how political, socio-economic, cultural

with multiple and casual partners was the main mode of infection with HIV in Burundian society (CEFORMI 2001:77; 94).

In the attempt to understand the factors behind this heterosexual mode of transmission, CEFORMI's researchers combined quantitative with qualitative studies by observing the behaviours and querying traditional Burundian cultural and sexual morals. This approach has enabled the researchers to identify a number of socio-cultural factors contributing to the spread of HIV and AIDS in Burundi (CEFORMI 2001:112-113). The findings show that these factors are rooted practices linked to traditional practices linked to systems of social relations in Burundi but which are now becoming powerful engines driving sexual permissiveness for men particular. Some of these practices are noteworthy in the context of the present study:

One of these practices, "*gusobanya urugo*" – which literally means "to repair the fence" – consists of visiting the women of the clan whose husband is absent in order to accomplish her spouse's duties including replacing him sexually. This practice is linked to cultural division of labour which, based on one's sex, determines what kind of work a man or women can or cannot do.

"*Gushinga icumu*", meaning "taking one's place" or "to occupy the territory" was a traditional practice that allowed men free sexual access to their sisters-in-law. It was justified by the Kirundi adage "*umugore ni uwo umuryango*" meaning "a woman is for the clan". This adage applied also to the practices of "*gutera intobo*", which referred to sex between father-in-law and daughter-in-law and that of "*Guterura umwana*", literally meaning "to pick up a child" which referred to the compulsory sexual intercourse between spouses on certain occasions such as when their child has his/her first teeth. In

and religious factors as well as sexual rituals rooted in the patriarchal system, renders people vulnerable to HIV infection. More importantly, as it was mainly based on a participatory approach, it is a primary source since it allows the voices of different categories of people to be heard and thus enables the researcher to understand how ordinary Burundians perceive the HIV and AIDS epidemic and the ways they are coping with its effects.

case of the absence of the husband, his close relative (father or brother) was committed to fulfil this obligation.

Other practices, which, to some extent, are still common today, are “*gucura*”, a social obligation to marry the wife of one’s brother or one’s son in the case of death of the latter and “*guhrika*”, a permitted polygamy in certain circumstances such in cases of barrenness. Recently, new sexual practices that are linked to the older traditional sexual behaviours have emerged. One of them is current practice of “*Gusanura ivyasambutse*”. This expression which literally means “to reconstruct what has been destroyed by the war” has emerged recently as people started to deal with the aftermath of the civil war that erupted in 1993. According to CEFORMI (2001:112), this expression means “to sexually entertain women who were affected by the war or to replace spouses who died during the war”. It emerges from the older sexual practice of “*Guterura umwana*” discussed above. Others new practices are “*kududura*”, meaning “surprise sexual encounter” and “*kwandura*” literally meaning “to collect” and refers to “enjoying casual sexual partners” (CEFORMI 2001:113). These practices support the gendered social relations in which the male has unlimited freedom to multiple sexual partners. The practices are legitimised by sayings such as: “*Umwonga umwe wonza inyoni*” (one valley makes a bird thin); “*Impfizi ntiyimirwa*” (the bull has no limit of access to the females of its troupe); “*Iyirinze ntirindira sengondo*” (a cow in rut does not await the dominant bull) (CEFORMI 2001:115). These traditional practices are clearly rooted in patriarchal structures, which constitute a great challenge to an effective response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Burundi. If they are not addressed, it will be difficult to attain the fundamental behavioural change that is required to fight the spread of the disease.

Although the role played by Christianity in condemning these practices cannot be denied, the church has not done enough. Nevertheless, considering people’s views on these practices as presented in CEFORMI’s study, it would appear that these traditional practices and sayings that promote male sexual permissiveness are losing ground. Apart from the practice of “*gucura*”, which was supported by 32.9% of participants, the other practices were supported by less than 10% of those who took part in the study

(CEFORMI 2001:116). It is believed that the combined efforts of Christian teachings that condemn polygamy and any sexual relationship out of marriage, the women's emancipation movement which works mainly through the Union of Burundian Women (UFB), Catholic youth movements, and the enrolment of girls in schools (they now have almost equal representation with boys in primary school) have together dramatically altered those traditional sexual behaviours (CEFORMI 2001:116).

However, the fact that new sexual practices rooted in older patriarchal social relations are emerging demonstrates that those social arrangements that promote men's free access to women have not completely disappeared. While the role of Christianity in eradicating those practices is praiseworthy, the problem is that Burundian churches in general have only condemned them without taking palpable action to address the unequal power between men and women in sexual relationships, which underpins and drives these practices. As elsewhere, patriarchal structures in the Burundian context – including within the churches - continue to reinforce gender inequality, making mutual sexual relationships between men and women impossible. Churches have long been characterised by negative teaching about sexuality, so that sexual transgressions are judged more harshly than others, resulting in a simplistic, legalistic morality that is out of touch with how people are living. As consequence, the churches have failed not only to deal with sexual practices realistically but also to promote a balanced sexual education for the youth. This is worsened by the fact that speaking about sexuality is taboo in Burundian culture.

In Burundian society there are many taboos and prejudices surrounding the question of sexuality and these hinder any form of communication on this issue between parents and children or men and women (CEFORMI 2001:121). This has resulted in the absence of adequate and inclusive educative approaches involving different groups in the community, particularly parents and their children. The main challenge here is that the HIV and AIDS pandemic emerged in a cultural context that prohibits people from discussing sexuality issues freely. Even uttering the Kirundi words for sexual organs and sexual acts is considered as being immoral. In traditional Burundian society, only

shepherds (mostly boys) and young girls when collecting firewood or water were allowed to use those words freely¹². In other words, sexual education for boys and girls often took place informally amongst their peers while they were performing their daily tasks. In recent times however, as CEFORMI (2001:114) has pointed out, school education has diminished these occasions as young people are less involved in these kinds of activities. Moreover, even in the rural areas where these activities still exist, it seems that the same kind of sexual education no longer takes place. Due to the influence of Christianity, the language that was used is no longer acceptable at all because it is considered as sinful. The consequence is that young people often adopt risky sexual behaviour¹³ because of misinformation and ignorance about HIV transmission (CEFORMI 2001:103)¹⁴. The point here is that both these wrong views about HIV transmission and the traditional practices discussed previously cannot be challenged when there is no appropriate space where people can discuss openly and objectively about sexual issues.

Most churches have youth programmes or pre-marriage lessons wherein issues relating to sexuality are discussed. However, even in these programmes when sexuality is addressed openly without judgement or prejudice, the discourse often deals exclusively with individual behaviour without addressing the patriarchal structures that regulate sexual relationships. This explains why the traditional sexual practices that were believed to have disappeared have in fact survived and continue to be practised albeit more secretly. This is evidenced in Bururi province where the provincial medical doctor confirmed that entire locations were decimated in certain communities where there has been significant migration or emigration due to the practices “*gutera intobo*” and “*gusobanya*” (CEFORMI 2001:119). One can therefore affirm that the HIV and AIDS epidemic has exposed the reality that the same traditional sexual practices that Burundian

¹² The theoretical sexual education of young people was performed through various games with their peers. As CEFORMI's study points out, the most famous game was a kind of competition which consists of insulting each other by exchanging sexual expressions known as “*imikomo*”. In ancient times, all young people had to practice this kind of game. For more information about sexual initiation of young Burundian boys and girls see CEFORMI (2001: 94,114).

¹³ For more information on different reasons that push young people to risky sexual behaviour, see CEFORMI (2001:103-107) and CSLP (2006:43). What these studies show is that the role of parents or adult in general is central in pushing young people to adopt risky sexual behaviour..

¹⁴ The details on erroneous beliefs prevailing among Burundian young people can be found in CEFORMI (2001:77-78).

churches sought to eradicate have in fact survived because they have never addressed the patriarchy that prevails within society at large and within their own structures. The situation in Burundi has usefully been summarised in the following quote:

...les croyances, les attitudes et les pratiques des burundais en matière de sexualité sont encore teintées par la tradition et par les prescriptions chrétiennes. L'apparition du sida a mis à rude épreuves les habitudes antérieures face à la nécessité de réduire le nombre de partenaires et de se protéger par des moyens artificiels comme le condom.... Les survivances de la tradition font partie des obstacles nombreux qu'il faut lever à travers les stratégies de changement de comportements.

[...beliefs, attitudes and practices of Burundians in matters of sexuality are still tinted by tradition and by the Christian prescriptions. The emergence of AIDS has challenged the traditional habits in facing the need to reduce the number of sexual partners and protect themselves by artificial means as the condom.... The survival of traditions is among the many obstacles that must be dealt with through behaviour change strategies] (CEFORMI 2001:116).

This signifies that traditional practices are among the challenges that need to be tackled first in order to promote behavioural change. There is, therefore, a need to deal with the patriarchal socio-cultural structures that enable these traditional practices to survive. In fact, as we shall see in the following section, these practices are perpetuated by socio-economic injustices linked to the distribution of power in terms of gender and age.

2.4.2 Socio-economic factors

The extreme poverty in which the Burundian population is currently living is one of the factors that push people, particularly women, to capitulate to abusive traditional sexual practices and to adopt other risky behaviours. The study carried out by CEFORMI (2001) as well as data from CSLP (2006:43) indicate that due to poverty, particularly food

insecurity, women and girls have resorted to engaging in sexual activities as a means of survival and as “coping strategies”:

...la plupart des femmes embrassent ce métier à cause de la pauvreté. Il s'agit souvent des filles-mères qui doivent nourrir leurs enfants. Elles deviennent donc dépendantes et acceptent toutes les conditions que leur imposent leurs clients, y compris d'avoir des rapports non protégés.

[Most women embrace this profession due to poverty. Often young single-mothers have to feed their children. They become therefore dependent and accept all conditions that their clients impose on them, including having unprotected sex] (CEFORMI 2001:111).

As commercial sex may be one of the only income-generating options open to these single parents, they accept the risks linked to unprotected sex in order to feed their children. The following story narrated by a sex worker in Buyenzi (a populous quarter in the capital city of Burundi, Bujumbura) demonstrates this reality:

Umugabo yamaze gushika mu nzu, aravuga ngo ndamusubize amahera yiwe nimba ntashaka kureka capote. Nawe uca uraba, buriye cane, ufise abana bagomba icyi mu gitondo, none nzogikura hehe? Ugaca wemera.

[A client is already in the house, he tells me to give back his money if I do not want to make love with him without condom. You reflect: it's night; you have children who will claim breakfast in morning, where I am going to get it from? You don't have the choice, you accept.] (Sex worker, quoted in CEFORMI 2001:89).

Another sex worker has declared that she cannot worry too much about the risk of getting infected with the virus because of the pressing need for money, especially when her client is ready to pay more for unprotected sex than for sex with a condom:

Mushitse mu nzu, umugabo akakubwira ngo sinshobora gukoresha préservatif, vuga ivyo ukeneye ndabiguhe tugire sans préservatif, ukemera kubera inzara, kandi uzi neza ko sida ayifise.

[You arrive in the house; the man tells you that he does not want to use the condom. He tells you to ask him whatever you want provided that you have unprotected sex with him. You accept because you are hungry, though you are sure that he has AIDS] (Sex worker, quoted in CEFORMI 2001:84).

By taking this decision, it is unlikely that this sex worker did not know the consequence of having unprotected sex with a man who might be HIV positive. Instead, her decision confirms the argument of Barnett and Whiteside (2006:88):

Life lived in a risk environment affects who you are, who you become, how you earn your living and what you (and others) do with your body...people who inhabit a risk behaviour environment make decisions that are rational for them in their circumstances. However it is the case that in a risk environment, people may be compelled to take risks that are against their long-term interest because they have little hope for the long term.

The poignant experience of these two women raises a critical question: given the situation in which they find themselves, what can be done so that they may have other choices? This dilemma may be difficult to solve but one thing that is confirmed in their statements is that in situations of dire poverty and hunger, the risk of HIV infection may no longer be the main concern of people. According to participants in a study carried out in 2004, the HIV and AIDS epidemic appeared as a secondary priority to people. It was cited by only 13% of people interviewed and it was classified thirteenth out of fifteen priorities that the government needs to address (SCLP 2006:25). As noted above, for the majority of participants in the survey, the major concerns are successively: “the incapacity to feed one’s family followed by the absence of decent home and the difficulty to pay medical expenses for one’s family members” (SCLP 2006:24). Clearly, since these three issues are the main signs of poverty, this indicates that poverty and its effects are

considered more of a threat than the risk of HIV infection. All these issues are linked to the country's history of civil unrest as food, shelter and access to health care are the main basic rights that the majority of Burundians have been denied largely due to the civil war which was waged in Burundi for more than a decade. In what follows, we shall see in some detail how socio-political factors contribute to the spread of the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

2.4.3 Socio-political factors

Sida irica, ariko n'abasaya n'ubukene birica.

[AIDS kills but assailants and poverty also kill]

(An internally displaced person quoted in a study by CEFORMI (2001:110)).

There are various ways in which the civil war that erupted in 1993 might have contributed to the spread of HIV in Burundi. The first way is that during war people have to survive in situations of extreme poverty, which, as we have seen previously may force women and girls to sell sex to survive. Apart from this so-called "survival sex" (Brummer 2002:7), civilians are often exposed to sexual violence. As in any situation of war, from 1993 up to 2004 cases of rape soared, including the rape of young children, and sexual harassment.¹⁵ The acts of violence were committed by both government soldiers and armed groups (NRC 2003:52-53; Feller 2001). In addition to this, women also become victims of domestic violence.

¹⁵ For instance, SCLP (2006) data indicate that in 2003 and 2004 there were 983 and 1664 reported cases respectively. Amongst these cases, 43% were under 18 years old with 17% being children under 10 years old (2006:22). The laws of Burundi provide for 10 to 20 years' imprisonment for rape, or even more if there are aggravating circumstances (NRC 2001:57). Unfortunately, as Feller has noted, many cases are not brought to trial and most often, the perpetrators go unpunished. Due to social and other pressures the victims or their parents often accept out-of-court settlements. In fact, "the Burundian culture encourages a raped woman to conceal her suffering. Consequently, hardly any women report rape to the police. If a woman does report a rape to the police and her case goes to court, the procedure is reportedly very humiliating for the woman, especially since the male judge questions the woman on her behaviour before and during the act" (Feller 2001:14).

In his study on violence against women in Burundi, Feller (2001:11) reveals that because many men were no longer able to cope with the needs of their families as a result of the armed conflict, they felt threatened in their role as head of the family as it is usually the women who work in the fields and nourish the family. Consequently, they often turned to abuse of alcohol and took their frustrations out on the women by battering them in order to exert their power (Feller 2001:12). According to Feller (2001:12), “the study conducted by the Ligue ITEKA shows that 42% of the women who participated in the study in Bujumbura had experienced some kind of domestic violence; 91% of the women who reported domestic violence were battered; 49% of the girls who reported domestic violence were raped” (Feller 2001:11-12). This has very negative psychological and health consequences for women. Studies have shown that the risk of HIV transmission is very high in women who experience sexual violence. According to Abdool Karim (2005:257), women who are raped, physically assaulted or threatened with assault are more likely to be engaged in risky sexual behaviours. It has also been shown that sexually abused girls lose self-esteem and are more likely to engage in earlier sexual activity, multiple partners, the use of alcohol, or transactional sex and trafficking (Global Health Council 2009:1).

The second way in which war contributes to the spread of HIV is through the disruption of social institutions and family life, largely because it often leads to forced migration (Brummer 2002:7). Since the armed conflict which started in Burundi in October 1993, hundreds of thousands of people have become refugees. Others were internally displaced people (IDPs). People in camps for the internally displaced were not allowed to leave to go to their fields to gather food, resulting in severe malnutrition in these camps (NRC 2003:10). Furthermore, the soldiers in charge of protecting the sites forced the population to provide them with water, wood and food. These daily duties and the stress of not knowing what the future would bring, nor how to provide for one’s family destabilise psychologically displaced people even more (Feller 2001:17). In those camps, women were disproportionately vulnerable in many ways. The Human Rights Watch report released in 2000 indicated that:

In a number of cases, soldiers have raped women, often after having encountered them in a secluded place outside the camp or after having brought them to the military post on some pretext. In many other cases, soldiers have used their authority to pressure women to engage in sexual acts against their will, sometimes in return for implied or explicit promises of protection or small payments...Fear of soldiers is so great that sometimes people refuse to intervene even if it is clear that a rape is taking place (HRW 2000, quoted in NRC 2003:59).

Here again, it is clear that in addition to being victims of soldiers' abuse of power, women's vulnerability is also linked to the situation of extreme poverty, gender imbalances in the distributions of tasks between men and women, as well as the destruction of family structures. Due to the insufficiency of food in quantity and quality and the difficult access to water and firewood, the women at sites of displaced persons and regrouped populations make great sacrifices on behalf of their family. The 1998 United Nations General Assembly (UN GA) report on the Situation of Human Rights in Burundi indicated how women in displaced camps are exposed to multiple dangers:

...Women are often most vulnerable while engaged in their daily tasks, such as gathering firewood. In most camps, women must venture beyond the camp perimeters, sometimes walking several kilometres, to collect wood for their cooking fires. Exposed and helpless, they may be subjected to brutal sexual assault and rape. Often the victims are mercilessly shot, knifed or beaten (UN GA 13 October 1998, Para. 53 quoted in NRC 2003:58).

The same report indicates that during the socio-behavioural survey, 9% of young people surveyed reported to have already been victims of rape and that young people from 15 to 24 years old surveyed in displaced sites asserted that it is difficult to abstain from sex (UN OCHA 19 Nov 2002, p.15 & 26 in NRC 2003:76).

The disturbance of traditional safety mechanisms to care for children, orphans, the elderly, the infirm and the destitute is a third factor resulting from war that contributes to

the vulnerability of women. Several studies (UN OCHA 2002; CEFORMI 2001; Feller 2001) show that many mono-parental families in Burundi are currently headed by women because men have been killed during ethnic violence that erupted from 1993 onward. The vulnerability of households headed by women is worsened by gender discrimination against women in terms of the access to inheritance, land, credit and education¹⁶.

Furthermore, large numbers of families have been separated, with the children usually remaining with their mother. This is worsened by the fact that Burundi has a very high fertility rate of around seven children per woman (Feller 2001:10). In addition, women now engage in new risky sexual behaviours similar to the older sexual practices discussed above. In 2002, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Burundi (UN OCHA Burundi) reported that some men in the camps were pressurising women into sexual intercourse in order to 'reconstruct' what the war has destroyed, by engaging in the practice of "*gusanura ivyasambutse*" (UN OCHA 19 Nov 2002, p15 & 26 in NRC 2003:76). The sexual harassment of widows motivated by this practice of "*gusanura ivyasanbutse*" was also previously confirmed by the CEFORMI's study (2001:109).

The fourth way through which war contributes to the spread of HIV is linked to soldiers who are separated from their family while living in a stressful environment. During the war, soldiers were obliged to remain far from their spouses. The consequence of this was the adoption of high-risk behaviour such as sex with multiple partners, including with sex workers and women in displaced people's camps (CEFORMI 2001:111). As both soldiers and truck drivers (who also frequent roadside camps on their long-distance journeys) are key populations at higher risk, the chance of becoming infected is great for these women especially when condoms are not readily available in camps for internally displaced people and in military sites surrounding these camps (CEFORMI 2001:111).

¹⁶ For more details on various kinds of gender inequalities in Burundi see CSLP (2006: 45) and Feller (2001:10ff).

A sixth factor resulting from the civil war and that leads to risky sexual behaviour is the “lineage mentality” in Burundian society.¹⁷ As many people lose their relatives during war, people are more concerned about reproduction to continue the family line, than about HIV prevention (CEFORMI 2001:109).

There is also the slackness of morals and tolerance of sexual relations before or outside marriage as well as the practice polygamy due to the disruption of the social and cultural environment, forming a seventh way in which war leads to further HIV infection. A typical example is the tolerance of unmarried young girls who have children and continue to live under the same roof with their parents. In the past, this was unacceptable since it was considered as disgraceful for the family. It is said that in traditional Burundian society, a girl who became pregnant before marriage was attached to a rock and thrown in the abyss or in a river; the same punishment that was given to a traitor of the king (CEFORMI 2001:80,113). This practice has been abolished by the introduction of the modern state but girls’ pregnancy has never been tolerated neither by society nor by the church. Often, girls who become pregnant are kicked out of their father’s house and are suspended from church. However, the situation of war has loosened this morality as part of the general disintegration of social norms and values.

The eighth and final driving factor of HIV infection which has been fuelled by the political strife is the limited access to health facilities. This is one of the main obstacles to the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) in Burundi. As studies have shown, MTCT can be significantly reduced by administering anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) to mothers during pregnancy and when giving birth (Barnett and Whiteside 2006:354). This requires regular access to health facilities and the availability of ARVs as well as qualified medical personnel. Unfortunately, none of these conditions are present in Burundi. As was pointed out by the Burundian government in its *Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Lutte contre la Pauvreté (CSLP)* [Strategic Framework for Growth and

¹⁷ This mentality is not only found in Burundi. According to Caldwell and Caldwell (1990:82), “The core of African society is its emphasis on ancestry and descent” and as result “people may want to avoid HIV infection; they may want to defer marriage or childbearing; but the pressures of lineage, family, gender roles and short life expectancy may often be for sex now (preferably reproductive, fertile sex) rather than deferred for sex and the use of condom” (quoted in Barnett and Whiteside 2006:24).

Fight against Poverty] this situation is partly due to the decade of civil war that has heavily affected the national health system (CSLP 2006:42). Even the few health centres that exist do not have the capacity to provide the necessary services prescribed by the national minimal norms (CSLP 2006:42). As it is in most poor countries, very few people have access to ARVs and it is estimated that almost 80% of all Burundian women are delivering their children at home and without qualified assistance (UNAIDS 2006; NRC 2003:84).¹⁸ In addition, given the extreme poverty in which the majority of Burundians are living, many cannot afford six months' formula feed to replace breastfeeding.¹⁹

In addition, the limited access to health facilities is an important contributing factor in HIV infection through blood transfusion. The transfusion of unsafe blood is considered as the most effective way of transmitting the virus as it introduces the virus directly into the bloodstream (Barnett and Whiteside 2002:44). To minimize the risk of transmission, testing all blood donations and recruiting safe blood donors are fundamental principles (Barnett and Whiteside 2002:44). In Burundi, there is indication that efforts have been made to adhere to these principles. For instance, the prevalence among blood donors has regressed progressively from 8.7% in 1992 to 0.47% in 2002 (WHO 2005:37). However, given the current context, many challenges remain to ensure blood safety²⁰. In most of the provinces health facilities are not operating and HIV testing kits are not assured (CSLP 2006:42). This means that blood screening also cannot be guaranteed.

Another way in which the lack of health facilities contributes to HIV infection is the sharing of syringes and needles. In official health centres, the sharing of syringes and

¹⁸ This may be the reason why infantile and maternal mortality rates in Burundi are among the highest in the world. According to a government report, they were respectively 114 per thousand and 800 per hundred thousands in 2005-2006 (CSLP 2006:42). Since 2006, health care is free for children under five and for maternity care, including caesarean births, but the problem is the availability of health care centres, especially in rural areas.

¹⁹ Apart from the financial factors, there also the socio-cultural and psychological factors that may push mothers to stick to breastfeeding instead of using formula feed especially in a context where stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV is prevalent as we shall see later.

²⁰ One should bear in mind that, as Barnett and Whiteside (2002:44) point out, even where the means to ensure blood screening are available, the risk cannot entirely be eliminated since during the window period the antibodies are not detectable in infected blood. The implication is that the risk of transmission is high in a context where blood transfusion is frequent. This may be the case in Burundi due to the high rate of anaemia - often linked to malaria which is endemic in the Great Lakes region - especially among children and pregnant women.

needles does not exist. However, for various reasons – mainly linked to limited access to health facilities and medical charges – people continue consulting illegal unqualified medical practitioners and traditional healers who often use non sterilised material (CEFORMI 2001:76). This is again a confirmation that in a context of helplessness, the level of knowledge on different modes of transmission does not correspond to people’s behaviour.

2.6 Conclusion

We have seen that their vulnerable context forces people to resort to coping strategies that expose them to a high risk of HIV infection. Many of the factors that limit people’s choices are rooted in interconnected unjust economic, political, socio-cultural, and religious structures that are beyond the control of individual behaviour. This is where the HIV and AIDS epidemic challenges the different stakeholders including churches to rethink the way they have been responding to the epidemic. For the churches particularly, the challenges that the HIV and AIDS epidemic poses compel them to go beyond prevention campaigns that mainly put the emphasis on individual sexual behaviour modification in terms of “Abstain, Be Faithful, Use a Condom” (ABC) and focus on addressing these larger political, economic, social, cultural and religious issues that drive people to risky behaviour. This requires thinking “out of the box” and a critical analysis of the social, economic and cultural realities in order to understand whether they promote life or death. It is by doing so that one can identify the fundamental factors that make people susceptible to HIV transmission and vulnerable to the impacts of the epidemic. One will be able also to determine where prevention and impact mitigation interventions should be targeting. Moreover, instead of applying the principle “one size fits all”, interventions that are relevant to the context and to the main concerns of people can be adopted. My argument in this study is that for the Burundian Pentecostal churches to be relevant, they have to address the broad factors that make people susceptible to HIV transmission and render them vulnerable to the effects of AIDS.

Thus, in setting the context of this study, a brief overview of the HIV and AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa was discussed. In this chapter, it was noted that sub-Saharan Africa is the area most impacted by the epidemic with women being disproportionately affected. Possible reasons for this situation were outlined. Focusing on the Burundian context, various factors that exacerbate HIV transmission were highlighted. It was made clear that beyond the bio-medical factors, there are various other factors rooted in patriarchal structures as well as linked to the socio-political situation in the country, which effect decision-making in terms of sexual and other risky behaviours that expose people to HIV infection. These include cultural practices that encourage multiple sexual partners to the advantage of men; war and the resulting economic hardship; gender-based inequity and violence, and limited access to good food, health facilities, clean water, sanitation, shelter, education, and preventive information.

For the faith based organisations to takes the risk and responsibility of addressing these factors, it requires a clear and holistic vision of the mission of the church in the world. As far as the Burundian Pentecostal churches are concerned, the question is whether this vision exists in their current theology that informs their ministry in general and their responses to the epidemic in particular. This is what the fourth and the fifth chapters will be looking at. As we shall discuss later, the kind of theology of mission that was developed in Burundi is based on the traditional, narrow understanding of salvation. This understanding suggests that involvement in society has nothing to do with salvation, which is rather focussed on drawing people toward the church where they might get access to eternal salvation (Bosch 1993:395). In other words, God's "salvific" activities are separated from God's "providential" activities in terms of the wellbeing of individuals and society (Bosch 1993:394). If the Burundian Pentecostal churches are to be relevant in the present context, they need a theology of mission which perceives salvation more holistically. More precisely, they need a theology of mission which does not separate individual salvation from the humanisation of the structures of our society and which communicates hope, not only for heaven, but on earth also. This study argues that that this theology of mission should be rooted in a holistic meaning of mission as defined by the concept of *missio Dei* which is discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

The *missio Dei* concept and its significance in the understanding of mission

3.1 Introduction

Since God's concern is for the entire world, this should also be the scope of the *missio Dei*. It affects all people in all aspects of their existence...It takes place in ordinary human history, not exclusively in and through the church (Bosch 1993:391).

When we ask ourselves what the mission of God is, and in what ways we are called to co-operate with God in it, we find ourselves talking about transformed relationships in several dimensions - between humans and God, between humans and between humans and creation (Langmead 2008:5-6).

This chapter explores the theological meaning of the *missio Dei* concept and its contribution to a holistic theology of mission. However, as Meyer has argued, *missio Dei* is not a concept in the sense of a clear-cut idea that can be defined once and for all in order to be applied and utilised. As a theological paradigm, it has unfolded in many different ways since its emergence in the 1930s (Meyer 2004:107). Given the scope of this study, the chapter is not intending to develop a comprehensive analysis of the theological discourse that gave birth to *missio Dei* concept or how it has developed.²¹ Rather, the focus of this chapter is on how this concept can help us to understand the relationship between God's mission and that of the church. More precisely, the focus is on exploring its theological meaning and its significance in providing a more holistic understanding of the mission of the church in the context of HIV and AIDS.

²¹ For a comprehensive historical background of the *missio Dei* concept, see David Bosch 1993:368-393 and Meyer 2004:110ff.

3.2 *Missio Dei* as a theological framework of mission

The “*missio Dei*” concept is one of the most important theological developments of missiological thinking of twentieth century. Since its inception in the early part of the twentieth century, the concept has become a fundamental theoretical framework of reference for the theology of mission (Bosch 1993:390). With the introduction of this concept in missionary discourse there was a remarkable paradigm shift from traditional understandings of mission and the church that had characterised earlier periods in the history of the church. These different understandings can be summarised as follows:

During preceding centuries mission was understood in a variety of ways. Sometimes it was interpreted primarily in soteriological terms: as saving individuals from eternal damnation. Or it was understood in cultural terms: as introducing people from the East and the South to the blessings and privileges of the Christian West. Often it was perceived in ecclesiastical categories: as the expansion of the church (or of a specific denomination). Sometimes it defined salvation historically: as the process by which the world — through evolution or by means of a cataclysmic event — would be transformed into the kingdom of God. In all these instances, and in various, frequently conflicting ways, the intrinsic interrelationship between Christology, soteriology, and the doctrine of the Trinity, so important for the early church, was gradually displaced by one of several versions of the doctrine of grace (Bosch 1993:389).

As this summary shows, before the *missio Dei* concept was introduced, the church considered itself as the origin of mission. The emergence of *missio Dei* led to a radical shift from the old paradigm that emphasised a church-centred mission to a mission-centred church (Bosch 1993:370). In other words, the concept of *missio Dei* brought a new understanding of mission as an attribute of God rather than an activity of the church (Bosch 1991:390-391). Here again, Bosch has captured well this shift from an ecclesiocentric to a God-centred understanding of mission:

Mission was understood as being derived from the very nature of God. It was thus put in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity, not of ecclesiology or soteriology. The classical doctrine on the *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit was expanded to include yet another “movement”: the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit sending the church into the world. As far as missionary thinking was concerned, this linking with the doctrine of the Trinity constituted an important innovation (1993:390).

Simply put, *missio Dei* became a new paradigm of missionary thinking that challenged the tendency to subordinate the larger mission of God to a few church activities. While before its emergence, mission was seen as part of ecclesiology with the church being the owner, agent and subject that sets the agenda of mission, within the new paradigm mission was redefined in relation to the nature of triune God with God being the only source of missionary endeavour. This Trinitarian basis of mission is important as it forms the foundation of any understanding of the link between the mission of God and the mission of the church. In fact, many scholars who have attempted to define *missio Dei* have relied on this emphasis on the involvement of the Trinity in mission. We shall explore in some detail their insights as we attempt to understand the theological significance of this concept.

Avis (2005) is one of the scholars who have used the Trinitarian foundation of mission to articulate the *raison d'être* of the church suggesting that: “Just as Jesus Christ was sent into the world on behalf of the Father, he sent the church into the world on his behalf. And just as all that Jesus said and did was motivated by his overpowering consciousness of being sent, so all that the church does and says should be so motivated” (Avis 2005:2). From this statement, it is clear that the church has been entrusted with a mission through her relationship with God. However, from the *missio Dei* perspective, the mission entrusted to the church cannot just be reduced to converting individuals or to numerical growth. This is so because the church’s mission is totally dependent or subordinated to the mission of God. According to Avis, “Christian mission is an expression of the movement of God towards the world: the church is the instrument of this movement.

Mission precedes church. The church exists because God's mission - in the profound, nuanced sense of *missio Dei* - is underway" (2005:6). In their Trinitarian definitions of *missio Dei*, Moltmann and Bosch also put an emphasis on the precedence and inclusiveness of God's mission.

Moltmann has described *missio Dei* as "a movement from God in which the church has its origin and arrives at its own movement, but which goes beyond the church... It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfil in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church" (1977:11, 64). In this same perspective, Bosch affirms that mission as *missio Dei* must be understood as a movement from God to the world. He defines *missio Dei* as "God's revelation as the One who loves the world, God's involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God, which embraces both the church and the world", in which the church also takes part (Bosch 1993:10). More explicitly, Bosch maintains, "the *missio Dei* is God's activity, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate" (1993:391). These scholars all clearly show that the church is not the initiator or the guarantor of mission but God is. They also reveal that there is a mission outside the church. In other words, God was already carrying on his mission in the world before the church was there. This means that although the church might be the privileged participant in this mission, it is not the initiator of mission. It also means that to participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward humanity (Bosch 1993:390). For this reason, if the church is to participate in God's mission, its primary purpose, to use Bosch's words, can therefore not simply be the planting of churches or the saving of souls; rather, it has to be service to the *missio Dei* (Bosch 1993:391). This raises two important questions: What does serving the *missio Dei* mean? What is the purpose of serving the *missio Dei*?

In responding to this question, the insights of Perry Yoder, Ross Langmead, and Steve de Gruchy are crucial. As mentioned earlier, Langmead views transformed relationships in several dimensions as the heart of *missio Dei* (2008:5-6). Drawing on the analysis of the pragmatic meaning of the *missio Dei* concept, de Gruchy (2005:31) concludes that the

mission of the church in the world is simply to promote God's work in the world, which means, "creating and sustaining *shalom*, and restoring it when it is absent". Actually, these insights that the two scholars have put forward are interconnected because, in de Gruchy's view, *shalom* –which is the heart of *missio Dei* – "is an all-encompassing vision that includes enjoying good relationships with God, with creation, with all humans and with oneself" (de Gruchy 2005:33). In other words, transformed relationships between humans and God, between humans and between humans and creation are key features of *shalom* – the main concern of the *missio Dei*. To understand better the meaning of participating in the *missio Dei*, it is therefore helpful to look at the notion of *shalom* in more detail.

3.3 *Shalom* as a defining concept of God's mission

The concept of *shalom* has three different meanings but these are interconnected in practice. According to Yoder (1984:16), "*shalom* sometimes refers to material and physical conditions, sometimes to relationships, and sometimes to moral behaviour". In a deeper analysis of this concept, Walterstorff (1983:69) argues that justice, right harmonious relationships, and enjoyment or delight are inseparable in constructing the idea of *shalom*. He insists that *shalom* is intertwined with justice and that there is no *shalom* without justice. However, he also believes that *shalom* goes beyond usual justice as it incorporates things like living in peaceful relationship with God, with self, with fellow human beings, and with nature (Walterstorff 1983:69). He recognizes that being in peaceful and harmonious relationships does not always mean that *shalom* is there. He provides the illustrative example of the nation, which may be at peace with all its neighbours and yet be miserable in its poverty (1983:69-70). From this Walterstorff concludes that *shalom* is also "enjoyment or delight in one's relationships" which includes "to enjoy living before God, to enjoy living in one's physical surroundings, to enjoy living with one's fellows, to enjoy life with oneself" (1983:69-70).

Yet again, he also believes that *shalom* is not yet achieved when there are individuals who are in conditions that do not allow them to have a humane and dignified life. He argues that in *shalom* there is neither poverty nor disease. According to him,

In *shalom* there are no blind; all see...in *shalom* there are no lame; all walk. There are no lepers; all are well. There are no deaf; all hear. There are no dead; all are alive. And there are no poor; all have plenty. To limp is to fall short of *shalom*, to be impoverished is to fall short of *shalom*...In *shalom* there is no poverty. In *shalom*, there is no disease (Walterstorff 1983:77).

From this same perspective, Yoder has argued that “*shalom*, in the Hebrew Bible refers primarily to a physical state of well-being, to things being as they ought to be in the material world. *Shalom* is marked by the presence of physical well-being and the absence of physical threats like war, disease, and famine” (1987:13). Drawing on the critique of society of Old Testament prophets (Amos 3:9-11; Isaiah 10:1-2), he argues that *shalom* cannot be achieved (1) when the rich with their abundance and affluence live in the midst of the poor and needy; (2) when the rich and the powerful are oppressing the poor and the powerless; and (3) when the legal and political structures are upholding unjust laws to support their own interests, with harmful results for the ordinary people (Yoder 1987:17). In few words, there cannot be *shalom* “if things are not as they ought to be” (Yoder 1987:17).

Briefly, one can say that in Walterstorff’s and Yoder’s understanding of *shalom*, the full realisation of *shalom* is fully attained when justice, harmonious relationships, and delight are combined with prosperity and welfare for all. Even so, justice, to use Yoder’s expression, is “the true measuring stick for whether or not there is *shalom*” (Yoder 1987:18). A brief analysis of two interconnected Hebrew words, *sedaqah* and *mishpat* illustrates this point.

It has been demonstrated that in the Hebrew Bible the term “justice” is very rich in meaning and that *sedaqah* and *mishpat* are the two principal expressions that are used to

speak about justice. According to Daniel G. Groody, the term *sedaqah* is used 523 times in the Old Testament and it is often translated as “justice, righteousness, or upright relations” (2007:27). This term has a central significance because it encompasses many aspects of human relationships and life including the distribution of material necessities (Groody 2007:27). As Groody points out, this kind of righteousness should not merely be equated to personal righteousness in terms of moral high-mindedness, spiritual superiority, or religious Puritanism, but it has more to do with social righteousness which involves “relational interdependence and a profound attentiveness to the needs of others” (2007:27). In few words, justice as expressed through the concept of *sedaqah* “deals with how individual, families, communities, as well as juridical, religious, and political authorities, interact with each other, with the most vulnerable members of society, and with the Covenant God” (Groody 2007:27-28). The main idea that *sedaqah* emphasises is that there cannot be justice if there are not right relationships and in the same way, there cannot be justice if there is no fidelity to the demands of these relationships. Faithfulness to the demands of right relationships was very fundamental in Israelites’ daily life. This is obvious in the covenantal law.

According to Groody (2007:41), covenant (*berit* in Hebrew) is not only the metaphor Israel mostly uses to describes its relationships to Yahweh, but it is also central to understanding the notion of justice. In fact, for Israelites, the covenant was crucial because it embodied what we call the “rights and the responsibilities” of every citizen. From a biblical perspective, it is seen as binding agreement between two parties resulting in new relationship and its goal is right relationships, which produce life, justice, and peace. In fact, the Hebrew Bible distinguishes two kinds of covenant: the first one the Abrahamic/ Davidic (Genesis 15:1-18; 17:1-17/ 2 Samuel 7:1-17) covenant which stresses God’s commitment to Israel and therefore gives confidence to Israel; the second one is the Mosaic covenant (Ex. 19-24) which emphasizes Israel’s responsibility to God and consequently, it gives Israel a conscience (Groody 2007:41). This twofold characteristic of covenant as God’s commitment to Israel and as Israel’s responsibility to God is observed in the exodus event through which, as Folk (1991:72) indicates, God is revealed as the powerful liberator of Israel, while calling Israel to be a covenant

community and to live a covenant life. Thus, on the part of God, “the relationship with Israel began with care for Israel’s ancestors, the rescue of Israel from slavery in Egypt, and finally the gift of the land” (Yoder (1987:76). To consolidate the relationships that covenant requires, God gives to Israelites laws and regulations to guide them in their relationships with God and their fellow humans (Folk 1991:73). The Israelites’ responsibility was on the one hand, to fulfil these commandments as a sign of trust in God and as an expression of their gratitude for being delivered; on the other hand, to regulate their everyday lives on the basis of these laws in order to become a just society as opposed to the unjust society of Egypt, where they were slaves. In such way, “Israel fulfils its vocation in the world as an ensign pointing to the true God, the God of exodus, of covenant faithfulness, and of justice” (Folk 1991:73). In other words, as Groody has summarized,

The gift and responsibility of the covenant entail a vertical change expressed as right worship rather than idol worship and horizontal change expressed as right social behaviour rather than social injustice.... New behaviour is expected to flow out of new life and concern for others as the response to Yahweh’s concern for Israel. In gratitude for Yahweh’s gift of new life, Israel is to show care for strangers and aliens (Deuteronomy 15:1-11) (2007:41-42).

It is for this reason that in addition to the laws found in the covenant code (Exodus 20:22-23), the Holiness code (Leviticus 17-2) and Deuteronomy, there is also the gleaning law, the Sabbath year law, the jubilee year law, laws protecting strangers, widows and orphans and the law prohibiting interest on loans, all of which give concrete expression to the covenant life (Folk 1991:73). Through the practice of these laws, justice would be expressed to the poor and needy and a community of *shalom* would result, a just society, an alternative to Egypt (Yoder 1987:82; Folk 1991: 75). In this sense, the purpose of the law was to create and regularize a set of new relationships, procedures, and structures that bring about *shalom* at the material, social, and spiritual level (Yoder 1987:82). In other words, the objective of the law was to promote and maintain a liberated community so that there might be *shalom*. As Yoder (1987:82) puts it, the law seeks to maintain

liberation by showing how a liberated community arranges its life. In this sense, the mission of Israel was,

To be the light to the nations by bearing witness to the God of Exodus –the Liberator God who hears the cries of the oppressed and delivers them from their oppressors. This task requires Israel to embody the gift of liberation in its social life by protecting and respecting the weak and the poor (Folk 1991:75).

It is noteworthy that the way *par excellence* to accomplish this mission was not only through charity but by ensuring that social and religious laws were designed to restrain the greed of the mighty and to protect the well-being of the weak. Thus, as Israel was supposed to avoid economic greed at all costs, covenantal regulations were there to protect individuals, and groups against their own and others' greed (Folk 1991:75).

As far as *mishpat* is concerned, this concept is used 422 times in the Hebrew Bible and refers to “justice or judgment” (Groody 2007:27). However, Groody warns that God’s justice in the form of judgment expressed by the term *mishpat* “is not principally about vengeance or retribution but about restoring people to right relationships with God, with themselves, others, and the environment” (2007:27). According to Yoder, God’s justice is not about vengeance or retribution because “God’s action for justice is not based on the merit of individuals, but on their need. More precisely God’s justice is not based on calculating what people deserve, but rather on making an unright situation a right one” (Yoder 1987:34). Thus God’s justice as expressed by the concepts of *shalom*, *sedaqah* and *mishpat* is primarily a restorative rather than a retributive justice. It is a justice that is more concerned with the restructuring and renewing of relationships through forgiveness and genuine reconciliation so that humanity may live fully in relationship to God, each other, and creation.

It is from this perspective that, in the New Testament, Jesus is seen as the one who brings the notions of *sedaqah* and *mishpat* to fulfilment and is revealed as the justice of God because he not only reconciles the world to himself, but he also restores people to

right relationships (Groody 2007:28). In fact, justice based on reconciliation is also the core motif in the New Testament because “the central Christian affirmation is that in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has reached out in forgiving and reconciling love” (Langmead 2008:9).

While the Christian tradition has often limited the notion of reconciliation to the restoration of the relationship between God and human beings, the biblical notion expressing divine reconciliation is more holistic. According to Yoder, the Greek word “*eirene*” which is usually translated as “peace” has a very close meaning to *shalom* in terms of material and physical well-being, good relationships and moral character (Yoder, 1987:19). But more importantly, the theological significance of this word “*eirene*” resides in the fact that “it was used to talk about God and the good news of God for humankind” and “it comes to a peak when it is used to refer to the result of Jesus’ death and resurrection”(Yoder 1987:20). This is clearly expressed in Romans 5:1-11 where Paul maintains that one of the purposes of the work of Jesus was to bring peace between people and God (Yoder 1987:20). But the result of Christ’s transforming death, as Yoder continues, does not end at re-establishing the relationship between God and human, but also it transforms affairs among people (1987:20-21). Yoder bases his argument on Ephesians 2:14-17 and Colossians 1:20 where Paul says: “through Christ’s death, old enemies, the Jews and the Gentiles, now become one” (1987:21). Therefore, the word “*eirene*” refers to two complementary realities, firstly peace between people, and secondly peace between people and God. Yoder’s conclusion is that “the chief aim of life is not only finding peace with God, but also positive peace among people and classes”, because failure to establish *eirene*, which implies the presence of injustice and oppression, “is not only a political and a social problem, but a theological one as well” (1987:21). In other words, from a biblical understanding of reconciliation, there is no reconciliation between humans and God if there are no harmonious relationships between humans themselves. In this sense, Langmead (2008:7) is right when he suggests that reconciliation should be seen as a model of mission. He argues that reconciliation,

as a metaphor, ... beautifully covers and draws together a wide range of ideas which ... are simply facets of the mission of God: cosmic reconciliation, the Hebrew notion of *shalom*, the meaning of the cross, the psychological effects of conversion, the work of the Holy Spirit, the overcoming of barriers between Christians, the work of the church in the world, peacemaking, movements towards ethnic reconciliation and the renewal of ecological balances between humanity and its natural environment (Langmead 2008:6).

Thus, like *shalom*, reconciliation requires justice resulting from restored relationships. Reconciliation cannot occur when unjust structures that encourage discrimination, domination, and violence have not been transformed. These ideas thus challenge the theology of mission that tends to separate the divine-human relationships from the relationship of human beings with each other and with creation. Groody has thus argued that “more than a peripheral dimension of Christian doctrine, this notion of God’s desire to restore relationships through Christ is the foundation for social responsibility” (2007:28). For this reason, Yoder views Jesus’ sayings as implying a social transformation, since establishing *shalom* requires structures of *shalom* to be put in place instead of systems of oppression (1987:125). His argument is that Jesus’ life and ministry from the beginning to the end, was socially, economically, and politically revolutionary (Yoder 1987:126). Langmead has nicely summarised the radicalism of Jesus’ life and ministry:

The message of Jesus is one of love for enemies, radical forgiveness, overcoming ethnic barriers, upturning social arrangements and new life for those who follow him. The cross is (at least) the consequence of his radical challenge to the social, religious, and political arrangements of the day. As the gospels show, Jesus died because of the way he lived (2008:9).

The significance for the current context of HIV and AIDS of this radical approach that characterised Jesus’ ministry will be analysed in more detail in the sixth chapter as we will be exploring the implications of *missio Dei* for the Burundian theology of mission. In

the meantime, it is worth mentioning that Jesus' earthly ministry demonstrates that he was the messianic figure, prophesied in the Hebrew Bible, who was supposed to bring *shalom* to all nations of the world. His ministry was prophetic in the sense that Jesus publicly denounced the socio-economic and political injustices that were perpetrated by the political and religious rulers of the day. It was transformative in the sense that Jesus called into existence an alternative society that would bear witness to *shalom* in the world. It can therefore be argued that Jesus brought the notions of *mishpat*, *sedaqah* and the covenantal law to fulfilment because throughout his ministry, he demonstrated how people should live right relationships based on interconnectedness and solidarity, sharing joy and sorrow, caring for each other's needs, and loving their neighbours as themselves (Groody 2007:53). For those who are committed to justice, particularly Christians who claim to be participants in *missio Dei*, Jesus' death, and resurrection and the resulting establishment of an alternative community are the foundations of Christian hope that, despite the forces that oppose *shalom*, such a community will one day become reality.

3.4 Conclusion

The discussion of the *missio Dei* concept has made clear that mission originates in God and that God has been and is always active in the world. It was shown that there is interconnection between the concepts of *missio Dei* and the concept of *shalom*. Drawing on some scholars' insights it was argued that establishing *shalom* is the goal of the mission of God in the world. With this understanding, it becomes clear that the mission of the church is to respond with humility to God's missionary will which is to establish justice in the broad sense of *shalom*.

The analysis of the biblical understanding of justice as expressed through the various intertwined notions such as *shalom*, *sedaqah*, *mishpat*, *berit* illustrates that God's mission is mainly one of the reordering and renewing of relationships so that humanity may live fully in relationship to God, each other and creation. In the New Testament, it was demonstrated that Jesus' life and ministry embodied the notions of *shalom*, *sedaqah* and *mishpat*. The analysis of the Greek word "*eirene*" has shown that reconciliation is the

focus of God's mission through Jesus Christ. It was made clear that while a renewed relationship between humanity and God is central in the biblical account, it is also integrally bound up to human beings' relationship to each other and to creation.

In light of the biblical understanding of God's mission in terms of *missio Dei* and *shalom* there are two important things that have become clear: First, the main focal point of God's mission is to the poor, the disadvantaged and the weak; second, in terms of purpose, God's mission is to set things right by transforming unright relationships into right ones. It is this transformation that forms the basis for *shalom*, which is, as we have seen, is the goal of *missio Dei*. Given the meaning of *shalom*, it has become evident that the purpose of God's mission is to create and regularise a set of new relationships, procedures, and structures that bring about wellbeing at the material and spiritual level. The next chapter will assess whether God's vision of *shalom* is reflected in Burundian Pentecostal churches' theology of mission. To do so we will analyse the main themes of Pentecostal theology in general and then explore the resulting theology of mission that was later developed in Burundi by Swedish missionaries.

Chapter Four

Pentecostalism and mission

4.1 Introduction

...since one's theology of mission is always closely dependent on one's theology of salvation; it would therefore be correct to say that the scope of salvation – however we define salvation – determines the scope of the missionary enterprise (Bosch 1993:393).

In the second chapter, we have seen that the main factors contributing to the spread of HIV in Burundi are rooted in unjust political, socio-economic, cultural and religious structures. It was argued that any response that does not address these structures has limited effectiveness. As far as the efficiency of the churches' response to the HIV epidemic is concerned, it was asserted that they need a holistic theology of mission that encourages and equips believers to participate actively in social transformation. In the third chapter, it was demonstrated that this holistic theology of mission is well defined by the concept of *missio Dei*. As we noted, the heart of the *missio Dei*, or God's mission, is to promote holistic right relationships by transforming unjust structures in society. Whether or not the Burundian Pentecostal churches' theology of mission embodies this vision, is the concern of this fourth chapter.

Drawing on the historical background of Pentecostalism, this chapter will discuss the main themes that are fundamental to Pentecostal theology and will then look at the influence of these themes on the way mission was understood when the Swedish Pentecostal missionaries came to Burundi. Finally, using an analysis of hymns, the chapter will examine whether or not the kind of theology of mission transmitted to Burundian Pentecostals is holistic.

4.2 Historical background of Pentecostalism

The rise and expansion of Pentecostalism can be traced to two main historical events. Most historians agree that the movement began during the first days of 1901 and recognise that the movement's worldwide influence is rooted in a three-year long revival at Azusa Street in Los Angeles that attracted both national and international attention (Kay and Dyer 2004: xxi; Wacker 2004:126; Melton 1993:79). The movement's early history is often linked to an outbreak of speaking in tongues – a phenomenon called “*glossolalia*” – considered by Pentecostals as evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit (Richardson and Bowden 1983:225). The historical moment when the new movement took root occurred on New Year's Day of 1901 in Topeka, Kansas (USA), within the premises of the Bethel Bible School, founded by the Reverend Charles Parham, a holiness teacher and former Methodist pastor (Melton 1993:79; Synan 1971:100). Agnes Ozman, one of Parham's Bible School students was “baptised in the Holy Spirit”, accompanied by speaking in tongues during an all night vigil service conducted by Parham and his students on 31st December 1900 (Synan 1971:101; Melton 1993:79). Synan provides a full description of this event and shows how it would later affect the Pentecostal movement's theology:

In this service, a student named Agnes N. Ozman requested Parham to lay hands on her head and pray for her to be baptized with the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues. It was after midnight and the first day of the twentieth century when Miss Ozman began “speaking in the Chinese language” while a “halo seemed to surround her head and face”. Following this experience, Ozman was unable to speak in English for three days, and when she tried to communicate by writing, she invariably wrote in Chinese characters. This event is commonly regarded as the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement in America. After Ozman experienced “tongues” the rest of the students sought and received the

same experience. Somewhat later Parham himself received the experience and began to preach it in all his services (1971:101-102).²²

This initial experience of speaking in tongues was followed by a claim that Parham's students, who were all Americans, spoke in twenty-one known languages that they had never studied (Synan 1971:102). Consequently, Parham immediately started to formulate the doctrine that tongues was the "Bible evidence" of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. He also taught that tongues were a supernatural impartation of human languages – what Synan (2006:4) call "*xenoglossolalia*" – for the purpose of world evangelisation. Henceforth, he taught that missionaries did not need to study foreign languages. All they needed was to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit because the latter would enable them to preach to the natives all over the world in languages unknown to the speaker (Synan 1971:102-103; Synan 2006:4).²³

With the intention of spreading this new theology Parham closed his school at Topeka and, together with his students, undertook a four year long revival tour of the United States of America to promote their exciting new experience (Melton 1993:79). In 1905 he began to work in Houston, Texas, where he eventually established his headquarters and later opened a Bible school. It was in this school where the black American holiness preacher, William J. Seymour, received his theological training under Parham (Melton 1993:79).²⁴

²² For a summary of the original account this event by Charles Fox Parham himself, see "Charles F. Parham, 'The Latter Rain', Apostolic Faith, December 1950-January 1951, pp.3 and 15, abridged" in Kay and Dyer (2004:10-11).

²³ There was one instance when two missionaries, A.G. Garr – the first white man to receive the experience at Azusa – and his wife went in India, relying on this teaching that they could preach in unknown languages but they were disappointed in this (Synan 1971:111). Though this belief in *xenoglossolalia* seems not to have prevailed, the impact of this teaching that *glossolalia* is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Spirit has held firm. This teaching is what divides Christians in two classes; those who have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and those who have not. This has led Pentecostals to consider other Christians as being apostate and theologically corrupt.

²⁴ It is interesting to note that what Seymour learnt from Parham remains fundamental in Pentecostal churches' understanding of the baptism of Holy Spirit, which is the foundation of their doctrine. According to Synan, Seymour was taught that sanctification was not the baptism of the Holy Spirit as it was taught by the holiness movement. Instead, it was a "third experience" separated in time and nature from the "second blessing". For Parham, the "second blessing" of "sanctification" which comes after conversion, "cleansed and purified the believer", while "the baptism with the Holy Spirit" – with speaking in unknown tongues as a palpable sign of its authenticity – "brought great power for service" (1971:103).

It was in April 1906, after he and seven others experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit, that Seymour initiated the historic revival meetings in Azusa Street, through which Pentecostalism achieved worldwide attention (Melton 1993:79). During the three years (1906-1909) that the Azusa Street revival continued, hundreds of preachers from around the continent travelled to Los Angeles to see for themselves what was taking place and most of them received their own “Pentecost”, evidenced by their speaking with other tongues before returning to their churches (Synan 1971:113).

In addition to the preachers who received their “Pentecostal” experience at Azusa Street, there were many others from different parts of the world who were indirectly influenced by the revival in Los Angeles (Melton 1993:79; Synan 2006). Among these was Thomas Ball Barratt of Norway, a Methodist pastor, later to be known as the veritable prophet of Pentecost in northern Europe (Anderson 2004:84; Synan 1971:114; Bloch-Hoell 1964:75). Receiving the baptism in the Spirit in New York City in 1906 when he was on a tour of the United States in 1906-1907, he returned to Oslo where he conducted the first Azusa-type Pentecostal services in Europe in December of 1906 (Synan 1971:114). From Norway, Barratt travelled to Sweden, England, France, and Germany where he triggered other national Pentecostal movements (Synan 1971:113). It was during these services that Barratt met Lewi Pethrus, the leader of Pentecostal movement in Sweden and who played a central role in the introduction of Pentecostalism to Burundi. According to Allan Anderson (2004:85), Lewi Pethrus, a former Baptist Pastor who converted to Pentecostalism after visiting Barrett in Oslo in 1907, became pastor of the Filadelfia church in Stockholm, Sweden in 1911, which was home to the largest Pentecostal congregation in the world until the 1960s. I will discuss Pethrus’ role in more detail later when dealing with Pentecostalism in Burundi. But before embarking on this however, I turn briefly to the context that gave birth to the worldwide Pentecostal movement.

4.3 The context that led to the Pentecostal movement

If you ask Pentecostals about their origin, most of them trace it to the Apostles' era and maintain that the Pentecostal movement reappeared as result of some Christians who strongly desired more of God's power because they were interested in world evangelisation and realised that they needed the original power of the Holy Spirit to do this. This view is popular due to the fact that the initial historical works on Pentecostalism were apologetic and non-historical as there were written "within a 'providential' framework and focused on the role of God rather than human and natural causation" (Stephens, <http://are.as.wvu.edu/index.html>).²⁵ In fact, according to Wacker these works "depicted the Pentecostal revival as dropping from heaven like a sacred meteor" (1986:86).

However, there is historical evidence showing that the Pentecostal movement has its roots in the holiness revival movement that led by what Grant Wacker (2006) calls "mainstream Evangelicals and radical Evangelicals" during the second half of the nineteenth century. This revival was an expression of both social and theological disappointment among the people of the lower and middle-class groups. Holiness advocates condemned the impiety in mainline denominations and were alienated by the growing wealth and elaborateness of their churches (Wacker 2006:126).

The most important immediate precursor to Pentecostalism was the holiness movement that resulted from the holiness crusade of 1867, organized by Methodist Church though what was called "The National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of the Christian Holiness" (Synan 1971:36).²⁶ This crusade, which took place at Vineland, New

²⁵ See Stephens, R. J. Assessing the Roots of Pentecostalism: A Historiography Essay. American Religious Experience: <<http://are.as.wvu.edu/pentroot.htm>> (Accessed 20/02/2010).

²⁶ The National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of the Christian Holiness, which became later "the National Holiness Association", was an interdenominational revival movement whose main objective was to revive the doctrine of entire sanctification or Christian perfection by organising camp meetings and publishing periodicals (Synan 1971:36ff, Bloch-Hoell 1964:15).

Jersey, from 17 to 26 July 1867, is considered as the beginning of the modern holiness movement in United States (Synan 1971:37).²⁷

After the Methodist crusade of 1867, the doctrine of the holiness movement was not only popular within Methodist churches but also in other denominations such as the Salvation Army, The Society of Friends, The Evangelical United Brethren Church, and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Synan 1971:44). As Synan points out, "...it was stated that Christian perfection had become so popular among other denominations, in fact, if not in form, that no longer could Methodists claim it as their peculiar heritage" (1971:44). This popularity of the doctrine of holiness was however cut short by controversy over the theology of perfection that begin to be felt in Methodist Church during the 1880's (Synan 1971:45). In fact, as indicated by Synan, during the last quarter of nineteenth century, no institution, however sacred, escaped the searching scrutiny of the critics. The established churches, particularly those aligned to traditional Protestantism were subjected to heavy criticism. With its emphasis on individualism, these churches were accused of neglecting the pressing problems of the society (Synan 1971:55). One of the accusations was that the Protestant churches had become centres of middle-class thought and values. Many writers considered the theology of that time as "outmoded theology" (Gilley 1966:124 quoted in Synan 1971:55). As result, numerous new theological movements arose. Methodism and the holiness movement that it had initiated were the most affected.

Basically, as is obvious in the criticism of the National Holiness Association voiced by Methodist leaders in 1878 and the in the defences of the movement, this controversy was rooted in the misunderstanding between conservative intellectual Methodists and the

²⁷ According to Kay (2004:83), holiness Christians' teaching followed a Wesleyan framework that presumed two basic stages within the Christian's life: the first stage, conversation or the new birth, and the second stage sanctification, or holiness, or perfect love. The first stage occurred when someone came to saving faith in Christ and the second took place after prolonged spiritual exertion and attempts to eliminate sinful habits and dispositions. In historical perspective, the Pentecostal movement was the child of the holiness movement, which in turn was a child of Methodism. Practically all early Pentecostal leaders were firm advocates of sanctification as a "second work of grace" and simply added the "Pentecostal baptism" with the evidence of speaking in tongues as a "third blessing", superimposed on the other two. Both Parham and Seymour maintained fully the Wesleyan view of sanctification through out their lives (Synan 1971:116).

radical holiness spokesmen (Synan 1971:45-46). One of these intellectuals was Greene Haygood, a Georgia Methodist minister who later became the bishop of the church. In his view, “holiness teaching was a “do-it yourself” doctrine of salvation” (Synan 1971:47). Another theologian, Wilbur F. Tillett, challenged the concept of sanctification as taught by the holiness partisans. He argued that all varieties of holiness teaching were “semi-pelagian”²⁸ and that “the effect of holiness teaching was to convince Methodists that they could attain salvation through willing it” (Synan 1971:48). But the more the intellectuals and ecclesiastical leaders of Methodism questioned the basic premises of the holiness movement, the more defenders of the doctrine arose to speak on its behalf.

The resulting consequence was the appearance of a “come-outism” movement, a radical holiness movement which denounced the tolerance of many Methodist church practices (Synan 1971:46). Some radicals even taught new doctrines alien to the Methodist Church. According to Synan, “among the “fanaticisms” and “heresies” taught were “sinless perfection, freedom from death, “marital purity”, a third work following sanctification called “the fire”, abstinence from pork or coffee, and that all “doctors, drugs, and devils” are done with when one is sanctified” (Synan 1971:47)²⁹. Others such as George W. Willson felt that the theology of the holiness movement was slowly dying because of the “spiritual compromise in urban congregations where dancing, card playing, and the theatre had detracted members from attending revivals” (Synan 1971:49). As the controversy deepened, defenders of holiness became less faithful to the

²⁸ “Semi-pelagian” is a term describing various theories which maintained that the first movement towards God is made by human efforts unaided by grace. The term was used at the end of sixteenth century to describe a controversy within the Roman Catholic Church about grace and human free will (Richardson and Bowden 1983:536-537).

²⁹ Some authors analysing the rise of Pentecostalism from a sociological perspective have argued that the outward expression of the holiness movement that emphasised the separation from the world by imposing certain taboos and new lifestyles, was the outcome of economic dislocation. Leaning on Robert Anderson’s work, Dyer argues, “The proponents of such taboos, not having material goods, defended their lowly social position, while implying an attack on those who did have more to flaunt in apparently unworldly manners” (Dyer 2004:128). In other words, in these authors’ view, Pentecostalism flourished because it compensated for low class people’s loss of social status. However others have emphasised the theological roots of Pentecostalism by arguing that it was a way of adjusting its adherents’ moral and ethical stance to the rapid social changes that arrived with the twentieth century (Dyer 2004:128-129). For them, the rise of Pentecostalism was a strategy of coping with economic uncertainties, social discrimination, and racism as well as with the scientific evolution and biblical criticism that came about with Modernism.

church, and defenders of the church became less loyal to the doctrine of holiness (Synan 1971:49).

Interestingly, both the loyal Methodists and the adherents of the holiness movement did not escape to criticism as a new theological movement known as “the social Gospel” that deeply disturbed the conservative religions, and in particular those in the holiness rank, was born (Synan 1971:56). This new movement was inspired by perfectionist thought that also produced the holiness movement. According to Synan,

In a sense, the social movement was a logical outcome of the holiness crusade because both groups shared the assumption that man [sic] could be perfect. The two movements parted company, however, on the question of the perfectibility of society, the holiness advocates holding that society would be perfect only with the second coming of Christ and the institution of the millennium (1971:58).

The pioneers of the social gospel movement were Washington Gladden, a congregational minister from Massachusetts, and Walter Rauschenbusch, a Baptist minister and a teacher at Rochester Theological Seminary. The social gospel movement was against capitalism and “capitalistic Christianity” and advocated for “a new system which they called “Christian Socialism” (Synan 1971:57). They called for a “social conversion” because they were convinced that “social sins” as poverty, irresponsible use of wealth, social exclusion, and unhealthy and indecent living conditions were as bad as individual sin (Synan 1971:57; Bosch 1993:323)³⁰. It was within this environment of theological, intellectual and socio-economic challenges and criticisms that the rise of Pentecostalism also occurred. As Synan has argued,

Writers within the holiness and Pentecostal movement generally cite these currents of thought [concerning “social conversion”] as the “false doctrines” against which the movements protested. In this sense, the holiness and Pentecostal

³⁰ For more details on the roots of Social gospel and the theological controversies linked to it, see Bosch (1993: 321-326).

churches represented a conservative counterweight among the lower classes to the liberal thinking of the upper and middle classes. In leaving the older churches, the holiness people were protesting against this “modernistic” development and were attempting to keep alive the “old-time religion” which seemed in danger of dying out in American Protestantism (1971:57).

It is noteworthy that the most radical elements in the holiness movement were in the rural (most likely disadvantaged) areas and that the holiness and Pentecostal denominations began in those areas during the period from 1895 to 1900 (Synan 1971:52). Synan has summarised well the disappointing reaction of disadvantaged people that the “social gospel” was meant to assist:

Interesting enough, the very groups that the social gospel advocates wished to help, that is the poor, the destitute, and the underprivileged, were the very ones who joined the holiness and Pentecostal churches and most bitterly denounced the Gladdens and the Rauschenbusches. In fact, the holiness people taught a negative “social gospel” of their own. Rather than trying to reform society, they rejected it. In the holiness system of values the greatest “social sins” were not poverty, inequality, or unequal distribution of wealth, but rather the evil effects of the theatre, ball game, dancing, lipstick, cigarettes, and liquor. Perhaps the most serious objection to the social gospel from all religious conservatives was the unsettling suspicion that the leaders of this movement would neglect individual salvation altogether and substitute “social works” for “saving grace” (1971:59).

Though these controversies occurred more than a century ago, it is likely that the theological vision informing the attitude of Pentecostals towards social issues is influenced by the negative “social gospel” that was taught by the holiness movements. In fact, one can affirm that the Pentecostals have inherited “theological baggage” from the teachings of the holiness movement. The only distinctive element they have added is their understanding of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and their emphasis on speaking in tongues. In what follows, we shall attempt to analyse how the same holiness system of

values might have influenced the theology of mission prevailing in Burundian Pentecostal churches.

4.4 Pentecostalism in Burundi

Pentecostalism was introduced in Burundi in 1935 by *Mission Libre Suédoise* (MLS), an organisation established by local Swedish Pentecostal churches for the co-ordination of missionary work in the Belgian colonies of Congo (now DRC), Burundi and Rwanda (Oskarsson 2004:27-28). These local Pentecostal churches that created the MLS were the result of the Swedish Pentecostal movement which originated mainly from the holiness movement and the Pentecostal revival that occurred at Azusa Street, Los Angeles in 1906 (Oskarsson 2004:23). As indicated earlier, the Pentecostal movement reached Sweden through the Norwegian Thomas Ball Barratt who, after having learnt from Seymour about the new Pentecostal doctrine, launched the Pentecostal revival meetings in Oslo in December 1906 (Synan 1971:113). Thanks to the influence of Barratt, Pethrus joined the Pentecostal movement and later became its leader throughout Sweden (Oskarsson 2004:23). It is therefore not surprising that the fundamental doctrinal themes emphasised by Swedish missionaries to Burundi adopted similar principles to those of the holiness movement, the movement that gave birth to Pentecostalism.

4.4.1 The fundamental theological themes of the *Mission Libre Suédoise*

The development of the doctrine, spirituality and religious practices of the Swedish Pentecostal movement reveals the influence of Wesleyan theology with the main subjects addressed in preaching being conversion, baptism of the believer, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, sanctification, and the return of Jesus-Christ (Oskarsson 2004:25). Concerning discipline, the believer was supposed to live a simple life and to abstain from “the things of this world” such as tobacco, alcohol, dance, theatre. Members of the Swedish Pentecostal movement distrusted higher education including theological studies

(Oskarsson 2004:25). This might have been the one of the reasons³¹ why the prospective missionaries were simply required to undergo four weeks of training in biblical courses in which the Bible was the only manual used (Oskarsson 2004:25). In others words, the Bible was accepted as the infallible word of God. When interpreting the scriptures (hermeneutics), literal interpretation was the norm; and Pethrus insisted that “they should search for Jesus in each biblical verse” (Oskarsson 2004:25).

In terms of spirituality, believers were expected to have the spiritual experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit in the same manner as the apostles of the early church. This means that the speaking in tongues was considered as “the ultimate sign of baptism in the Holy spirit” (Oskarsson 2004:25). As the Swedish Pentecostals claimed to be “the veritable successors of the apostles”, every believer was supposed to be baptised in the Holy Spirit in order to receive the same power to “evangelise and to found local and autonomous biblical churches” (Oskarsson 2004:25). Consequently, no one could be ordained as an elder or sent as an evangelist without having had this experience. In Pethrus’ understanding, the gift of the Holy Spirit was *sine qua non* of “living a holy life and gaining people for God” (quoted in Oskarsson 2004:25). It is for this reason that at the end of every public meeting, people were invited to the front where the elders would lay hands on them in order for them to be baptised in the Holy Spirit or to be spiritually “renewed” (Oskarsson 2004:25). People were also invited for conversion or to receive healing from sickness. Pethrus’ works affirm that divine healing was preached and that there were different opinions on whether not to take medicine (Oskarsson 2004:25).

When Swedish missionaries embarked on mission in Burundi, they promoted these teachings (Oskarsson 2004:269). In fact, seeing themselves as the true heirs of the apostles, Swedish Pentecostals were convinced that their divine call was to establish “churches of the New Testament” not only in Sweden but also in the whole world (Oskarsson 2004:25). This is well summarised in the following quotes:

³¹ For other reasons, see Bosch 1999:333.

Le point de départ de l'enseignement des missionnaires pentecôtistes était la nécessité de se convertir au christianisme, pour n'est pas perdre la vie éternelle. Cette conversion avait aussi d'autres conséquences : L'homme aurait la force de combattre les forces malfaisantes dans la vie quotidienne, manifestées par la maladie, les attaques des démons et les malheurs divers. Pour mieux combattre ces forces, il fallait être baptisé dans le Saint-Esprit. Les conflits avec les autorités comme tremblements de terre, étaient considérés comme les attaques du diable (Oskarsson 2004 :269).

[The starting point of Pentecostal missionaries' teaching was the necessity to convert oneself to Christianity in order not to lose eternal life. That conversion also had other consequences: the man [sic] would have the power to fight malfasant powers in daily life, manifested by sicknesses, demons' attacks and diverse misfortunes. In order to better fight these forces, it was required to be baptised in the Holy Spirit. The conflicts with the authorities as well as the earthquake were also considered as the devil's attacks].

Thus, the main objective of these missionaries was evangelisation with the intention to convert Burundians to Swedish-like Pentecostalism and to plant churches. As is obvious in the above summary of their vision of mission and of the world, the emphasis was placed on spiritual world and on the salvation of souls. To borrow David Bosch's words, the missionaries declared "only other-worldly realities to be the really real" (Bosch 1999: 343). A careful analysis of songs, which were the main medium used in evangelisation and doctrine teaching, demonstrates that saving individuals from the world in order to be ready for heaven was the main concern of Swedish missionaries.

In the next section, we shall attempt to analyse a few classical hymns from two official hymnals: the Kirundi hymnal "*Indirimbo zo guhimbaza Imana*" (1978 edition), and the French hymnal "*Chants de Victoire: Recueil des Cantiques pour réunions d'évangélisation, d'édification, missions de réveil and class d'enfants*". In doing to, we shall attempt to see how the missionaries' vision of mission has influenced the main

Pentecostal theological framework which evolved in Burundi and how it might have impeded the Burundian Pentecostal churches to become a real agent of social transformation. As this study focuses on the Pentecostal theology of mission and its relevance in motivating and equipping Pentecostals to address the driving factors of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, the analysis of these hymns will focus on the themes of mission and evangelisation.

4.4.2 Theology of mission in hymns

Since the introduction of Pentecostalism to Burundi, hymns have played a crucial role as a tool of evangelisation and as a means of transmitting doctrinal teachings (Oskarsson 2004:264). In other words, their messages focus on the underlying theological and dogmatic teachings of Swedish Pentecostalism. In fact, this approach is not unique to Pentecostalism in Burundi but has been applied globally since the beginnings of the Pentecostal movement. Dyer has rightly argued that “though Pentecostals shared much with Methodist revivalism and Baptist evangelistic doctrine, they made new collections of hymns that picked up Pentecostal themes, even if these had originally been composed in Methodist or Baptist contexts” (Kay and Dyer 2004:145). This implies that an understanding of those Pentecostal missionaries’ underlying theological and dogmatic teachings is indispensable for the interpretation of the hymns and songs that grew from their evangelisation efforts.

As we have seen previously, since its beginnings the Swedish Pentecostal movement placed its main emphasis on evangelisation and the role of the Holy Spirit in this undertaking. As is obvious in the lyrics of the majority of hymns, this evangelistic zeal of the movement is motivated by the belief in the imminent return of Jesus Christ and it is often combined with a very negative view of the world. A particular stress is put on the supreme power of the Holy Spirit and its importance in empowering Christians to save those who are dying. In regard to hymns under missionary and evangelisation themes – which are the main focus of our analysis – some hymns combine in a “systematic” way various theological topics in such manner that they summarise the Pentecostal doctrine

and dogmatic teachings. However, as is the norm among classical Pentecostals, the way theology has been systematised in these hymns should not be understood as in the sense of being critically reflective on the church's belief and praxis in the light of the scriptures and various contextual challenges. Instead, as Russell Spittler has rightly argued "For classical Pentecostals, 'systematic theology' is an elegant name for doctrine and consists of a concise statement of biblical truth presented in a logical order and marked by gathered scriptural support... what theology on this level does not do is to address social issues or cultural situations" (1991:297).

The first hymn under the mission theme – hymn number 280 in Kirundi hymnal "*Indirimbo zo Guhimbaza Imana*" – is a typical example. The analysis of the lyrics of this hymn shows that most of the basic doctrine of Pentecostalism is expressed. The very first verse presents three interconnected Pentecostal teachings. The first two lines seem to be an allusion to the imminent return of Jesus, one of the main doctrinal themes of Pentecostalism:

Imisi irahita vuba, [Days are passing rapidly,
Irahita yiruka. They pass quickly.]

The following two lines deal with death which occupies a significant place in Christian doctrine:

Ikigenda benshi bapfa [While days are passing many die
Batameny' Umukiza. Before they know the Saviour.]

Here, death is seen as an unexpected threat to unbelievers. In this hymn, the ideas about the imminent return of Jesus and dying before knowing the saviour as found in those first four lines, justify and are the *raison d'être* of the believers' task of evangelising or being a missionary which is articulated in the last four lines:

Har'igikorwa cacu [There is a task for us

<i>Tugikorane Umwete</i>	Let's do it with zeal
<i>Tubandanye dukore,</i>	Continue labouring,
<i>Imisi'itarahera.</i>	Before the days pass.]

This interconnection between the end of time, death, and the urgency of missionary work is well summarised in the lyrics of the chorus:

<i>Irahera, irahera</i>	[They are passing, they are passing
<i>Imisi irahera</i>	Days are passing
<i>Ni tuve hasi twese,</i>	Let's stand all,
<i>Tureke gukererwa.</i>	Lest we become few.]

In fact, the chorus recaps the ideas expressed in the first verse. This verse seem to embody the main point that the entire hymn is stressing: the return of Jesus at any moment and the threat of dying before conversion are motives that make the believers' task (or mission) necessary and pressing. It is important to bear in mind that this imminent return of Jesus has always played an important role in the Pentecostal movement's understanding of mission. This belief in the second coming of Jesus was strong among Swedish missionaries to the point that they did not see the necessity of long-term ecclesial and social projects. For instance, as Oskarsson (2004:91) has indicated, the reason why the Swedish missionaries did not keep records of their early work in Burundi was that they were persuaded that the second coming of Jesus was going to occur without delay. Thus, they did not think that one day someone would want to write their history. With this conviction, it is therefore not surprising that their missionary vision was oriented towards the other world rather than the everyday material life. This vision is expressed in several hymns, as demonstrated in the following example.

The second verse of the same hymn number 280 reads as follows:

<i>Wobiba imbuto z' ivyiza</i>	[If you sow the seed of goodness
<i>Mu mitima y'abantu</i>	In the hearts of people

<i>Amosozu y'abarira</i>	The tears of those who weep
<i>Woyabahanagura</i>	You can wipe them away.
<i>Hariho n' abaguye</i>	There are also those who have fallen
<i>Kubavyura ni kwiza</i>	To lift up them is good
<i>No guhumura amaso</i>	And to open eyes
<i>No kuvura ibisebe.</i>	And to heal wounds.]

These lyrics summarise their understanding mission: through sowing the seeds of goodness one can wipe away the tears of those who weep, lift up those who have fallen, open the eyes of the blinds and heal the wounded.³² While analysing the lyrics of this verse, one wonders whether the expressions “tears”, “falling”, “the opening of eyes” and “the healing of wounds” are referring to the material or spiritual world. Certainly, in a context where people are experiencing sickness, death, bereavement, famine, and many kinds of suffering and dehumanisation it is unlikely that, when singing this hymn, people would not link these expressions to their life experiences. Nevertheless, this material reality is seldom recognised in Pentecostal teachings. These words are often linked to the lack of inner peace, health, and life (the state of one’s heart) due to feelings of guilt related to one’s personal sins. Various hymns from the Kirundi hymnal that fall under the mission theme (such as numbers 281, 285 and the first two verses of hymn 288) as well as those from the French hymnal under the evangelisation theme (including hymns number 74, 80, 93, 102, 107,108 and many others) reflect this linkage. In what follows, a few examples are given as illustrations of this particular focus on the spiritual world:

In the Kirundi hymnal, hymn number 285, verses 1, 3 and 4 are a good example:

<i>I. Kiz' abanyavyaha, tabar' abapfa,</i>	[Rescue the sinners, care for the dying,
<i>Bakure mu vyaha no mu rupfu;</i>	Remove them from sin and the death;
<i>Habur' abahavye, vyur' abaguye.</i>	Bring back the erring one, lift up the fallen,
<i>Babwire ko Yes'azi gukiza.</i>	Tell them that Jesus knows how to save.]

³² Many of the key words of this verse seem to have originated from the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:1-25.

Chorus:

*Kiz'abanyavyaha, tabar'abapfa:
Yes' Umunyambabaz' arakiza.*

[Rescue the sinners, care for the dying:
Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save.]

*3. Toz' abazimiye inzira nziza,
areke guhahamir' ivy' isi;
Kanguz' imitima yab' urukundo,
Bagaruke ku wabacunguye.*

[Show the lost a good way,
So that they stop longing for worldly things;
Awaken by love their hearts,
So that they come back to the one who
saved them.]

*4. Kiz' abanyavyaha, urabikwiye,
Umwam' azoguh' ubushobozi;
Bos' ubasubize mu nzira ntoya,*

[Rescue the sinners, you are worthy of it;
The Lord will provide you with power;
So that you may bring back them to the
narrow way,,
Tell the exhausted ones that they have been
redeemed.]

Menyesha'induhe ko zarokowe.

This emphasis on spiritual state of the individual is also reflected in the first two verses of Kirundi hymn number 288. In this song, liberation is referring to a future free from eternal condemnation, while the life mentioned is spiritual one –“godly life”. The hymn reads as follows:

*1. Urukundo rwa Yesu
Rwashitse kuri twebge
Rudukurako rwose
Urabanza rwo gupfa.*

[The love of Jesus
Has arrived to us
It indeed liberates us from
A death sentence.]

*2. Abatari bgahabge,
Ubugingo bg'Imana,
Twihute tubabgire
Urukundo rwa Yesu.*

[Those who have not yet received,
Godly life,
Lets us hurry and tell them
The love of Jesus.]

The link between misery, death, sadness, and weeping and the state of heart of the unbeliever is also depicted in some verses of the hymns from the French hymnal. These include for instance hymn number 107, verse 1:

-Hymn number 107 verse 1:

<i>Une bonne nouvelle</i>	[Good news
<i>Descend des cieux:</i>	Descending from heaven:
<i>Pécheur, Jésus t'appelle;</i>	Sinner, Jesus calls you;
<i>Lève les yeux.</i>	Lift up your eyes.
<i>Chargé de ta misère,</i>	Charged of your misery,
<i>De tes péchés confus,</i>	Confused by your sin
<i>Viens : Jésus te libère,</i>	Come: Jesus liberates you,
<i>Viens à Jésus !</i>	Come to Jesus!]

This linkage is also emphasised in first two verses and the chorus of hymns number 80 and 108:

<i>1. O toi qui souffres solitaire,</i>	[Oh, you who is suffering alone,
<i>Dieu te cherche dans cet instant,</i>	God is looking for you at this instant,
<i>Toi qui gémis dans ta misère,</i>	You, who is groaning in your misery,
<i>Dieu te cherche et son coeur t'attend.</i>	God is looking for you and his heart is waiting for you.]

Chorus:

<i>Dieu te cherche, (x3)</i>	[God is looking for you (x3)
<i>Pour te guérir.</i>	In order to heal you,
<i>Dieu te cherche, (x3)</i>	God is looking for you (x3)
<i>Veux-tu venir ?</i>	Do you want to come?]

<i>2. Et si ton âme est alterée,</i>	[And if your soul is thirsty,
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*Dieu te cherche pour l'abreuver ;
Si du péché tu l'as souillée,
Dieu te cherche pour te sauver*

God is looking for you to give drink to you;
If you have dirtied your soul,
God is looking for you to save you.]

In all these hymns, the emphasis is placed on the spiritual world. Expressions such as “suffering”, “misery”, “death”, “sadness”, “weeping and tears”, “groaning”, “being thirsty”, need for liberation and others mostly refer to the spiritual state of the person. Where these words are associated with the physical experience of suffering, individual sins are seen as the cause. Nothing is said about the role played by social structures in shaping people’s everyday life experience.

From this same perspective, other hymns seem to suggest that suffering and pain are characteristic of a life without Jesus Christ. This is expressed in several hymns that contrast the danger that unbelievers or believers who abandon their faith are in and the security enjoyed by believers in Jesus. For instance, in hymns 282, 283 and 284 in the Kirundi hymnal, non-believers or Christians who abandon their faith are compared with lost sheep in danger and in need of being rescued:

Hymn 283, verse 1:

*Hariho abazimiye
Batay' Uhoraho,
Umenga n ink'intama
Zahabiye kure,
Ziri hafi y'imanga,
Zikishwa n'imbeho,
Zigahangwa n'imfyisi,
Abo niko bari.*

[There are those gone astray
Leaving the Lord,
They are like sheep
Lost far away,
That are on the edge of an abyss,
Shivering with cold;
Menaced by the hyenas,
That is how they are.]

Chorus:

Muze tubarondere,

[Come, let us go and find them,

Barazigirijwe.

Tuzogira akaneza

Tuzanye uwahavye

They are in danger.

We will rejoice

If we bring the lost ones.]

The danger faced by those who abandon their faith is articulated in hymn 284:

Har'intam'urwenda na cenda

Zari mu ruhongore,

Ariko imwe yari yahabiye,

Kure cane y'irembo;

Mu manga kure no mw'irinde,

Itay'Umwungere yayikunda,

Itay'Umwungere yayikunda.

[There were ninety and nine that safely lay

In the shelter of the fold,

But one was out away,

Far off from the gates of the fold;

Far away in an abyss and in trouble.

Leaving the Shepherd who loved it,

Leaving the Shepherd who loved it.]

.

The hymn 283 is an explanation of what it means to be “a lost sheep” and an appeal to believers to rescue these lost sheep:

Umve rya jwi ry'Umwungere,

Ni we Yes' Umutabazi

Arahamagay'intama,

Zashaye mu vyaha vyinshi.

[Hear the Shepherd's voice,

That is Jesus the Saviour

Calling the sheep,

That have sunk into many sins]

Chorus:

Zizane, zizane,

Izo ntama ziri mu vyaha;

Zizane, zizane

Zana zose kuri Yesu.

[Bring them in, bring them in,

Those sheep that are in sin;

Bring them in, bring them in,

Bring them all to Jesus.]

Thus, through these hymns people are encouraged to “get out” and to “rescue” others from this world of suffering by coming to Jesus. The majority of these hymns contain teachings that demonstrate a strong optimism that becoming a Christian gives an

individual access to a place full of riches and where there is no trouble and sorrow. Jesus' kingdom is described as a place where blessings are abundant, captives are liberated, and the exhausted get rest and where the poverty of the deprived is ended. The Kirundi hymn 287, verse 4 is a good example:

*Mu bgami bgiwe hari imigisha:
Imbohe zirabohorwa,
Kand' abarushe ni Yes' abaruhura.

Amar' abor' ubukene.*

[In his kingdom there are blessings:
The prisoners are set free,
And Jesus gives rest to the
exhausted.
He ends the poverty of the needy.]

This verse is an allusion to the second coming of Jesus and the glory that it will bring about for believers. Other hymns stress the blessings that are rewarded to those who have received Jesus and have responded to his call to spread the gospel. These include for example Kirundi hymn 286 and hymns number 74, 94, and 98 in the French hymnal. In these hymns, to be converted and/or 'sowing the good seed' (evangelising) are always associated with personal gain in terms of rewards in the afterlife.

While the Pentecostal theology as expressed in some hymns urges Christians to long for a life in fullness that will come about with the second return of Jesus, others embody prosperity and triumphalist teachings which embrace visions of material wellbeing and of conquest over forces of evil as an important part of the package of Christian salvation and as evidence of God's favour upon his faithful Christians. In these songs Jesus is seen as the source or provider of healing, protection, hope, rewards, treasure, happiness, consolation, wisdom, and support in difficult times (French hymnal numbers 72, 96, 100, 106, 108, 110, 112, 113 and 115, verse 1).

As common features, all these hymns are extremely optimistic and seem to urge faith and hope in God as a means to improve personal and social conditions for a better life here-and now. But due to the emphasis on personal salvation, this kind of theology has questionable implications as it weakens communal life and strengthens the individualistic

way of viewing life. What is generally emphasised is however not a better life in the here-and-now, but a life of bliss in the world beyond this one.

A careful analysis of these hymns that fall under the themes of mission and evangelisation shows that they tend to deny the material reality as they tend to stress otherworldly reality. As result, evangelisation becomes synonymous of rescuing people from the worldly life, as is clearly expressed in several hymns analysed above and many others such as hymn 285, verse 3 in the Kirundi hymnal and hymn numbers 94, 98, 110, verse 3, and 115, verse 3 in the French hymnal. The emphasis is put on reminding people that they are pilgrims in this world and thus on urging them to stop longing for worldly things. In other words, through these hymns Christians are motivated to envision and to long for a new place where pain, suffering and tears will not exist.

However, these teachings are not all consistent, especially when dealing with the suffering of the believers. In some hymns suffering and pain that believers experience are regarded as normal for the “pilgrim” or as “a cross” that believers have to carry. In others, this suffering and pain is merely opposed with the joy to come in the afterlife. As one can see in the lyrics of hymns number 211, 212 and 214b in the French hymnal under the theme “*Vie Chrétienne: Epreuve et Consolation*” [Christian Life: Trial and Consolation], emphasis is put on contrasting present difficulties and discouragements with future glory. Some verses suffice here to exemplify this contrast:

Hymn 211:

<i>Pour moi chrétien, la terre est un exil ;</i>	[For me a Christian, the world is an exile;
<i>Mais tout est bien, mais tout est bien.</i>	But everything is well, but everything is well.

<i>Il faut marcher de péril en péril ;</i>	One must walk from peril to peril;
<i>Mais tout est bien, mais tout est bien.</i>	But everything is well, but everything is well.

<i>Pourquoi les pleurs, la terreur ou l'ennui ?</i>	Why the tears, the terror or fatigue?
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*Christ est à moi demain comme
aujourd'hui;
Au ciel bientôt je serai tout à lui.
Oui, tout est bien, oui, tout est bien.*

Christ is for me tomorrow as today;
Soon in heaven I will be wholly with him.
Yes, everything is well, yes, everything is well.]

Hymn 212, verse 1:

*La croix que Dieu me donne
A porter ici-bas
Est jointe à la couronne
Qui ne flétrit pas.
Celui qui me l'impose
Se nomme mon Sauveur;
En son sein je dépose
Le soupir de mon coeur.*

[The cross that God gives me
To carry here on earth
Is linked to the crown
That does not fade away.
The one who imposes it on me
Names himself my Saviour;
In his bosom I lay
The longing of my heart.]

Hymn 214b:

*Aussi longtemps qu'etranger sur la terre,
Je foulerai les sentiers douloureux...
Et puis un jour, sans trouble, sans larmes
Je chanterai, sur des bords plus heureux,
L'hymn qu'ici je mêle avec mes larmes:.
Comme tu veux, Seigneur ! Comme tu veux!*

[As long as I am a stranger on the earth,
I will go through painful passages...
And then one day, without trouble, without
tears
I will sing, on the most blessed shores,
The hymn that I mix with tears here:
As you want, Lord! As you want!]

Overall, the analysis of these hymns shows that most of them focus on the relationship between the individual and God. Individualistic and pietistic themes such as inner personal peace and security, and individual righteous behaviour are emphasised. The message that is transmitted through these hymns has almost nothing to do with social transformation and has a very little concern for communal wellbeing in the material world. Instead, the main reason for conversion is for personal gain and the major (if not

the only) responsibility of the believer is to bring others to the Christian faith so that they can be ready to go to heaven. Simply put, it can be argued that the theology of mission promoted in these hymns encourages Burundian Pentecostals to assume that the mission of the church in the world has nothing to do with making the material world a better place to live. Rather, people are to be prepared for heaven where they will receive as reward the genuine riches, comfort, and happiness they are denied in this world. Mission is therefore understood as an effort to draw human beings out of a sinful world into a spiritual transformation within the church.

This understanding of mission is comparable to what Indian theologian Dhyanchand Carr calls the “Noah’s ark model of mission” (Antone 2008:93). According to him this traditional approach assumes that the church, like the ark of Noah, “comprises of people plucked out of the evil world which is set for damnation and thus, they need to be kept undefiled and pure to enter their heavenly abode” (Antone 2008:93). For the faith community that follows this “Noah’s ark framework”, the task of the saved is to rescue a few more individuals that are drowning by helping them to get in the ark and to prevent the believers who are already on board from being tempted to jump into the flood. It is this Noah’s Ark model of mission that is also reflected in local songs composed by ordinary Burundian Pentecostals. As we will see in the next chapter, even in songs which are not dealing with evangelisation, separation from the world is strongly articulated.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the development of the Pentecostal theology and how it has shaped the theology of mission of the Swedish missionaries who introduced Pentecostalism in Burundi. The main aim of the chapter was to analyse how, through hymns, this theology has been transmitted to Burundians. The analysis has shown that these hymns stress the accepting of Christ as a personal saviour. They are individualistic in emphasis and human actions to transform the society are seen as unnecessary and vain efforts. The reason for conversion is mainly for personal gain, namely to escape eternal

damnation and to get rewards in heaven. Consequently, the main responsibility of the believer is to avoid ‘worldly’ things and to bring others to faith in Jesus. Briefly, it was pointed out that the hymns reflect a Noah’s ark model of mission. As this model of mission has a negative and pessimistic view of the world, we have seen that the mission of the church is understood as an attempt to draw human beings out of the sinful world. In the next chapter, we will focus on three locally composed songs in order to analyse how this theology has been assimilated by ordinary Burundian Pentecostal and its impact on Pentecostal churches’ theological reflection and praxis, particularly in dealing with the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

Chapter Five

Local songs: an expression of Burundian Pentecostal contextual theology?

5.1 Introduction

The way we preach, pray, and sing will relate at a fundamental level to the way we conduct our life as individual Christians, and as church in political society. And because this a dialectical relationship, it is clear that the way we conduct our church-life within society in turn will influence our preaching, prayer, and singing (De Gruchy 1991:11).

It is undeniable that songs play an important role in Burundian Pentecostal churches. This is demonstrated by the amount of time assigned to singing in services and the number of choirs found in each local church. Every church service consists of a combination of hymns, songs, prayers, preaching and an invitation for conversion and there are at least four choral groups in each congregation (Oskarsson 2004:265). Very often preachers quote hymns, locally composed songs or choruses as enthusiastically as Bible texts. It is also common to use songs in setting the scene for the sermon and in concluding the preacher's address. In some cases, a hymn or chorus is used to substantiate a central point during a sermon. Basically, these songs underline biblical teaching, thus making doctrine accessible to the people. Their message may be one of encouragement, a warning to believers to live up to their responsibilities, an affirmation of a doctrinal truth, or even a rebuke of believers who are not being faithful to the church's teachings. Others songs may also be imploring prayers or songs of praise and thanksgiving or a direct evangelistic message appealing to unbelievers to accept Jesus. In other words, songs are an expression of people's convictions and they influence how people relate their Christian faith to their daily lived experience. They have, therefore, a significant influence on churches' praxis.

This chapter will firstly discuss the influence of songs and hymns on the indigenisation of theology. Secondly, it will analyse three locally composed songs that deal with the HIV and AIDS epidemic directly or indirectly in order to explore the relevance of the theology embodied in these songs in facing the challenges posed by the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

5.2 Hymns and locally-composed songs and the contextualisation of theology

“As Christian folksongs”, says Brian Castle, “many hymns are expressions of popular theology”. Doctrine expresses what the church feels its people should believe; hymns express what people do believe (Castle 1994:17). “Hymns as Christian folksongs”, continues Castle, “relate to the cultural and social background from which they come” (Castle 1994:31).

As far as Burundian Pentecostals are concerned, it is undoubtedly true that hymns may be the medium *par excellence* through which they learn biblical stories and theological themes. Those who have grown up in the church, as is my personal experience, can affirm that hymns are one of the first ways to learn about the Bible and Pentecostal faith. Most Burundian Pentecostals, both literate and illiterate, can recite more verses of hymns than verses from the Bible. The fact that hymns are used every time people meet to worship makes them invaluable instruments in transmitting church teachings and doctrine. This goes for the Christian church globally, as it does for Pentecostal churches in Burundi. As A.H. van den Heuvel (1966) points out,

It is the hymns, repeated over and over again, which form the container of much of our faith. They are probably, in our age, the only confessional documents which we learn by heart. As such, they have taken the place of our catechisms... That means, it seems to me, that we can talk about new theological insights as we like, but as long as these insights are not translated in liturgical hymns, they will never reach the people (quoted in de Gruchy 1991:7).

Given the high level of illiteracy in the country, Burundian culture is mainly an oral one.³³ Moreover, like their Swedish mother-church, Burundian Pentecostal churches do not formulate a written creedal confession (Oskarsson 2004:25). As result, theology is taught mainly through hymns and songs. By singing hymns, people become familiar with theological insights. This implies that these hymns serve as confessional lessons of Pentecostal dogma. As they communicate and teach the basis of Pentecostal theology in an accessible way, they allow Pentecostal theological foundations to be planted deeply in the hearts of people. We have already seen that Swedish missionaries used hymns to systematise the Pentecostal theology and doctrine. They were carefully selected mainly to cover the whole doctrine and theological teachings of Swedish Pentecostalism. Through these hymns people accumulated spiritual ideas and principles that then became creedal statements in the Burundian Pentecostal churches. Thus, hymns played and continue to play, a crucial role in the Christian education, liturgy and spiritual life of Burundian Pentecostal churches. Since “hymns are vignettes of theology which exert an incredible amount of power and influence” (Castle 1994:23), there is no doubt that the official hymns sung in church play a crucial role in shaping the worldview of Burundian Pentecostals and that they have a profound influence on the locally composed songs. As de Gruchy has pointed out,

...songs are not entities in themselves. They arise out of a certain social existence, social analysis, theological reflection and direct socio-political action. There is a strong relationship between singing a song, and theological and political analysis, as well as social existence and action. ...hymns and songs are not value-free but are dialectically related to a person’s conviction and commitments (de Gruchy 1991:12-13).

In the Burundian case, this means that official hymns were selected according to missionaries’ conviction, commitment and interests. Likewise, while songs composed by Burundians are a reflection of what missionaries taught them through those hymns or

³³ According to a government report of 2006, more than 40% of the general population was illiterate, while among adults the figure stood at higher than 50% (CSLP 2006: 30).

through reading the Bible, they are also expression of Burundians' own convictions and commitment. In other words, locally composed songs are the clearest testimonies that show to what extent Burundian Pentecostals have assimilated the missionaries' teaching and how they interpret this teaching in their socio-economic, political and cultural context. Given the way the missionaries' theology and dogma has enriched the Burundian cultures with new idioms, language, symbols and a new worldview, it is inescapable that the theological influence of hymns would have an impact on songs that are locally composed. It can be argued that local songs reveal the variety of ways in which Pentecostals in Burundi relate to the Christian faith as taught by missionaries. Through songs, people are attempting to express their contemporary experience of and views on being Christian in Pentecostal theological language, including their understanding of mission. In what follows, we shall focus on three locally composed songs that deal with the HIV and AIDS epidemic to see the impact of the missionaries' theology on Burundian Pentecostals' attempts to express their faith in the current Burundian context.³⁴

5.3 Inherited theology and contextualisation: The case of songs on HIV and AIDS

The first of the three songs examined here unequivocally shows how Burundians have contextualised the Pentecostal theology of mission is titled "*Igipfa caburiwe ni impongo*". This title is a Kirundi proverb that can be translated as "The animal that dies despite having been warned is the antelope". This proverb is the heart of the contents of the first part of this song. The song starts with a small drama describing an antelope being chased by hunters and their dogs. It consists of alternating verses with one person singing, and the whole group singing and the drama is concluded by a kind of commentary on the whole situation, in which one person says (sings):

³⁴ It is common to copy or adapt songs from others group choirs within Pentecostal churches and sometimes from other charismatic and evangelical denominations. However, no choral group can be allowed to records songs for sell if it does not have its own original songs. As far as am aware, the choral groups who produced the three songs that we will be analysing are well-known groups who have their own songwriters. Thus, one can affirm that these songs were written by Pentecostals.

One:

*Mbega yemwe, ntimuze ivy'urugi
rw' impogo?*

Yooo!Impongo iri mu kibundo,

Bayishwaburirako imbwa,

N'ayo abahigi n'abo,

Bagakikuza hirya no hino.

Yamara kwubuka, bati:

Ngaho, ngaho, ngaho muratangira!

Ikavunduruka ija iyo bari.

Nayo...

[You people, don't you know the hunting
of antelope?

Oh! When the antelope is in its hiding,

Hunters chase it with hunting dogs,

Then the hunters,

Surround all the area.

If the antelope is found, they say:

Watch out! Watch out! Don't let it escape!

The antelope hastily runs towards them.

It then...]

All: *Igasimba, isimba isimbirayo.*

One: *Abahigi bayikanze :*

igasimba isimbirayo,

All: *Igasimba, isimba isimbirayo.*

One: *Bavuga bati ngaho*

All: *Igasimba, isimba isimbirayo.*

One: *Iva mu kibundo,*

igasimba isimbira he?:

All: *Igasimba, isimba isimbirayo.*

One: *Iva mu kibindo,*

igasimba isimbira he?:

All: *Igasimba, isimba isimbirayo.*

One: *Nimwumve yemwe amagorwa y'iyu mpongo:*

All: *Igasimba, isimba isimbirayo.*

One: *Nimwumve yemwe amagorwa yiyo mpogo:*

All: *Igasimba, isimba isimbirayo.*

[It jumps, jumping towards them.]

[When the hunters frightened it
it jumps towards them:

It jumps, jumping towards them

If they said: watch out! It jumps,
towards where they are:

It jumps, jumping towards them.

Leaving its hiding,

To where does it jump?

It jumps, jumping towards them.

Leaving its hiding,

to where does it jump?:

It jumps, jumping towards them

Just hear the misery of this antelope:

It jumps, jumping towards them.

Just hear the misery of this antelope:

It jumps, jumping towards them.]

Chorus:

All: *Abakera barayamaze bati:*

Ikipfa caburiwe yemwe ni impogo (x2).

One: *Yooo, ikipfa caburiwe yemwe ni impongo:*

Ikipfa caburiwe yemwe ni impogo.

One: *Yooo, ikipfa caburiwe yemwe ni impongo:*

All: *Ikipfa caburiwe yemwe ni impogo.*

[Our ancestors have said

The animal that dies despite having been warned is the antelope”(x2)

Oh, the animal that dies after being warned is the antelope:

The animal that dies after being warned is the antelope.

Oh, the animal that dies after being warned is the antelope:

The animal that dies after being warned is the antelope.]

It is important to mention that the proverb on which the lyrics of this song are based originates from a common legend in Burundian culture. The legend says that a long time ago animals were warned that the bush where they were living was soon going to catch fire. The only way to escape was to hide in an underground den. This required them to cut off their horns. All the animals heeded the advice, but after having seen how they were bleeding, the antelope did not. After some time, the jungle caught fire and the animals whose horns were cut off entered into the den to escape. The antelope attempted to enter but in vain because its horns could not pass through the entrance of the den. As consequence, the antelope was killed by the fire while the other animals whose horns had already been cut off survived.

By analysing the lyrics of the song, it can be argued that the original tale that produced this proverb has been distorted. As the lyrics of the song show, while originally the legend talks about an antelope looking for a place to hide from a natural disaster (bush-fire), the song speaks of an antelope that leaves its hiding place and jumps into the hands of hunters who want to kill it. Fergus J. King (2000: 369) has indicated that, in East African settings, it is a common pattern among songs writers to alter their African wisdom traditions in order to suit to the situation addressed. In this case, one can affirm

that this alteration is motivated by the intention of the composer to give advice about behaviour and/or spirituality to a particular category of people. The fact that the legend was adjusted in order to portray an antelope leaving its hiding place instead of an antelope looking for a place in which to hide demonstrates that the writer of this song was concerned with Christians who leave their place of safety because of temptation. This is one of the concerns of the Noah's ark model of mission: to prevent the believers who are already on board from being tempted to jump into the flood. This concern is well articulated in the repetition of the expression: "*Igasimba, isimba isimbiraya*" [It jumps, jumping towards them]. The same concern is also emphasised in the concluding part of the song where there is a combination of two biblical narratives – the narrative about the destruction of the world by flood during Noah's time found in Genesis chapters six and seven and the story about Lot and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire found in Genesis chapter 19. The song makes an analogy between this antelope's behaviour and the attitude of people who were killed by flood and fire during Noah's and Lot's time because they did not listen to Noah and Lot:

<i>All: No mu gihe ca Nowa uko niko vyari.</i>	[Even in Noah's time it was like that.
<i>Baraburirwa na Nowa</i>	People were warned by Noah
<i>ariko ntibumva.</i>	But they did not listen
<i>No gihe ca Loti</i>	Even during Lot's time
<i>uko niko vyari.</i>	It was like that.
<i>Baraburirwa na Loti</i>	People were warned by Lot
<i>Ariko ntibumva (x2).</i>	But they did not listen(x2).]

The analogy is also applied to our time and the songwriter provides a meaning for the proverb today by suggesting that through different media, people are warned by the gospel but they continue to "jump" into adultery, drunkenness and other bad behaviours:

<i>One: Niko biri mw'iki gice cacu</i>	[That is how things are in our time
<i>Niko biri muri iki gihe c'iherezo (x2).</i>	That is how things are in the last days (x2).

<i>All: Ubutumwa buravugwa henshi;</i>	The gospel is preached in various places;
<i>Ubutunwa buragwa mu ma radio;</i>	The gospel is preached through radio;
<i>Ubutumwa buravugwa mu ma televisiyo;</i>	The gospel is preached through television;
<i>Ubutumwa buravugwa mu binyamakuru;</i>	The gospel is preached through newspapers;
<i>Abantu baraburirwa ntibumva (x2)</i>	People are warned but they do not listen (x2).]
<i>One: Bahebe ubusambanyi, ariko bo:</i>	[To renounce adultery but them:
<i>All: Bagasimba, basimba basimbirayo.</i>	They jump, jumping into it.
<i>One: Bahebe ububorerwe, ariko bo:</i>	To renounce drunkenness but them:
<i>All: Bagasimba, basimba basimbirayo.</i>	They jump, jumping into it.
<i>One: Bahebe ubwicanyi, ariko bo:</i>	To renounce murder but them:
<i>All: Bagasimba, basimba basimbirayo.</i>	They jump, jumping into it.
<i>One: Bahebe urusaku, ariko bo:</i>	To renounce gossip but them:
<i>All: Bagasimba, basimba basimbirayo.</i>	They jump, jumping into it.
<i>One: Bahebe amacakubiri, ariko bo:</i>	To renounce discrimination but them:
<i>All: Bagasimba, basimba basimbirayo.</i>	They jump, jumping into it.]

Given the biblical texts used in this part of the song, one would expect an interpretation of the meaning of this song that exhorts those who are not yet Christians to repent (to enter into the ark). But as these lines of the last verse show, particularly the repetition of the expression “jumping towards it”, the writer is more concerned with Christians (those who are already on board) who, despite being warned through different means, continue to fall into diverse sins, as did the people of Noah’s and Lot’s time.

In chapter two, we highlighted the problem of susceptibility to HIV infection faced by refugees for various reasons linked to the pervasive and severe socio-political violence as well as other factors. It must be noted here that the main armed rebel groups who were fighting against the Burundian government army were based in the Mtabila refugee camp where this song was composed.³⁵ Due to their different political ideologies and other

³⁵ In October 1993 President Melchior Ndadaye, Burundi's first democratically-elected president was assassinated by the Tutsi-dominated army. This assassination led to civil violence between the two major

reasons, hatred, false accusations and even violent confrontation frequently occurred between the members of these armed groups. All these were challenges that could incite Christians not only to lose their Christian faith and/or to cause their own physical death. The challenges included sexual promiscuity and abuse, drunkenness, murder, and the various rumours and divisions to which the songwriter is referring. In this new environment full of challenges, one can assert that the main aim of the composer was to address those threats to both the spiritual and physical survival of the community. This is evident in way the songwriter has tried to apply the two biblical stories to his/her context. King is right when he argues that “the interpretations are related to the context, and directed towards the cares and concerns of the writer and listeners” (King 2000:367).

Apparently, this song does not refer specifically to HIV and AIDS. But given the way the proverb on which the song is based is used in Burundian culture and the Christian teachings that surround the HIV and AIDS pandemic, it is explicable that the listener will link this song to the epidemic. First, on the basis of the proverb, those who continue “to jump into adultery” will end up facing the same fate (death) as the antelope. This death that the song is talking about is not spiritual, as is often the case in the hymns that we analysed previously, but a physical death. Second, in a refugee context where AIDS-related deaths are frequent, one cannot ignore HIV and AIDS when talking about death. Third, and more importantly, the HIV infection has been seen as a punishment for those who refused to listen to the church’s message that warns them to abstain from adultery. As the last part of the song indicates, in the list of sins that attract people, adultery is at the top. Thus, since it is common in Burundian culture to use arts, storytelling, or proverbs to talk about issues that people are afraid of tackling openly, it can be argued

ethnic groups – the Hutu majority (85%) and the Tutsi minority (14%). As a result, hundreds of thousands of Hutu fled the violence, mainly to Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and hundreds of thousands of others were internally displaced. According to the 2001 Amnesty International report, from 1994 onwards, a number of Hutu-dominated armed opposition groups, formally allied to political parties in exile, began fight against the Tutsi-dominated armed forces and their political allies. These armed opposition groups had bases in eastern DRC and Tanzania from where incursions into Burundi were launched. As the Amnesty International report indicates, these groups were recruiting their fighters among refugees and on occasion, competition for members and fighters led to violent conflicts among refugees. (Amnesty International. 2001. Burundi: Between hope and fear. <<http://www.asiapacific.amnesty.org/library/enginindex> >).

that this song is used euphemistically to say that the AIDS-related death is God's punishment for sexual immorality. This is also clear in two other locally composed songs. As we shall see, it seems that as far as Burundian Pentecostals songwriters are concerned, sexual immorality is seen as the only cause of HIV and AIDS, while obeying moral teachings is seen as the only solution.

In the second song, "*Ngaho nimuhunge SIDA!*" [Watch out, flee from AIDS!], awareness about the existence of HIV and AIDS is raised, various mistaken beliefs about the epidemic are challenged, and certain theological dogmas that link the HIV and AIDS epidemic to sin (specifically sexual immorality) are indicated. In fact, the key message of this song is that people are dying of AIDS because they have become enemies of God through their "friendship" with the world in terms of sexual immorality. As a remedy, they have to flee to Jesus because he is the only solution. The first chorus and the first verse of the song suffice to illustrate these points:

All: <i>Ngaho!</i>	[Watch out!
One: <i>Ngaho, ngaho!</i>	Watch out, watch out!
All: <i>Ngaho nimuhunge!</i>	Watch out, flee!
One: <i>Ngaho, ngaho!</i>	Watch out, watch out!
All: <i>Nimuhunge,</i>	Flee
One: <i>Ngaho ntimuhone!</i>	Watch out, don't be destroyed!
All: <i>Ico kiza SIDA!</i>	The AIDS epidemic!
One: <i>Ni Ruhunyamiryango.</i>	It is a destroyer of families.
All: <i>Nimuhunge!</i>	Flee!
One: <i>Ngaho, ngaho!</i>	Watch out, watch out!
All: <i>Muhungire muri Yesu,;</i>	Flee into Jesus;
One: <i>Ngaho, ngaho!</i>	Watch out, watch out!
All: <i>Wenyene,</i>	Him alone,
One: <i>Ngaho ntimuhone!</i>	Watch out, do not be destroyed!
All: <i>Niwe buhungiro.</i>	Is the refuge.

One: <i>Yemwe ababa mu Burundi:</i>	Inhabitants of Burundi:
All: <i>Ngaho!</i>	Watch out!
One: <i>Yemwe ababa mu Rwanda:</i>	Inhabitants of Rwanda:
All: <i>Ngaho nimuhunge!</i>	Watch out, flee!
One: <i>Yemwe ababa muri Kongo:</i>	Inhabitants of Congo:
All: <i>Nimuhunge,</i>	Flee,
One: <i>Ngaho ntimuhone!</i>	Watch out, do not be destroyed!
All: <i>Ico kiza SIDA</i>	The AIDS epidemic
One: <i>Yemwe ababa mu Buganda:</i>	Inhabitants of Uganda:
All: <i>Nimuhunge,</i>	Flee,
One: <i>Yemwe ababa i Tanzaniya:</i>	Inhabitants of Tanzania:
All: <i>Muhungire muri Yesu,</i>	Flee into Jesus,
One: <i>Hungire muri Yesu wenyene:</i>	Flee into Jesus alone:
All: <i>Wenyene, niwe buhungiro.</i>	Him alone, is the refuge.]

The first verse that is sung just after the above refrain is based on biblical scriptures found in James 4:4 and reads as follows:

<i>Yemwe basambanyi,</i>	You adulterous people,
<i>ntimuzi yuko</i>	do you not know
<i>gucudika n'isi</i>	that friendship with the world
<i>ari ukwankana n'Iman?</i>	is enmity with the world?
<i>Kuko muri ubwo busambanyi</i>	Because in that adultery
<i>harimwo urupfu,</i>	there is death,
<i>urwo rupfu ni ca kiza SIDA (x2).</i>	that death is the AIDS epidemic (x2)].

The first section of the question posed is the first part of James 4:4 quoted from the Kirundi Bible. The second section of this question, which expands on the first section, is a literal interpretation of the word “adulterous”. In this interpretation, it is obvious that the songwriter has linked “adulterous people” to sexually immoral people. However, it could be argued that James used the term “adulterous” in metaphorical way. According

to *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, the term “adultery” is used in the Old Testament such as in Jeremiah 3:9; Ezekiel 16 and Hosea 3:1 in reference to prophetic representations of unfaithfulness to God. This applies also to Jesus’ usage of the same term in Matthew 12:39; 16:4 and Mark 8:38 (Leahy 1997:914). In the attempt to understand why the writer of this song has chosen the literal type of interpretation, Thiselton (1993:105) is helpful. He argues that literal approach to biblical interpretation “does not exclude metaphorical or symbolic meaning when this plainly accords with the intention of the writer” (quoted in King 2000:366). In our case here, the intention of the songwriter is to justify the link between HIV and AIDS and sexual immorality.

In the third instance the same pattern of linking the HIV and AIDS epidemic with sin is also observable in the Swahili song titled “*Ee Yesu njo udusaidiye*” [Oh Jesus, come to help us]. Although the writer did not quote any biblical text, it is obvious from the lyrics that the song is based on Pentecostal teaching and dogma on dress codes.³⁶ It links “indecent clothing” to sexual immorality which leads to HIV and AIDS. The key message of the song is that indecent clothing and sexual immorality are traps that Satan is using to ensnare human beings and that many people have fallen into these traps resulting in numerous AIDS-related deaths, increasing the number of widows, orphans and divorces. The text of the song reads as follows:

<i>Mungu Baba, Hurumia watu wako.</i>	[Father God, forgive your people.
<i>Maana wajua walikotoka;</i>	They do not know where they come from;
<i>Hata wanakokwenda.</i>	Neither where they are going.
<i>Ni huzuni!</i>	It’s a pity!

Chorus:

<i>Ee Yesu, uuuh! Ewe Yesu!</i>	Oh Jesus! Oh Jesus!
<i>Ee Yesu, njoo utusaidie, baba!</i>	Oh Jesus, come help us, Father!

³⁶ Burundian Pentecostals are strict concerning dress code. For instance, women are not allowed to wear trousers, mini-skirts or to visit beauty salons. The common biblical texts used to justify these restrictions are 1Peter 3:3-5 and 1Timothy 2:9-6.

Verse 1(One person):

Shetani amechimba shimo kubwa, Baba!
Shimo hilo limemeza akina baba wengi.
Shimo hilo limemeza akina mama wengi.
Shimo hilo ni kuvaa mpasuo:

All: *Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie*

One: *Siku hizi watu hawana hata aibu:*

All: *Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie*

One: *Wanathubutu*

kutembea uchi barabarani:

All: *Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie*

One: *Wakidhani hayo ndio maendeleo:*

All: *Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie*

One: *Hawajui wamefungwa na Shetani:*

All: *Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie*

One: *Ee Yesu, uuuh! Ewe Yesu!*

Ee Yesu, njoo udusaidie, baba!

Satan has dug an abyss, Father!

That abyss has swallowed many men.

That abyss has swallowed many women.

That abyss is to clothe in indecent clothes:

Oh Jesus, come to help us.

These days, people are not even ashamed:

Oh Jesus, come to help us.

They dare

to walk naked in the street:

Oh Jesus, come to help us.

Thinking that that is what development is:

Oh Jesus, come to help us

They ignore that they are enslaved by Satan:

Oh Jesus, come to help us.

Oh Jesus! Oh Jesus!

Oh Jesus, come help us, Father!

Verse 2 (One person):

Shetani ametega mtego mwingine, Baba!
Mtego huo umenasa watu wengi, Baba!
Mtego huo unaitwa uzinzi:

All: *Ee Yesu, njoo utusaidie!*

One: *Watu wengi wanakufa kwa ukimwi:*

All: *Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie.*

One: *Akina baba wengi*

wamepoteza wake zao:

All: *Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie.*

One: *Akina mama wengi*

Satan ensnares us with another trap, Father!

That trap has caught many people, Father!

That trap is called adultery:

Oh Jesus, come to help us.

Many people are dying from AIDS:

Oh Jesus, come to help us.

Many men

have lost their wives:

Oh Jesus, come to help us.

Many women

<i>wamepoteza waume zao:</i>	have lost their husbands:
All: <i>Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie.</i>	Oh Jesus, come to help us.
One: <i>Talaka nyingi kila</i>	Many divorces
<i>siku zatolewa,</i>	are given every day:
All: <i>Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie.</i>	Oh Jesus, come to help us.
One: <i>Watoto wengi wamekuwa ni yatima:</i>	Many children have become orphans:
All: <i>Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie.</i>	Oh Jesus, come to help us.
One: <i>Hayo yote yatokea twayaona,</i>	All these things are happening before our
	eyes,
<i>Lakini watu hawabadiliki,</i>	But people do not change,
<i>Ee Yesu njoo utusaidie, Baba!</i>	Oh Jesus, come to help us, Father!
One: <i>Wafungue macho watu hawo</i>	Open the eyes of these people
<i>wapate kuona walivyo fungwa,</i>	that they can see how they are imprisoned,
<i>Baba!</i>	Father!
<i>Ili waweze kurudi kwako</i>	So that they can come back to you
<i>wapone moto wa milele, Baba!</i>	To escape the eternal fire, Father!]

In this song, the writer is struggling to deal with the tension between good and evil on the one hand and to relate God's grace and humanity's sin on the other. The song begins with words of prayer imploring God to forgive humans because they are victims of Satan's traps. It is a soft lament in the sense that the songwriter seems to argue that God should not punish people because they are overpowered by the devil. However, the lament in this song is quite different from the lament we find in the book of Job. The story of Job shows that it was when Job started to lament and to question what was happening to him that he was radically changed in terms of his understanding of God (Job 42: 5) and more importantly, the prevailing theology that was held by his friends was proved wrong (Job 42:7). By questioning God through lament, Job was able to realize that God's compassion and willingness to save was greater than God's retributive justice (Wittenberg, 1994:67). So, contrary to Job's lament that seeks answers from God, the lament in this song is based on a Pentecostal theological understanding of suffering: what Gerald West calls

the “pre-packed missionary interpretation” which has “constituted the raw material of [the missionaries’] interpretative and appropriative acts”(2003: 341). In other words, the lament expressed in this song does not challenge the inherited dominant theology about suffering.

In the previous chapter we have seen that some Pentecostal teachings tend to link suffering to being an unbeliever since unbelievers are not protected against the devil’s attacks. It is for this reason that Satan is accused of ensnaring people and is blamed for people’s bad behaviour while at the same time the song indirectly blames those who fail to follow the dress code and who commit sexual immorality. This is demonstrated by the emphasis the writer places on continual disobedience by people despite what is happening: “*Hayo yote yatokea twayaona lakini watu hawabadiriki*” [All these things are happening in front of us, but people do not change]. In other words, the emphasis is on the ethical behaviour of individuals. While the songwriter is concerned with various issues (e.g. increasing number of widows and widowers, orphans, divorces), his/her theological reflection is not based on a deep critical analysis of the social factors that give rise to these issues. Nothing is said about the many socio-economic and cultural factors that may make people susceptible to fall into “Satan’s traps”. Instead, the blame is imputed to indecent clothing (“*kuvaa mpasuo*”) and adultery (“*uzinzi*”), thus emphasising individual behaviour in terms of the spread of HIV and AIDs and ignoring the structural factors that drive the epidemic.

One of the factors that might have influenced the songwriter’s interpretation of the situation is the doctrine of retribution, in which “God rewards people according to their obedience and punishes them in proportion to their disobedience” (Cone 1972:61). This idea is reinforced by the Pentecostal teachings that once a person is converted, he/she has the power to fight malfeasant powers in daily life that are manifested in sicknesses, demons’ attacks and diverse misfortunes (Oskarsson 2004:269). Added to this is the common African belief in the spiritual origin of sickness. Mbiti explains that in African societies (Burundi included), sicknesses, bereavement, accident, famine, etc “are often, if not always attributed to magic, witchcraft, curses and (to a much lesser extent) the living-

dead and spirits” (1978:83). Individuals who behave in a displeasing way are liable to become victims of one or more of these misfortunes. Thus, it is not surprising that the emphasis here is placed on individual pietistic behaviour. It is also logical that once a problem is perceived as having spiritual causes, it requires a search for spiritual solutions. It can therefore be argued that this perception of problems as having spiritual roots leads Burundian Pentecostals to neglect the role of political, socio-economic and cultural factors in the spread of the HIV. But, from a contextual theology perspective, this does not mean that these songs are completely irrelevant especially when they are rooted in accepted community wisdom. In the next section we will attempt to explore this further as we look at some of the factors that make the theology embodied in these locally composed songs relevant or irrelevant to the current context.

5.4 Theology and community wisdom: a critical assessment

The fact that songs are composed and sung in their indigenous idioms shows that Burundian Pentecostals are trying to make sense of their faith in their particular context. As the analysis of the three songs demonstrates, one dominant feature of the locally composed songs is that their theology is contextual. In his explanation of the meaning of a theology that is contextual, Castle argues, “it is not only what theology is actually saying that is contextual, but also the way in which it is being said. Theology is frequently being expressed through narrative: dreams, song, liturgy, parables, miracles, creedal formulations in a systematic form and through pastoral practice” (1994:29). This narrative approach is obvious in the three local songs analysed above. These songs are expressions of Pentecostal theology using the Burundian traditional ways of transmitting messages. Moreover, the way these songs are composed and sung follows the Burundian folklore pattern that is dynamic, interactive, participatory and persuasive³⁷. Another feature that is evidenced in these songs is that composers were referring to the Bible or

³⁷ In Burundi, songs and folklore in general are not neutral; they act as vehicles through which values are conveyed. For instance, wedding songs are interactive, usually following a call-and-response pattern involving different parts of the audience in such way that all participate. Very often wedding songs also give symbolic expression to the tensions inherent in social relationships. For example, through songs the two families can act out the tensions between them as well as the resolution of these tensions. Moreover, through songs, proverbs and stories, advice is given to newly married couples.

reflecting on their situations through a particular set of lenses provided by their Pentecostal background, their experience of life and their concern for their own religious community. This shows that Pentecostals in Burundi are engaging creatively with the biblical texts and applying them to their current situation and needs. To use King's expression, they are "signs of an interpretative tradition" which is faithful to its Burundian African heritage, in both its choice of method and theme (King 2000:372).

However, the fact that songs are locally composed does not always mean that they embody contextually relevant theology. For a theology to be contextually relevant, it has to answer to faith questions arising from a social context. The analysis these songs has made it clear how the composers have been influenced by the theology inherited from the Swedish missionaries. Yet, this theology is embedded in the language, idioms, and culture of the missionaries. More importantly, it was formulated to answer the questions and problems that arose in the context of Swedish Pentecostals of the 1930's rather than the problems and questions that face the Burundians in the current context of the HIV and AIDS epidemic. It is therefore difficult for songs composed in the theological framework of the beginning of twentieth century to respond to the problems and faith questions of our time. Thus for instance, as the analysis shows there is no single song that criticises the endemic oppressive political and economic structures, and patriarchal cultural traditions that have characterised Burundian society for decades. Yet, as discussed in the second chapter, these factors have generated discrimination and exploitation culminating in ethnic conflicts with all their consequences, including fuelling the rapid spread of HIV. In my opinion, this is where the alarming weakness of locally composed songs resides: the emphasis has been on saving people spiritually while neglecting the material realities. Their messages concentrate on a relationship with God and on eternal life in heaven. As a result, even the message of hope that could inspire people to struggle for social, economic and political programmes for improving the living conditions of all is reduced to "hope" in the afterlife.

It is important, however, this teaching on futuristic hope in the afterlife that these hymns embody is not completely irrelevant. In a context such as that of Burundi where, for

many decades, the majority of people were denied their human dignity due socio-economic and political conflict and discrimination and many other forms of dehumanisation, hope in the afterlife can play significant role in affirming dignity and self-esteem. Some authors have boldly argued that teachings on future hope give the believers comfort and assurance that boost their hope and courage as they face the problems of their material life situations. Reflecting on the study conducted in Rwanda on the significance of new hymns after the genocide, Claudio Steinert shows how important hymns are that focus on themes such as the suffering of Christ or eschatological hope:

...the lyrics together with the music correspond with the life of the people. The creedal hymns of these Rwandan choirs represent a deeply moving '*theology of consolation*' [italics in the original]. With their "songs of consolation and empowerment", the choirs function as "an empowering force" (2007:102-103).

The role of "future hope" in uplifting, inspiring and empowering is also acknowledged by Archie C. C. Lee (2006), an Old Testament scholar from Hong Kong. He advocates for the need to uphold and share various religious sources on utopian imagination because,

In a world desperately crying for hope in the midst of human suffering and oppression the powerful prophetic voices of the Bible and the various non-biblical resources on utopian imagination from our respective cultures should be upheld and shared. We must open up our minds and let the outcries and aspirations of our people stretch our imagination and inform our social actions (quoted in Antone 2007:38).

Furthermore, James Cone in his study titled *The Spirituals and the Blues* disagrees with the criticisms of those who argue that the emphasis on eschatology in the black spirituals "served as an opiate for black slaves, making for docility and submission" (1972:87). In Cone's view (1972:87), the idea of heaven enabled black slaves to endure the mental and physical stresses of slavery and to keep their humanity intact. More importantly, as Cone

points out, is the fact that hope, in black spirituals, is not a denial of history: “Black hope accepts history, but believes that the historical is in motion, moving toward a divine fulfilment. It is the belief that things can be radically otherwise than they are: that reality is not fixed, but is moving in the direction of human liberation” (Cone 1972:95-96).

However Christian hope has not always been linked to the belief in a dynamic history. According to José Miguez-Bonino “in the history of Christianity the eschatological symbols have been so cut off from this world, so individualised, and so exclusively related to God’s power conceived as the negation of human participation that they have led to resignation and historical cynicism” (1983:93-94). The danger of this kind of hope is that it can lead to passivity and apathy instead of promoting action for change. As Mbiti has warned, “...interest in a Futurist Eschatology may partially be an unconscious attempt to find a spiritual homeland beginning here and now in this life, but not knowing how to find it [people] revert to a largely mythical future which may be no more than a shallow veneer of escapism” (1971:125). What Mbiti and Miguez-Bonino seem to emphasise here is that these kinds of hope can be a hindrance to Christians becoming genuine agents of transformation in society. The main reason for this is that many Christian traditions, which might have been relevant in past, have been accepted uncritically and eventually internalised to the extent that they become the guiding principles in current theological reflection and praxis even though they may no longer be applicable or even positive in any way. This explains why inculturation of the gospel³⁸ is not always helpful despite its importance in promoting people’s agency. The analysis of locally composed songs has demonstrated this point. As the message of these songs agrees with prevailing Burundian cultural and religious education (of Pentecostals at least), it can be asserted that they speak to people’s life experience to a certain extent. Since these songs are rooted in the worldview and religiosity of Pentecostalism, they represent the local interpretation of contemporary existence and provide essential guiding principles in dealing with the current life challenges. However, the theological reflection and message prevailing in these songs are seldom liberating and transforming.

³⁸ The concept of inculturation is defined as being “the creative and dynamic relationship between the Christian message and a culture or cultures..., an ongoing dialogue between faith and culture” (Lombard 1999:353-354 in Steinert 2007:75)

Judging whether community wisdom is relevant, especially in spiritual songs and hymns, is not an easy undertaking. In fact, it is risky. This is so because “the hymn that one person may love, another may abhor. The hymn that one person associates with an occasion of joy, another may associate with an occasion of sadness” (Castle 1994:158). It is from this perspective that Castle warns that “It is difficult to make a critical assessment of a hymn without running the risk of belittling the faith of a person for whom that hymn has means a great deal” (1994:158). Likewise, Cochrane (1999) is cautious about the tendency of thinking that only trained individuals have the right of doing theology. He defines theology as “reflection on faith in the world in order to make sense of reality” (Cochrane 1999:153). In his view, “theology, properly conceived, is the Christian community’s reflection on their faith” and to behave “as if only trained individuals have the means or the right to construct a theology is a denigration of the reasonable faith of ordinary Christians” (Cochrane 1999:154). Castle seems to emphasize the same view when he warns that “to deny the value of hymns as valid expressions of theology is to deny a voice to the group which constitute the largest part of our congregations” (Castle 1994:37-38). He goes even further by arguing that, “Whether the Christian faith is world-affirming or world-denying, whether the faith is being expressed by a community which wishes to show acceptance or denial of the world, the language and thought forms must make sense in the society in which they are being used” (Castle 1994:33). While this statement has its merits, it also raises many questions in a society such as the Burundian Pentecostal community where oppressive socio-economic structures, patriarchal cultural traditions and religious dogmas that emphasise pietistic individual salvation and otherworldly reality have been internalised. This situation is literally threatening the lives of large numbers of people in this era of HIV and AIDS, and it is being further perpetuated by the failure of the church and its members (Cochrane’s “ordinary Christians”) to speak out and act against these oppressive structures and dogmas.

It could be argued that locally composed songs, as a form of folk Christian music represent an aspect of the way Pentecostalism has been indigenised in Burundi society. As they are the result of the creative responses of Burundians to Christian faith, they are

considered as having grown out of the seed of the gospel that has been planted in the Burundian cultural soil. However the situation in this regard in Burundi is more similar to that which a Sri Lankan theologian Dr D. T. Niles describes below:

The gospel is like a seed and you have to sow it. When you sow the seed of Christianity in Palestine, a plant that can be called Palestinian Christianity grows. When you sow it in Rome, a plant called Roman Christian grows. You sow the gospel in Great Britain and you get British Christianity. Now, when the missionaries came to our lands they brought not only the seed of the gospel, but also their own plant of Christianity, flowerpot included (quoted in Pattison et al. 2007:59).

The analysis of the three local songs has revealed that their composers combined an African worldview and cultural practices with Christian teaching and practice. Yet, the analysis also shows that the Swedish missionaries' teachings have a dominant influence. The implication is that the missionaries' worldview is still the main paradigm used by composers in their attempt to contextualize their faith through songs.

Once again, this is not to undermine the well-recognised role of songs in indigenisation and contextualisation of the Christian faith. Various scholars such as Cone (1972), Mugambi (1989), Mbiti (1978), Triebel (1992), de Gruchy (1994), Castle (1994), Steinert (2007), Pass (2007) and others have insisted on the importance of songs and music in contextualising the gospel in a manner that resonates with people. However, the fact that songs are perhaps the main medium through which theology is contextualised does not mean that their theology or message is relevant. Some songs are imbedded with theology that does not speak at all to people's real context, especially that of the marginalised. Others may be contextual but not helpful enough because they may be informed by internalised oppressive ideologies and by patriarchal cultural and religious beliefs, or by fatalistic attitudes to earthly suffering and experiences. For example, the analysis above shows that the interpretation that prevails in the local songs we have been dealing with, particularly "*Ee Yesu njo utusayidie*", is male-centred. The specific women's concerns

are not addressed. They are just blamed for wearing indecent clothes. The situation is made even worse by the fact that many women accept cultural and religious traditions that define their situation and hence they contribute in maintaining the status quo that makes them vulnerable to many social injustices, including HIV infection.

It is for this reason that Cochrane and others uphold that it is crucial to test the wisdom of the community because “if it is not challenged, the world of the text [for example the Burundian experience] is often reduced to a particular experience or context [such as that of male Burundians only]” (Cochrane1999:11). While both Cochrane and Castle agree on the importance of songs or community wisdom in expressing the faith of ordinary Christians and in shaping their praxis, they also concur that these songs need to be tested and challenged within the Christian community (Cochrane1999:11; Castle 1994:31).

Cochrane thus acknowledges that local realities and local wisdom have the power to “shape interpretative activity that reach beyond the personal, the particular and the local to the broader community including the public sphere of discourse and action that shapes nations and societies” (Cochrane1999:119). At the same time however, he warns that the faith and reflection of local Christian communities should not be romanticised. He rightly argues that local wisdom is full of mixed interests and systematic distortions since “perceptions of reality or truth are subject to deception, alienation, and wilfulness” (Cochrane 1999:119). From a biblical studies perspective, this same thinking is extensively discussed in Gerald West’s book *The Academy of the Poor: Towards a Dialogical Reading of the Bible*, in which the author stresses the importance of academic scholars to engage in reading the Bible “with” (or “listening to”) the poor and marginalised instead of reading “for” (or “speaking for”) them. While West recognises the value of ordinary readers’ perspectives in biblical interpretation he also warns that not only “a patronizing ‘speaking for’, that minimises and rationalises the interpretations of the poor and marginalised”, but also “a naïve ‘listening to’, that romanticizes and idealises the interpretations of the poor and marginalised..., must be problematized” (2003:29). In others words, it is important to recognise that both scholars and ordinary readers are shaped by their context. In West’s words, “recognising that subjects are

shaped by their particular experience of class, race, gender, culture and other social forces has powerful implications for the process of ‘reading with’, in that it emphasises the need to make conscious the subject positions of both socially engaged biblical scholars and ordinary ‘readers’ of the Bible” (2003:32). Similarly, Castle insists on the importance of examining both the theology of the hymns and the socio-cultural influences that shape them, given that “people do not compose or sing song out of a theological, cultural or social vacuum” (1994: 21) and that as folksongs, hymns “relate to the cultural and social background from which they come” (1994:31). Certainly, Christian traditions are not excluded from this cultural and social background that Castle is talking about since in Africa, religion, culture and social life are inseparable. The above points are what make the evaluation of songs more complex.

To overcome this dilemma, Cochrane (1999:120) and Castle (1994:31) have suggested some criteria to evaluate the relevance of local wisdoms or songs. Both authors emphasise that these wisdoms or songs should be effective in helping the church community to be engaged with the world. Relevant local wisdoms must enable the community to have a deeper relationship with God, within itself, with the world (Castle 1994:31). “A good hymn”, Castle argues, “must be true to the purpose of God: it must be considered in the way it enables the singer to be involved with God’s world” (1994:161). The theology expressed in the above songs fall short of this criterion. We have seen that the theology that they promote is individualistic and world-denying with a focus on pietistic moral behaviour and futuristic hope. This theology has many fundamental weaknesses. Given the scope and the purpose of this study, some interconnected examples suffice to illustrate this fact.

One of the weaknesses of the theology expressed in local songs is that by putting emphasis on individual moral standards their message is judgemental and devoid of notions of grace, hope and love especially for the listeners who may be affected by HIV and AIDS. In fact, Harrison has rightly argued that “...when religious people fear the loss of moral standards, they become more repressive about sex and sensuality. As result they lose moral sensitivity and do the very thing they fear – they discredit moral relations

through moralism. That is why the so-called “moral majority” is so dangerous” (Harrison 1985:13). If one considers the songs on HIV and AIDS that we have analysed, the use of uncaring language that is not sensitive to people’s situation is a typical example of this kind of insensitive moralism.³⁹ The dominant message in these songs is that people are sick because of their disobedience to moral laws. God’s blessings for believers are seldom linked to God’s love and grace. Instead, they are mostly seen as result of conversion and obedience to the church’s moral rules. This judgemental language can be alienating those who are affected by HIV and AIDS.

It must also be noted that the emphasis on moral standards is linked to the teaching on individual salvation that focuses on individual relationship with God through personal conversion. Such an understanding of salvation is contrary to the traditional African value of community. As we have seen previously in the analysis hymns and songs, there is no accountability to community due to the emphasis on individual salvation that characterised the theology of the missionaries to Burundi. Simply put, the African emphasis on the communal struggle for life was lost. The desire to preserve jealously one’s dignity as a person and as member of community was replaced by the longing for holiness by separating oneself from this world, even if this implies the rejection of/by one’s own community. With this new value, to be dehumanised in this world does not matter as long as one’s citizenship in heaven is secured. As a result, believers are not motivated to struggle to make the society a place closer to God’s vision of *shalom*. Instead of equipping and encouraging Christians to be the catalysts of God’s saving work in the world and of a community serving the world in the love of Christ, the church becomes merely the refuge of “the saved”.

Another weakness of Christian faith that is world-denying is linked to the resulting body/mind western dualism which assumes that “we are most moral when most detached

³⁹ The insistence on moral standards especially in matters of sexuality was prevalent in Burundian society even before the introduction of Christianity. As we have seen in the second chapter, the punishment for perceived sexual immorality was very harsh, particularly in regard to young unmarried women. Given that HIV infection is often linked to sexual immorality, it can be argued that this background is also contributing to the use of insensitive language towards people living with HIV and AIDS.

and disengaged from life-struggle; that ‘disinterestedness’ and ‘detachment’ are basic preconditions for responsible moral action” (Harrison 1985:13). The outcome of this is that Christians become ignorant of the world around them because, as Harrison states, “all our knowledge, including our moral knowledge, is body-mediated knowledge”, in other words, it is knowledge gained through lived experience in the physical world (Harrison 1985:13). Given that “an error about the world redounds in error about God” (Thomas Aquinas quoted in de Gruchy 2009:7), the resulting consequence is that they become ignorant of God and God’s mission in the world.

Furthermore, another consequence of this duality that values the spiritual at the expense of the material world is that many key biblical themes such as peace, liberation, imprisonment, wellbeing, illness, work and rewards are devoid of a holistic biblical meaning of justice as they are spiritualised without making any deep and critical historical and political connections. With a particular focus on future wellbeing in heaven, the biblical application of these themes to the present situation is almost lost. To use de Gruchy’s expression, “the eschatological tension of here/there, now/then, yet/not yet, earth/heaven is collapsed into a futuristic dream” (de Gruchy 1991:18). Once this eschatological tension is lost, the theological motivation for Christians to be critically engaged in society as transforming agents is also lost. And once this theological motivation is lacking, Christians cannot participate in *missio Dei* as they should.

It therefore follows that if the Burundian Pentecostal churches are to participate in *missio Dei* in the current context of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, there is a need for a new religious language or “grammar of faith” in locally composed songs. This will require a fundamental change in the theological understanding of the mission of the church in the world; a shift from the inherited Noah’s ark model of mission to a holistic model of mission. What is now needed is, to use Niles’ words, “to break the flowerpot, take out the seed of the gospel, sow it in our own cultural soil”, and let our version of theology of mission grow (quoted in Pattison et al. 2007:59). Liberating the Pentecostal theology of mission from the pietistic and individualistic understanding of salvation in which it has

been imprisoned is the *sine qua non* if the Burundian Pentecostal churches are to be relevant in the current context.

5.5 Conclusion

The analysis of locally-composed songs has shown that though these songs reflect the writer's and his/her listeners' context, their message is wanting as it does not equip or encourage the listeners to deal with the issue at hand in a more comprehensive manner. The focus is on Pentecostal spiritual teaching about the need for personal salvation, the need to resist the devil and the need to separate ourselves from worldly things. In other words, the traditional soteriological understanding of mission "as saving individuals from eternal damnation" (Bosch 1993:389) appears again and again in these songs. The songs also show little interest in the spiritual need (such as love and compassion for instance) of those who are already affected by the HIV and AIDS epidemic and nothing is said about the socio-economic and political factors driving the epidemic. The cause of a person's infection is simply reduced to "being a friend of the world". The tendency to believe that once you come to Jesus all problems are solved is obvious in these songs, as is the case with the classical hymns.

In a nutshell, the analysis of the locally composed songs shows that biblical and Christian traditions inherited from the missionaries to Burundi offer important sources or frameworks for the interpretation of reality to Burundian Pentecostals. Together with the socio-cultural elements such as proverbs and other Burundian folklore, they determine what is accepted or not accepted about people's behaviour, and shape the way Burundian Pentecostals view themselves and the way they relate to others (the unbelievers, the poor, the sick, the healthier, and the rich), as well as the way they understand the world (good or bad), God and Satan. While the local songs play important role in contextualising theology, the analysis has also demonstrated that the dualistic understanding of reality (the earthly world versus the heavenly world) inherited from missionaries renders these songs contextually irrelevant. In fact, it was shown that the tendency to separate the

spiritual from the material is the key factor that leads Burundian Pentecostals to neglect the role of political, socio-economic, and cultural structures in the spread of the HIV and AIDS epidemic resulting in their failure to become active participants in transforming these structures. This where the holistic theology of mission as defined by the *missio Dei* concept challenges the theology of mission that the Burundian Pentecostal churches have inherited from the Swedish missionaries. In fact, the locally composed songs demonstrate that the theology of mission developed by those missionaries and later indigenised by Burundians, does not allow them to participate entirely in God's mission since it has little concern for transforming the world in order to make it a place that reflects God's vision of *shalom*. In the following chapter, we will attempt to suggest an alternative theological framework of mission rooted in the *missio Dei* approach that can guide the Burundian Pentecostal churches to become agents of transformation.

Chapter Six

Towards a holistic Pentecostal theological framework of mission

6.1 Introduction

Nothing should be more sacrosanct than protecting human life. This principle should be the guiding one. Theological creativity demands that the church upholds whatever promotes life and actively opposes whatever diminishes life. If this means going against some aspect of African culture, then so be it (Chitando 2007a:33)

Cowardice asks the question: is it safe? Expediency asks the question: is it politic? Vanity asks the question: is it popular? But conscience asks the question: is it right? And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular- but one must take it simply because it is right.

Martin Luther King Jr.⁴⁰

In chapter two of this study, we have seen that the HIV and AIDS epidemic is closely linked to various social issues such as poverty, gender injustice, stigma, violence, war, human rights violations and diverse kinds of human exploitation. It was pointed out that these social problems are sustained by unjust socio-economic, political, cultural and religious structures. As these structures affect people's decision-making in terms of sexual and other behaviours that expose them to HIV infection, it was argued that bio-medical interventions alone cannot prevent the spread of the epidemic if these structures are not transformed.

⁴⁰ See Power, Justice and Mercy Quotes: <http://www.tentmaker.org/Quotes/justicemercyquotes.htm>).

As far as the Burundian Pentecostal churches are concerned, we realised that a clear and holistic vision of the mission of the church in the world is needed if they are to be competent in their responses to the epidemic. In an attempt to examine whether this vision exists in the theology that informs their ministry in general and their responses to the epidemic in particular, it was shown in chapter four that it has little interest in transforming social structures because it focuses solely on personal relationship with God and – as far as HIV and AIDS is concerned - on individual morality. From a biblical perspective of God's mission in the world, this kind of theology of mission was found wanting. In the third chapter, the analysis of the *missio Dei* concept had made clear that the purpose of God's mission is to establish the structures of *shalom* characterised by holistic relationships between God and humans and between humans and between humanity and the rest of creation. It was also shown that in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, participating in God's mission in the world implies fidelity to the demands of these holistic relationships. As noted above, an analysis of the various factors that contribute to the spread of HIV and AIDS in Burundi and elsewhere, clearly reveals that they are rooted in unjust relationships that characterise our society. This means that the continual spread of HIV is proof of the failure of the church to adequately promote right relationships in our political, economic, social cultural and religious affairs. By implication, the Burundian Pentecostal churches cannot persist in holding on to their traditional theology of mission that informs their ecclesiastical and social works but that effectively ignores the real causes behind the growing epidemic. Instead, the current situation compels Burundian Pentecostals to rethink their way of understanding mission in light of the biblical holistic understanding of *missio Dei*.

Drawing on these findings, this chapter will outline the meaning of being a missionary church in the current Burundian context. Taking into account the fundamentals of the Pentecostal faith and relying on the theological vision provided by the holistic theology of mission encapsulated in the *mission Dei* concept, the chapter will suggest an alternative theological framework of mission that can guide the Burundian Pentecostal churches in addressing to the challenges posed by the HIV and AIDS epidemic. While it will examine some of the values and principles that should be promoted by those who

claim to be participants in *missio Dei*, some practical implications of the holistic understanding of God's mission to Burundian Pentecostal churches in the current context will also be highlighted.

6.2 Comprehensive transformation as a missiological paradigm for Pentecostals

The distinctive character of Pentecostals, originating from the holiness movement, is that the baptism in the Holy Spirit came to be understood as empowerment rather than sanctification. The view developed that the purpose of this empowerment, as Clark et al (1986:82) point out, was that of being the witnesses of Jesus as written in Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth". For this reason, "a vision of 'reaching the world for Jesus' has always been a strong motivation factor" (Clark et al 1986:82) for Pentecostals. But the question remains: what does it really mean to be a witness of Jesus? Pentecostals would say that being a witness of Jesus involves imitating Jesus in words and actions.

In our attempt to understand God's mission from the perspective of the *missio Dei* concept, it was shown that Jesus did not come to accomplish his own agenda, but rather God's mission. In the Old Testament, we have seen that the ultimate purpose God's mission for the world is restoring right relationships that provide people with the basis for life in fullness as defined by the concepts of *shalom*, *sedaqah*, and *mishpat*. In the New Testament, the analysis of the Greek word "*eirene*" has shown that reconciliation in its wide sense of transformed relationships between humans and God, between humans and between humans and creation is the main focus of God's mission through Jesus Christ. In light of these four concepts (*shalom*, *sedaqah*, *mishpat* and *eirene*) it became clear that God's mission, which was embodied in Jesus' life and ministry, is not merely about abstract spiritual realities and but is more concerned with how economic, social, political, cultural and religious structures can be regulated in order to promote life for every member of the community. This implies that transforming the society in all its

dimensions should be the aim of any church that claims to be a witness of Jesus. However, as we have seen previously, due to their narrow understanding of the church's mission in the world, Burundian Pentecostals have been more concerned with self-preservation and self-propagation. This is in contradiction with the aim of Jesus' mission of ensuring that people have life in fullness (John 10:10). For the Pentecostal churches to be authentic participants in God's mission as *missio Dei* there is a need to revise the foundation of their theology of mission. In other words, they need a paradigm shift from the narrow theology of mission of the early twentieth century, which they inherited from the missionaries to Burundi. Without claiming to be exhaustive, we shall now highlight some of the key areas in which Burundian Pentecostal churches need a paradigm shift in terms of the theological and doctrinal frameworks that guide their actions.

6.2.1 Liberation from a narrow understanding of salvation

If Pentecostals are to participate faithfully in God's mission there is a need for a paradigm shift from their narrow understanding of salvation that focuses on the spiritual aspect on the otherworldly realities. This understanding is itself a result of the Pentecostal worldview that "sees a far more serious challenge to human liberty and well-being in oppressive force of personal evil than in temporal and temporary social structures" (Clark and Lederle et al 1989:93). According to this Pentecostal worldview, oppression is understood

as a very real spiritual slavery to demon forces, to human nature as it reveals itself in rebellion against God, to legalistic systems which (in the guise of religion and philosophy) hold out a vain hope of self-salvation... The conflict is not with flesh and blood, neither are weapons involved natural (Clark 1989:93).

As their social analysis and theological reflection do not take seriously the social realities, much of the time Pentecostals are not only unaware of and apathetic toward the socio-economic and political causes of their misery, but they also adopt a fatalistic attitude to life instead of using their God-given capabilities and available assets to address their

problems. In chapter three, we have seen how Pentecostals in Burundi repeatedly place emphasis on individual spirituality in terms of personal relationships with God as the solution to any problem. In their view, God's mission, and therefore the church's mission, is more directed toward the individual's spirituality and relationship with God than toward the needs of and responsibility toward society. However, in our analysis of the meaning of God's mission and its purpose, we have seen that the kind of righteousness that God is interested in is not merely personal righteousness, but social righteousness. This involves "relational interdependence and a profound attentiveness to the needs of others" with special emphasis on "how individuals, families, communities, as well as juridical, religious, and political authorities, interact with each other, with the most vulnerable members of society, and with the Covenant God" (Groody 2007:27-28). In fact, as we have seen in our analysis of the underpinning principles of the *missio Dei* concept, the human spiritual and social dimensions are inseparable. The implication is that Christians cannot claim to be participating in God's mission if they are indifferent to how social structures are affecting members of the society, especially the poor and the marginalised. As Matthias Wenk has rightly argued, "at the centre of biblical ethics is not the concern for the autonomy or self-discipline of a person, but rather the care for one's neighbour, expressed in acting love. Biblical ethics thereby is primarily social ethics and has its focus on interpersonal relationships rather than on an individual's virtues and duties" (2010:47).

Given the way the HIV and AIDS epidemic is linked to the structures of society and how it is affecting people's wellbeing at all levels, the epidemic compels the Burundian Pentecostal churches to question the meaning of salvation in the current context. Without doubt, if their reflection is based on sound social analysis, they will agree with Bosch that,

In a world in which people are dependent on each other and every individual exists within a web of inter-human relationships, it is totally untenable to limit salvation to the individual and his or her personal relationship with God. Hatred, injustice, oppression, war, and other forms of violence are manifestations of evil; concern for humaneness, for the conquering of famine, illness, and

meaninglessness is part of the salvation for which we hope and labor. Christians pray that the reign of God should come and God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Mt 6:10); it follows from this that the earth is the locus of the Christian's calling and sanctification (1993:397).

There is, therefore, a need for these churches to shift from the traditional narrow understanding that sees salvation as escaping from the wrath of God and as redemption of the individual soul in the hereafter and which tends to make an absolute distinction between the struggle for justice and salvation. Instead, they need a comprehensive understanding affirming that "that redemption is never salvation out of this world (*salus e mundo*) but always salvation of this world (*salus mundi*)", meaning that "salvation in Christ is salvation in the context of human society en route to a whole and healed world" (Bosch 1993:399). In other words, this comprehensive understanding of salvation must go beyond "every schizophrenic position" in order to allow these churches to involve individuals as well as society, soul and body, present and future in their ministry of salvation (Bosch 1993:399). As was mentioned during the Bangkok Assembly of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism in 1973, there is thus a need for these churches to acknowledge that salvation manifests itself in four interconnected dimensions: (1) in the struggle for economic justice against the exploitation of people by people; (2) in the struggle for human dignity against the political oppression of human beings by their fellow humans; (3) in the struggle for solidarity against the alienation of person from person; and (4) in the struggle for hope against despair in personal life (Bangkok 1973 in Kinnamon and Cope 1997:357). None of these dimensions of salvation can exist without the others since,

There is no economic justice without political freedom, no political freedom without economic justice. There is no social justice without solidarity, no solidarity without social justice. There is no justice, no human dignity, and no solidarity without hope, no hope without justice, dignity and solidarity (Bangkok 1973 in Kinnamon and Cope 1997:357).

Thus, Pentecostals are challenged to embrace salvation in all its dimensions. This requires a new religious mindset.

6.2.2 Liberation from pietistic optimism

Pentecostals need to be liberated from the belief that political and economic liberation would be achieved merely through preaching the gospel rather than through engaging in socio-political pronouncements and actions. As we have seen in the analysis of their hymns, Pentecostals consider as futile any human effort to transform the world, while placing an emphasis on social activities is seen as a distraction from the central mission of preaching the gospel. It is true that “the change in the lives of those who become Christians is often so remarkable that it positively effects change in their context also” (Warrington 2008:230). However, our experience shows that this change is insignificant if the structures of injustice are not transformed. In fact, Nolan is right by asserting that

Personal conversion from sin and selfishness will not lead to structural change, even if large numbers of people are involved, unless they become aware of the role of structures in the perpetuation of evil, unless they are conscientized and take an option for the poor and oppressed of all kinds (Nolan 2009:167).

In the context where many people are dehumanised and deprived of their dignity due to poverty and other social evils, there is a need to acknowledge that a theology that encourages Christians to simply pray and wait for heaven when all wrongs will be corrected is unhelpful. We need a theology that will equip the church and individual Christians to transform structural injustices and to respond holistically to their debilitating consequences such as poverty, disease and lack of education. Instead of promoting a pietistic view that encourages Christians to be disengaged from their society, there is a need for recognising that from both the Old Testament and the New Testament perspectives, ethical issues in society and the personal growth of individuals are inseparable. That is why a clear understanding of the meaning of liberation at the religious level is crucial for the Pentecostal churches in Burundi.

Liberation on religious level deals with freedom from sin, which is the ultimate source of injustice and oppression (Groody 2007:186). Here, sin should not be understood as simply concerning the individual's morality, but the breaking of friendship with God and others. Connecting John 11:52 to John 1:29 and 3:16, Wenk (2010:55) argues, "the sins of the world, according to John, are not simply the moral problems of an individual, but the state of corruption and of alienation of the entire world". Consequently, commenting on 1 John 2:9-11; 4:19-21, he then states that reconciliation between God and a person and reconciliation among people cannot be separated from one another, not even in the sense that one is the result of the other (Wenk 2010:55). This outlook challenges the widespread view amongst evangelicals and Pentecostals that prioritises spirituality by arguing that social change is the result of spiritual change. In Wenk's view, however, John's thinking about reconciliation is not so much causal but rather holistic (2010:55). Thus, since sin is the breaking friendship with God and others, liberation from sin or salvation, therefore, means restoring the bonds of friendship with God and with one's neighbour.

Understanding sin as the breaking of relationship with God and others is fundamental in dealing with HIV stigma. It is known that the stigmatization of people who are HIV positive is mainly linked to religious beliefs that HIV and AIDS is punishment of God for personal sexual sin (West 2003:336; West and Zengele 2004:114; Haddad 2006:88; Cochrane 2006:26). These beliefs are based on the dominant theology known as the "theology of retribution" which maintains that "what people sow, they will reap" (West and Zengele, 2004:114). But it can also be argued that these beliefs are associated with the above-mentioned narrow unbiblical understanding that reduces sin to individual moral misconduct against God. If people can understand sin as the consequence of broken relationships, Christians would not hurry to judge others. In fact, they would become conscious of the existence of the prevalence of sinful attitudes such pride, self-righteousness, exclusivity, hypocrisy, judgemental language, and the misuse of power and would realise that stigmatisation and discrimination of people living with HIV is more rooted in these injustices. These attitudes are sinful because they deprive people of

their ability to speak out and to name their reality due to fear of rejection and because of internalised trauma. These attitudes are reinforced by patriarchal structures that we have taken for granted in our churches, as is further explained below. Thus, in order to address the stigma efficiently, these sinful patriarchal structures must be challenged in our society and churches.

6.2.3 Liberation from patriarchal mindsets

If Pentecostals are to promote the structures of harmony and interconnectedness (structures of *shalom*) they need to be liberated from the patriarchal mindsets which we have uncritically accepted as natural or even as divine. According to Rakoczy, “patriarchy is an ideology, a way of thinking, feeling, and organising human life which legally, politically, socially, and religiously enforces male dominance and power. Culture, society, and religious bodies, including the Christian church, are all structured on this principle” (2004:10). However, the reality of this situation is seldom recognised. Consequently, as patriarchal mindsets are shaped and reinforced by our cultures and religions, they have become the guiding principles in our thinking and practices and have divided us on basis of sexual (gendered) categories, but also in terms of socio-economic classes, ethnic and linguistic groups, or religious background with certain groups claiming to be superior to other. It is for this reason that patriarchy is detrimental to social and religious relationships as it divides people into “saved” and “unsaved”, chosen and condemned, good and bad, intelligent and stupid, rational and emotional, to name but a few. Thus, as Rakoczy has rightly pointed out, patriarchy should be seen “not only as the root cause of sexism but also of the many “isms” which distort and poison human relationships: racism, colonialism, economic classism” (2004:11). In other words, patriarchy is a major cause of oppressive socio-cultural, religious, political, and economic relationships. Thus, Pentecostal churches are challenged by the principle of *missio Dei* to eradicate the patriarchal mindset from their own institutions and from the wider society. In fact, from a *missio Dei* perspective, the heart of the mission of the church in the world is representing the values of the kingdom of God here and now, a kingdom in which there

is “neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female” (Galatians 4:28). That is why Pentecostals need to rethink their understanding of God’s kingdom.

6.2.4 Liberation from an erroneous understanding of kingdom of God

Usually, the biblical text John 18:33-40 especially verse 36 has been used to justify why Christians are not to be involved in socio-political issues since the kingdom of God that they the mandate to represent is not of this world. However, according to Nolan, “the much quoted text ‘My kingdom is not of this world’ (John 18:36) does not mean that the ‘kingdom’ is not, or will not be, in this world or on this earth” (1992: 59). Instead, it must be understood in the same sense as in John 17:11, 14-16 where Jesus and his disciples are said to be in the world but not of the world to mean that although they are in the world, they do not live according to the values of the world (1992: 60). In other words, the fact that Jesus was opposed to both the religious leaders and political leaders, demonstrates that the values of the kingdom that Jesus came to inaugurate are different from, and opposed to, the values of the systems of this world. Thus, as Nolan has warned, Pentecostals should not think that the kingdom Jesus was talking about “will float in the air somewhere above the earth or that it will be an abstract entity without any tangible social and political structure” (1992:60). The fact that it is called the kingdom of God does not make it to be less political. Instead, it means that this kingdom is opposed to the human kingdom or the kingdom of Satan (Nolan 1992:60). By implication, Christians are not meant to be indifferent of what is happening in the world because, as holders of the values of the kingdom of God, they constitute a community through which and by which the transformation of the world can take place. It is for this reason that the church’s existence makes sense. Bosch (1993:377) rightly argues that just as we cannot speak of the church without speaking of its mission, it would be impossible to think of the church without thinking of the world into which it was sent. In his view, “if a church attempts to sever itself from involvement in the world and if its structures are such that they thwart any possibility of rendering a relevant service to the world, such structures have to be recognised as heretical” (Bosch 1993:378). Consequently, the Pentecostal churches’ leaders are challenged to equip believers with a theological vision that empowers them to

raise their voices and be engaged critically with those who are in positions of influence to make significant changes at local, national and international levels.

6.2.5 Liberation from apocalyptic escapism

Pentecostals believe that this world is not their home; they are simply passing through as they move towards their eternal home. According to Warrington (2008:229) the belief in the imminent return of Jesus has influenced Pentecostals' tendency towards passivity with regard to social change as they maintain that if Jesus is to return soon, there is no reason to criticise the practices and the pleasures associated with the world. Thus, rather than encouraging active citizenship, Pentecostals feel their role is to create "citizens of heaven". As Warrington points out, it is for this reason that they have been "accused of 'enjoying pie in the sky' instead of engaging in social action... The emphasis has been on saving the world and its people spiritually rather than physically, socio-economically, politically or ecologically" (2008:229). Instead of influencing the world, Pentecostals have opted to "come out of it" (Warrington 2008:229), an attitude that is typical for the Noah's ark model of mission discussed previously in section 4.4. This approach contradicts the mission of Jesus because it creates what Snyder calls 'church people' who "often put church work above concerns of justice and truth...think about how to get people into the church;...[and] worry that the world might change the church" (quoted in Bosch 1993:378). To participate in *missio Dei*, the Burundian Pentecostal churches need to adopt a holistic theology of mission that produces 'kingdom people' who "seek first the kingdom of God and its justice" and who "think about how to get the church into the world" (Snyder quoted in Bosch 1993:378). This leads us to the sixth area where liberation is needed.

6.2.6 Liberation from a narrow understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit

To overcome the indifference toward social issues that has always characterised Pentecostals, there is a need of a paradigm shift from narrow understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit that tends to restrict the role of the Holy Spirit to individual spiritual

empowerment for personal evangelism, church planting and growth while ignoring social issues. Various Pentecostal scholars have argued that Pentecostals are supposed to lead the field in social transformation, given their emphasis on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Warrington asserts that “Pentecostals are best placed to emulate the resistance to ungodly and unacceptable social practices engaged in by the Old Testament prophets and Jesus because of their attachment to charisms of the Spirit, especially prophecy”, which he enlarges to include speaking out against injustice (2008:244-245). As “power” is a keyword for Pentecostals, Petersen is of the idea that they must engage in the wider agenda of social transformation to take advantage of the presence of the Spirit in their lives:

Spirit baptism empowers one not only to participate in evangelism and supernatural events but also to enjoy the empowerment of the Spirit in the expression of ethical concerns. Therefore, it is only when contemporary Pentecostals, empowered by the Spirit, recognise and practice a confirmed commitment to both evangelism and to social concern that integrity of mission is accomplished (quoted in Warrington 2008:244).

Basing his argument on the idea that the gifts of the Holy Spirit as described in 1 Corinthians 12: 4-7 “are given for the common good”, Tony Balcomb (1991:82) challenges the tendency of seeing spiritual gifts as individual property. He argues that while individual talents and abilities must be recognised, there is little place for individualism as such in the sense of acting in an individualistic and unaccountable manner. Instead, the gifts of the Spirit are essentially gifts given to the community, not to an individual (Balcomb 1991:83). Similarly, on the basis of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, Kung argues that “the promised Spirit is the Spirit of justice and peace...any form or tendency of privatisation...of God’s promise of the Spirit is misleading and distorted” (Kung 2001:13-14). In his analysis of the role of the power of the Holy Spirit during the ministry of Jesus and the apostles, Balcomb demonstrates that those who are empowered by the Holy Spirit cannot be apolitical, as Pentecostals seem to believe. He argues that the Acts of the Apostles,

were acts that caused the followers of Jesus to be described as “those who had turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). Such power could not go unnoticed. It was a power that was especially felt by the rulers of the day whom the entire book of Acts describe as being constantly confronted and disobeyed by those who were filled with the Spirit. It was the same power that filled Jesus who said “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to . . . proclaim freedom for the captives” (Balcomb 1991:80).

Moreover, while the role of the gifts of prophecy, especially the gift of speaking in tongues, is often limited to the spiritual domain, Balcomb shows how the gift of tongues described in Acts 2 was not a mere ecstatic utterance of words but was in fact challenging to the status quo:

What was significant about the gift of tongues on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 was the fact that the multiplicity of tongues spoken were understood by many different people present in Jerusalem. This unifying work of the Holy Spirit must have given the authorities much cause for alarm and indeed it was from this time onwards that the church, now clearly a church of the people, became a force powerfully subversive to the status quo of the existing society (1991:84).

Similarly, contrary to what many Pentecostals may think, true prophecy is revolutionary in its function. According to Walter Brueggeman, prophecy “nurtures, nourishes and evokes a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us” (quoted in Balcomb 1991:85). Drawing on Brueggeman’s description of the prophetic task, Balcomb (1981:85) identifies four functions of prophecy that Pentecostals need to consider. These functions are: (1) reading and declaring the signs of the times; (2) the ability to engage in penetrating critique of social structures in the light of the word of God; (3) bringing hope to people, setting them free and building them up and (4) the denunciation of false prophets. In other words, the prophetic gift has a crucial role to play in transforming the unjust structures that underpin

power relations in an oppressive society. As Balcomb continues to point out, being prophetic means to

demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God (1 Cor.10:5), and to expose its roots causes...[Being prophetic] also makes way for further critique, analysis and constructive empowerment of the powerless. In the process it inspires hope in the hearts of the oppressed, which so easily become disillusioned and apathetic as they are forced to submit to the oppressive culture of the powerful, and elicits resistance to these forces (1991:85-6).

Briefly, one can argue that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are fundamental to involvement in social transformation. In fact, as Balcomb has rightly argued, “Authentic liberation can never occur apart from genuine Pentecostal encounter” (1991:88). But again, for this encounter to occur, Pentecostals must be liberated from a narrow understanding of God’s mission in the world because “authentic Pentecostal encounter does not occur without liberation” (Balcomb 1991:88).

From what has been discussed, one can conclude that the Pentecostal tradition can provide rich resources to equip the members of its churches to be agents of social transformation as long as the various paradigm shifts discussed above take place.

In the next section, we shall see what these paradigm shifts mean practically in the current context of the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

6.3 Practical implications of a holistic theology of mission

In chapter two, we have seen that multiple social factors beyond the control and choice of individuals play a crucial role in driving the HIV and AIDS epidemic. The factors are rooted in unjust political, economic, socio-cultural, and religious structures. Civil war is

one of the main factors that have increased the suffering of many Burundians, making them vulnerable to HIV infection. In this regard, studies have shown that the various ethnic wars that have occurred in Burundi are rooted in the unjust political distribution of power and unjust economic order structures that have prevailed for almost a half century (Baregu 2002; Ngaruko and Nkurunziza 2000, Ndikumana 2000).⁴¹ However, due to the irrelevant theology and wrong theological motivation that informs their involvement in the public sphere, the churches in general have failed to oppose the injustices perpetrated by the ruling elites (Longman 1988; Longman 2005; Daley 2006). As Longman (1988:92) has indicated, the Burundian churches have failed to be agents of social transformation because they have only openly challenged the state for the sake of self-preservation and self-propagation.

As far as Pentecostal churches are concerned, we have seen that this failure is due to their narrow understanding of God's mission in the world which has affected their social involvement. In our attempt to find an alternative theology of mission, we discovered that the theological framework of mission rooted in *missio Dei* challenges the Pentecostal churches in Burundi to rethink their theological vision in order that it will better guide their ministry in general and in the current context of HIV particularly. This framework calls Pentecostals to reshape their activities to ensure that unjust structures are transformed because they deny people "life in fullness" as described by the concept of *shalom*. Considering the factors driving the HIV and AIDS epidemic, we shall now highlight some of practical implications of this framework of *missio Dei* for the Burundian Pentecostal churches.

The first implication is that the promotion of socio-economic and political justice, solidarity, human dignity, and hope should be the yardstick of their theology and praxis. For the Burundian Pentecostal churches to promote justice at all levels, they need to be

⁴¹ These authors highlight that the conflicts in the Great Lakes region are firstly driven by leaders who maintain themselves on power and who collaborate closely with gunrunners, plunderers, drug barons, mercenaries, and private military companies. Secondly, these conflicts are fuelled by imperialist interests that are frequently in competition with each other for political power and resources (Baregu 2002:18).

prophetic by explicitly denouncing and boldly opposing the various social evils that expose people to HIV infection, to stigma and to lack of quality health care. This requires these churches to be liberated from their captivity in serving the interests of dominant classes, ethnic groups, religious and cultural traditions. In other words, they must be liberated from their complicity with structural injustice and violence to become the catalyst of God's saving work in the world and a community serving the world in the love of Christ, instead of being merely "the refuge of the saved" (Kinnamon and Cope 1997:357). In this regard, solidarity with the poor is crucial. If in many African countries HIV is more likely to be a death sentence for the poor than for those who can care for themselves and afford treatment (Barnett and Whiteside 2002:34), it is immoral for the churches to be an instrument of and supportive of the programmes and approaches of government of the day in maintaining the status quo. Instead, they are called to be leaders in the mobilisation of the oppressed rural and urban poor, so as to facilitate their right to health care for instance. In politicians' speeches, primary health care is often referred to and is officially declared a priority; and yet, it is not acted upon in terms of resource allocation and practical policies. The poor face many health related problems and these are linked to issues such as the shortage of public health facilities and qualified medical personnel, medicine availability, low salaries for medical personnel and so on. With the current neo-liberal policies that promote privatisation, the majority of people are denied access to basic health care services. Since the health care model of wealthy nations has been copied by poor countries like Burundi, the gap between the haves and the have-nots in terms of access to health care has been widened. In a situation like this, there is no doubt that being the catalyst of God's saving work implies taking the side of the deprived community, which may demand participation in the processes and procedures needed to change political and economic policies and eventually to correct injustices in the health care system.

The second implication, which is closely linked to the first, is that these churches are called to struggle for the restoration of right relationships among people. That right relationships are critical in the context of HIV is cannot be contested. As we have seen in chapter two, in many countries in Africa including Burundi women are at the highest risk

of HIV infection due to unequal gender relations that diminish their right to control over their bodies. As a result of this unequal power in sexual relationships, the ABC (Abstain, Be faithful and Condomise) prevention method is meaningless for many women as they have no option to abstain when being forced into sex and even if they may be faithful, it does not guarantee them a faithful partner especially when society allows men to have multiple partners. Moreover, due to the power imbalance, it is often dangerous to even suggest the use of condoms.

We have also seen that sexual violence which contributes to the ongoing spread of HIV is mainly linked to broken relationships due to political and social instability. Moreover, as Bongmba (2007:36) points out, much of the time violence also occurs in our home in a covert manner through a range of abuses such as rape, including marital rape, and economic oppression that forces women into dependence. There is also violence linked to divorce laws that discriminate against women, unfair inheritance laws, sexual exploitation of women and girls in employment and school recruitments; gender-based discrimination in education and health services; and the pervasive psychological abuse wherein women are told repeatedly that they are lesser humans, leading to a severe lack of self-esteem.

All these issues confirm Gerrit Ter Haar's statement that "...the core problem of our ill-health can be traced back to broken relationships...A well-known adage has it that 'only a healed team can be a healing team'" (1990:54). It is therefore obvious that the way *par excellence* to achieve any success against the HIV and AIDS epidemic is to deal with unequal relationships that characterise patriarchal structures.

The discussion on *missio Dei* has shown that restoring right relationships is the main purpose of this concept of mission. To participate in *missio Dei*, the Burundian Pentecostal churches have therefore to struggle for a society based on human dignity, mutual relationships, and active concern for the most vulnerable members of the community. Practically, this means eliminating all kinds of domination, abuse, and subjugation that degrade human interaction and all kinds of discriminations based on

ethnicity, gender, culture, religion, or social status which, not only hurt the weak but also dehumanise the powerful. Given the history of Burundi, this requires putting in place structures that help every individual in rediscovering their freedom of mind, dignity, and self-esteem. These structures are needed in order to deal with internalised perceptions and stereotypes such as attitudes of superiority or inferiority based on social status, ethnicity, religion and other destructive mentalities that affect our relationship with ourselves and consequently with others. They may also help the poor change the way they think about themselves, especially when they see their condition as fate or worse, as divinely ordained. This leads us to the third implication, which is about empowering people for action.

If we agree that the main mission of the church in the world is to be an agent of transformation to promote fullness of life at all dimensions of human being (personal and social), clinging onto the given popular political and socio-economic ideologies, as well as the religious and cultural traditions that no longer promote fullness of life is not an option. We therefore need a theological vision that encourages creativity and mass participation in order to counteract the status quo. That is why a self-criticism of Pentecostal churches and a critical solidarity in their relationship to state are crucial. This obliges Pentecostal churches “to move beyond a mere 'ambulance ministry' to a ministry of involvement and participation” (Kairos Theologians 1986: 28). Instead of merely being the government’s distribution centres of welfare grants for the poor and rather than adhering to the government’s expectations of submissive support, churches’ ministry should be characterised by critical engagement with society, by taking the side of those who are being neglected by the current socio-economic and political systems. This requires a critical analysis in order to understand the main concerns of the poor majority. Thus, for instance, in Burundi where the majority of the population relies on agriculture for their subsistence, the land code and the inheritance laws need to be challenged as they deny access to land to the majority of poor especially widows and returned refugees. This has put many people in situations of vulnerability to HIV infection as it forces them to adopt risky coping strategies such as migrating to the cities to look for work, hence breaking up the family, or engaging in commercial sex. To respond to this dilemma, churches may

provide legal assistance but what is mostly needed is participation in and the encouragement of people's organizations to pressurise the authorities to change oppressive laws. However, this alone is not what the mission of the church is all about. As we have seen, the mission of the church is to participate in making *shalom* a reality. In Yoder's view, *shalom* makers not only deal with the immediate need of the poor and oppressed but also help the poor "to break the grip of their oppression" (Yoder 1987:36).

This means that Burundian Pentecostal churches are challenged to undertake long term practical actions in order to achieve a just, ordered, and peaceful society where *shalom* dwells. In this undertaking, they need a strategy that will empower them to stand against those structures which oppose *shalom*. In this regard, they should take seriously Martin Luther King's statement that, "Our most powerful non-violent weapon is...organisation. To produce change, people must be organised to work together in units of power" (quoted in Philip 1999:136). In this same perspective, Korten demonstrates the importance of participating in organizing and mobilizing community voluntary action from local community to national or global scale in order to benefit from what he calls "the power of ideas, values and communication links" (Korten 1990:127). Korten emphasises the importance of creating social movements of dedicated volunteers that offer mutual inspiration, political support and exchange of experience and technology (quoted in Swart 2006:134). Similarly, Turner maintains that through organisations "individuals learn to co-operate, learn that co-operation gives them power to achieve changes in their environment, and learn, through the attempt to deal with problems, the relations between their immediate problem and the wider political and social structure" (1971:82). At local level, what churches can and should do is to encourage the creation of small groups such self-help groups, book discussion groups, Bible study groups, and other groups. These kinds of small organisations generally offer the possibility of learning how to have honest communication, how to build trust and mutual concern, and how to generate respect for differences. Moreover, they enable the church to remain "the church of the poor" which, as Richard (1987: 173) has pointed out, is characterised by its involvement in popular struggles. These groups also offer an excellent bottom-up model

that can enable the actual religious beliefs and practices of poor and oppressed people to be heard, challenged, valued, and strengthened.

This approach can empower Pentecostal Christians to oppose the status quo by challenging the oppressive secular and religious structures. Since it encourages critical thinking and creativity, it can motivate Pentecostals to question oppressive political and economic ideologies and to overcome internalised misconceptions based on ethnicity, gender, cultural traditions, and religious dogmas and on other kinds of social evils, which are, as we have seen, the driving forces in spreading the HIV and AIDS epidemic. It can also persuade Pentecostals to question some of their beliefs systems about sexuality, the nature of God, sin and punishment, and other matters that are culturally and religiously seen as taboo. Finally, as it encourages the present Christian generation to be the author of their own history, it can allow them to overcome the colonial legacy of ethnic hatred. Moreover, it can challenge the missionary legacy of denominationalism, which has prevented the Burundian people to work in synergy as they struggle against the many social factors that make people vulnerable to the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has stressed the need for the churches to rethink their theology of mission and adopt a theology of mission rooted in God's mission. It was made clear that God's mission has always focused on the way people live in right relationship with God, with each other and with the rest of creation. As the church is called to be an active participant in God's mission, the implication for the Burundian Pentecostal churches is that they need to be prophetic by challenging oppressive political and socio-economic ideologies as well as cultural traditions and religious beliefs that do not promote right relationships. In the context of HIV and AIDS particularly, God's mission requires the Pentecostals in Burundi to also denounce both secular and religious unjust structures that make people vulnerable to HIV infection and to other many opportunistic diseases. In regard to this, the present chapter has argued that Pentecostal churches in Burundi need a new theology

of mission that sees the mission of the church as involving both individual and social justice and that encourages all believers to define their own history and to challenge the unhealthy status quo. To reach this goal, the chapter has therefore suggested that the Burundian Pentecostal churches should be active participants in the community's struggle by being catalyst and promoter of community-based organisations.

Chapter Seven

General Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Summary of the study

Chapter one introduced the study by providing a general overview of the study. It pointed out that HIV and AIDS is a crisis that compels the church to rethink its theology of mission. Based on the assumption that Burundian Pentecostal churches cannot respond efficiently to this crisis because they do not have an adequate theology of mission, the research question was formulated and objectives of the study were set. The theoretical framework and research methodology of the study were also described. The chapter concluded by giving an outline of the whole study.

Chapter two was an exploration of the different factors driving the HIV and AIDS epidemic. It demonstrated how the epidemic is closely linked to various forms of social evils that are often beyond personal control because they are rooted in unjust socio-economic, political, cultural, and religious structures. As these structures affect people's decision-making in terms of sexual and other behaviours that expose them to HIV infection, it was argued that interventions that focus on individual responsibility alone cannot stop the spread of the disease. It was therefore stressed that these structures challenge different stakeholders to opt for holistic responses that address at a wider level than individual responsibility, the various factors responsible for people's susceptibility to HIV infection and vulnerability to the impacts of AIDS.

The implication for faith-based organisations, it was pointed out, is that an effective response requires a clear and holistic vision of the mission of the Church in the world. In searching for this holistic theology of mission, we embarked on the analysis of the concept of *missio Dei*, the key principles of which were highlighted in the third chapter.

In the third chapter, the analysis of the *missio Dei* concept made it clear that the purpose of God's mission is to establish the structures of *shalom* characterised by holistic and right relationships between God and humans, between humans and between humanity and the rest of creation. During this analysis, two important points were highlighted: that the main focal point of God's mission is the poor, the disadvantaged and the weak; and that the ultimate goal of God's mission is to set things right by transforming unjust relationships into right ones that promote the fullness of life for every creature. It was also shown that in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, participating in God's mission implies fidelity to the demands of these holistic relationships. On basis of the holistic understanding of mission from a *missio Dei* perspective, it was argued that the human spiritual salvation can not be separated from the struggle for economic justice, the struggle for human dignity, the struggle for solidarity against alienation, and the struggle for hope against despair.

With a special focus on Burundian Pentecostal churches, the question was whether this vision is existent in the theology informing their ministry in general and their response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic in particular. This was the main question that the fourth and the fifth chapters have tried to answer.

In the attempt to respond to this question, we analysed hymns and songs. These hymns and songs constitute not only the main means through which Pentecostal theology is transmitted, but also the way through which Pentecostals reflect on their faith and acquire their theological vision to guide their involvement in ecclesiastical, developmental, and humanitarian activities. The analysis demonstrated that the Burundian Pentecostal churches' theology of mission follows the traditional model referred to as the "Noah's Ark model of mission" that was inherited from the missionaries. This model focuses on individual salvation which focuses on personal relationship with God. The mission of the church in this model is understood as saving people out of this world which is set for damnation. In other words, the churches' main preoccupation is to convert people to Christianity so that they can escape eternal damnation. As result, their theology has little interest in transforming structures in society, as the focus is on individual spiritual change

and on life in heaven. These chapters have shown that this theology is rooted in Pentecostal spiritual teaching that emphasises the need for personal salvation and the need to be separated from worldly things. This stress on individual spirituality and on future hope results in Burundian Pentecostals neglecting the role of political, socio-economic, and cultural structures in the spread of the HIV. Given that those structures are the driving factors of the epidemic, the Burundian theology of mission was found wanting. The fifth chapter concluded by arguing that for the Burundian Pentecostal churches to be relevant, they need a theology of mission that does not separate individual salvation from the humanisation of the structures of our society.

As outlined in chapter six, the implication for the Burundian Pentecostal churches is that they need to advocate for social justice by being on the side of the poor and marginalised in challenging oppressive political, socioeconomic ideologies as well as cultural traditions and religious beliefs that do not promote right relationships. To ensure that the agency of each person is valued, it was suggested that the churches need to adopt the principles and practices of community-based organisation in their theological reflection and praxis.

7.2 Recommendations for future research

As we have seen in the first chapter, Burundian Pentecostal churches have been neglected by researchers. This means that Burundian Pentecostals churches have seldom been given the opportunity to express their thoughts about their churches and their role in society, and in particular about their responses to the HIV and Aids epidemic. I would therefore recommend that a participatory approach should be used in any future research. By using this methodology, the research process itself can help to raise people's awareness, for example about the different factors behind the spread of the epidemic, which could in turn lead to communal action. These studies should aim at encouraging critical theological reflection on various forms and aspects of social injustice in order to help people realise that addressing these matters is an integral part of the mission of the church. This will serve as theological motivation for Pentecostals' involvement in society

in order to participate actively in eradicating the above-mentioned driving factors that are fuelling the spread of the disease, or in preventing their re-emergence. Given the centrality of the Bible in Pentecostal churches, it would be helpful to undertake future studies that are engaged in theological reflection on biblical themes. These could include themes which lead to critical reflection on the way Pentecostals interpret sickness in general, and HIV and AIDS in particular, such as sin and salvation, life and death, sickness and healing, Christian hope and the kingdom of God.

Further studies that reflect theologically on the Pentecostals' hymns and songs are also required, in order to motivate the composition of new songs and the compilation of new hymnals that are relevant to the current context.

Finally, further studies should focus on broad theological themes that engage the Pentecostal churches in key socio-economic and political issues that, directly or indirectly, make people vulnerable to HIV infection. These studies could address, among others, contemporary pressing issues of culture and the Bible in the context HIV and AIDS; the church, land disputes and women's inheritance; the church and ethnicity, including reconciliation; the church, democracy, and good governance; and the church and community development, including questions of food security and environment protection.

The theological framework suggested in this study has the potential to serve as a tool that inspires researchers to engage Pentecostal faith communities in critical theological, ethical, and ecclesiological reflections on the current socio-political and cultural context in Burundi. In doing so, it is my hope that Pentecostals will engage fully in the struggle for a just society in which political, economic, socio-cultural and religious structures are conducive for addressing the HIV and AIDS epidemic and the many other problems that hinder God's ultimate will of the establishment of *shalom* for all creation.

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