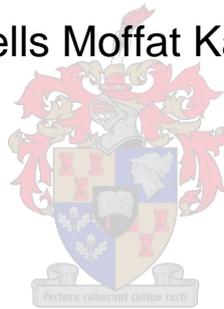


**TRADITIONAL MALAWIAN CHORAL MUSIC:
A LITURGICAL–CRITICAL STUDY WITHIN THE
CHURCH OF CENTRAL AFRICA PRESBYTERIAN (CCAP) –
NKHOMA SYNOD**

by

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Dissertation presented for the Degree of Doctor of Theology
at the University of Stellenbosch

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March 2008

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to analyse and evaluate the traditional Malawian Choral music as sung by young people in the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Nkhoma Synod with careful and critical consideration of the theological–liturgical outcomes. Such an analysis and evaluation reveals the neglected areas and the implications thereof for the Church, in aid of serving effectively her members. This will enrich and advance contextual theology as well as the liturgy in the Church.

Chapter 2 discusses the approach the writers of Mark and Philippians took to fit into the new situations in which they were. This chapter functions as the basis for the subsequent chapters, as it tries to show how reinterpretation could have taken place. In so doing, a living expression of a living reality, which was reinterpreted in a particular place, at a particular time, for a particular purpose, will be noted in a reconfigured state.

Chapter 3 will give an overview of theological–liturgical development in Malawi, and how the Gospel was brought in the light of the liturgy that evangelization assumed. The aftermath of traditional theology will then be assessed, including the impact of traditional theology on the Malawian people. Subsequently, the possibilities of coming up with a theology and a liturgy that is sensitive to the users are discussed.

Chapter 4 examines traditional Malawian Choral music before the arrival of Christianity. A discussion of the way missionaries used English/Scottish music without blending it with the traditional music in the liturgy then follows. The consequence of such type of liturgizing and the initiative in the development of both English/Scottish, as well as traditional Malawian music will be shown.

Chapter 5 provides an empirical study on what the young people in Malawi are singing in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod by means of some sample areas. This includes an examination of possible influences that are compelling the young people to compose and sing these songs. This examination comprises an analysis of songs, the themes that are developing, and the reason for such themes.

Chapter 6 contains suggestions for hymnological development in Malawi, based on the findings of the empirical study.

This thesis acknowledges the importance of reinterpretation because of different confrontations that an individual or group experiences. To achieve this, a process of reconfiguration that involves re-interpretation and blending has been suggested and discussed. This dissertation will discuss the dialectic of experience and interpretation as regards continuous experiences of humankind due to new challenges. Such an approach provides the framework for the investigation of current experiences of present readers of the New Testament in relation to the first Christians' experiences, which forced the reshaping of that symbolic world due to new religious convictions and experiences.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie proefskrif is om tradisionele Malawiese koormusiek, soos gesing deur jongmense binne die Nkhoma sinodale gebied van die Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), te analiseer en evalueer met noukeurige en kritiese inagneming van die teologies-liturgiese uitkomst. Sodanige analise en evaluering lê die verwaarloosde areas en die implikasies hiervan vir die Kerk bloot, met die oog daarop om haar lidmate in hierdie verband sinvol te bedien. Uiteindelik sal dit die beoefening van kontekstuele teologie, asook die liturgie van die Kerk verryk en bevorder.

Hoofstuk 2 bespreek die benadering wat die outeurs van Markus en Fillipense gevolg het om in te pas by die nuwe kontekste waarbinne hulle hulself bevind het. Hierdie hoofstuk funksioneer as grondliggend vir die daaropvolgende hoofstukke, aangesien dit probeer aandui hoe her-interpretasie moontlik kon plaasgevind het. In die proses word 'n reële artikulasie van 'n werklikheid wat in 'n spesifieke konteks en tyd ge-herinterpreteer is met die oog op 'n spesifieke doelwit, in 'n gerekonfigureerde staat aangedui.

Hoofstuk 3 gee 'n oorsig oor teologies-liturgiese ontwikkelinge in Malawi, en hoe die Evangelie verkondig is in die lig van die liturgie wat tydens die proses van evangelisasie in gebruik geneem is. Die gevolge van tradisionele teologie word geassesseer, met inbegrip van die impak wat hierdie teologie op Malawiërs gehad het. In aansluiting hierby word die moontlikhede van die skepping van 'n teologie en liturgie wat kontekstueel sensitief is, bespreek.

Hoofstuk 4 doen 'n ondersoek na tradisionele Malawiese koraalmusiek voor die koms van die Christendom. Dit word opgevolg met 'n bespreking van die wyse waarop sendelinge Engelse/Skotse musiek liturgies gebruik het, sonder integrasie met die tradisionele musiek van Malawi. Die gevolge van sodanige wyse van liturgie-beoefening, asook die inisiatief met die ontwikkeling van beide Engelse/Skotse en tradisionele Malawiese musiek word aangetoon.

Hoofstuk 5 doen 'n empiriese studie van wat die jongmense van Malawi binne die area van die Nkhoma Sinode besig is om te sing, aan die hand van 'n aantal steekproewe. Dit sluit 'n

ondersoek in na bepaalde invloede wat meebring dat die jongmense hierdie liedere komponeer en sing. Hier word aandag gegee aan die analise van 'n aantal liedere, die temas wat daarin aan die ontwikkel is, asook die redes vir laasgenoemde.

Hoofstuk 6 bevat suggesties ten opsigte van himnologiese ontwikkeling in Malawi, gebaseer op die bevindinge van die empiriese studie.

Hierdie proefskrif gee erkenning aan die sleutelbelang van her-interpretasie in die lig van uiteenlopende konfrontasies wat 'n individu of groep mag ervaar. Met die oog hierop word 'n proses van rekonfigurasie (wat her-interpretasie en integrasie insluit) gesuggereer en bespreek. Hierdie proefskrif gee onder andere aandag aan die dialektiek van ervaring en interpretasie, as voortdurende opgawe van 'n mensdom wat gekonfronteer word met nuwe uitdagings. Sodanige benadering voorsien 'n raamwerk vir die ondersoek na die ervarings van huidige lesers van die Nuwe Testament (soos bv. die Malawiërs), in relasie tot dié van die eerste Christene, wie se simboliese wêreld hervorm is deur nuwe religieuse oortuigings en belewenisse.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

The CCAP Nkhoma Synod represents a membership of over one million people in the central region of Malawi¹ (see Appendix B for the map of Malawi). More than half of these parishioners are young people who mostly² sing traditional Malawian choral music, either in choirs or elsewhere. In the Nkhoma Synod of the CCAP, traditional Malawian choral music has existed for quite some time parallel to the existing official hymnbook translated from the English. This translated hymnal contains mostly foreign melodies – inter alia, the fruits of colonization – but no indigenous Malawian tunes and rhythms. *In this sense, the CCAP has not provided a liturgy that examines both the people's faith and indigenous culture.* As a result, in the Church, tension exists between this culture and foreign factors to which it has been exposed. Many new popular choral songs (borrowed from the Malawian tradition) are relatively new in the Church, as they are not available in writing and are not an official part of the liturgy. *The Church has not properly acknowledged and/or reinterpreted theologically or liturgically the dynamics of the traditional Malawian choral music.* The popular socio-cultural Malawian perspective has been grossly neglected. Only the official hymnal songs are sung during Church services. Consequently, traditional choral music has existed mainly through the young people's initiative in choirs, the latter, ironically, being the dominant group in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod.

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1. In this research, I am not focussing on all ethnic groups found in Malawi. Rather, my focus will be on the Chewa people and do hope that what is happening in the Chewa context is, in many ways, analogous to what is happening in these other ethnic groups.
 2. At this stage, the researcher must make some general observations that will be tested, substantiated and refined as the research progresses. The general character of these observations does not invalidate the legitimacy of the problem stated.

Consequently, some young people may take certain measures to avoid the status quo when their needs are not considered. They may create their own formula of doing things, taking care not to be ex-communicated by the Church. Or, they may withdraw completely from the Church and join other denominations that satisfy their needs. On the other hand, young people may bring about change if the Church incorporates their needs in the liturgy and allows them to find liturgical sense in the Church. Of course, such a change may bring about tension in those who are opposed to any change in the liturgy. These “worship wars” (Long 2001: 2-9) may lead to a schism in the Church. On the other hand, the avoidance of the problem may lead to the situation remaining static and, ultimately, also cause a schism. Or, this may simply result in the young people’s energy and vision being stifled whilst in the system – a sad state of affairs!

Such a situation calls for an urgent theological, and especially liturgical, analysis of the situation at grass-roots level. Many questions concerning developments in the traditional Malawian choral music sung by young people in choirs and other Gospel bands arise, and should be addressed *from a responsible theological–liturgical focus*. These questions can be grouped around four key words, namely *context, ecclesiology, spirituality and reconfiguration*.

Context

What are the young people singing? What kind of songs do they sing? How indigenous in content are the songs? In what contexts do they sing these songs? What external influences are they suffering from that have compelled them to sing these songs? What roles do the social systems and social structures play in their music? From the analysis of the songs that the youth sing, what unfamiliar themes have developed or are developing? What distortions have taken place as a result of the Church’s negligence of indigenous songs in the liturgy? In what way do these themes explain the context of the Malawian Church? What familiar topics do the traditional choral songs address? What are the impending dominant theological topics - for instance: liberation, salvation by grace, apocalypse, God images - and how are they related to

the Malawian context? Etcetera.

Ecclesiology

If, as Begbie (2002:272) states, music has possibilities for theology, to what theological situation has the negligence led the Church? What could the ecclesiological effect be if the contemporary songs were incorporated in the official hymnbook? How can what has taken place help the Church to clarify, avoid or correct issues? Do the traditional songs reflect optimistic faith in the Church's future capacity for change?

The present state allows only young people to sing traditional Malawian choral music in choirs. How does this translate into: those who sing traditional Malawian choral music are marginalised together with the music that they sing? *Or does it mean a church is developing within a church?* Or, in what way is the Church only a training ground or launching pad for leadership in other newly founded Pentecostal or Charismatic Churches?

Spirituality

How do young people express their feelings through the songs that they compose and sing? More importantly: *what experiences of God do they derive, and what God-images do they articulate while they sing these traditional songs?* From the findings of the research, what suggestions could result in a liturgy that empowers the congregation and provides a means of expressing the thoughts and emotions of their worship, and adequately expresses their vision/image of God?

Reconfiguration

In dealing with this term of reconfiguration,³ the following questions will be tackled: how does the "atmosphere" of the traditional songs contrast to that of the official hymns? From a biblical and, more specifically, a New Testament perspective, what is

3. This term "reconfiguration" has been defined in detail in chapters 2 and 5 of this dissertation. It is a process that involves reinterpretation and blending, the outcome of which is a new context.

the ongoing dialogue between the Christian faith and the indigenous culture? How did experiences of the early Christians influence their contexts and cultures? How did their new experiences of Jesus' worldview impact upon their old contexts and cultures? How did they reconfigure these new events to suit their new experiences? What are the indigenous valid forms that the young people use in doing theology-through-music? How do the youth and other people interact with regard to traditional oral music and hymnal songs? What can be done to bring to the surface those aspects of Christian truth in the songs that the youth are singing? In what possible ways can the songs sung by the youth be part of the CCAP liturgy without denying the old hymns and without causing a schism in the Church?

In summary: this research addresses two main areas of concern, namely the *theology* that is developing through the young people's choral music, which must be addressed, and the *liturgy*, where the convergence of the Gospel (old) and the culture (new) ought to take place, also taking into account cultural aspects in the (old) Gospel.

This means that the questions concerning developments in the traditional Malawian choral music (context, spirituality and reconfiguration) are theological and will be addressed theologically, whereas the blending of the songs that young people sing (hymnological) is liturgical and will be addressed liturgically, when suggesting possible ways of converging the Gospel (old) and the culture (new) in what the youth are singing. This tandem of theology–liturgy cannot, in fact, be separated, and underlines the whole structure of this research.

1.2 THE HYPOTHESIS

In a certain sense, this type of study will generate a hypothesis, since it is exploratory and descriptive by nature. To start with, it seems difficult to have a clear-cut hypothesis. All the same, the following could be stated:

Music seems to be the nuclear factor in the so-called “worship wars” raging in many denominations – also in Malawi. The pressure to engage in newer forms of songs has

generated tension throughout history (Long 2001:2-9). The tension between the dominant and non-dominant, the old hymns and contemporary songs have remained a source of conflict. If one tries to change the style of music suddenly, a serious schism may result in the congregation. If music is chosen without carefully considering the congregation, the musical praise will probably fail (Johansson 1992:3). In contrast, “good music”⁴ is that which empowers the congregation and gives the congregation a means to express the thoughts and emotions of their worship (Long 2001:63).

My point of departure is that “good music” can be generated in the Malawian Church only if the context of her people, the structures of the Church and the (diversity of?) spiritualities meet one another in an attempt to truly celebrate the Gospel in a meaningful, liturgical manner. *The liturgy seems to be the obvious niche where this convergence should take place.* My hope is that one of the outcomes of this study will be, at least, some encouragement towards a new dialogue in a seemingly checkmate situation between context, church and spirituality.

Therefore, my hypothesis is that meaningful theological–liturgical enrichment in Malawi cannot take place without taking note of, and liturgically evaluating and reinterpreting traditional choral music. Continuous reinterpretation and reconfiguration is necessary in order for the Gospel to be relevant to the people receiving that Gospel. This will allow for a relevant, trustworthy, problem-solving approach to life. It is about making sense to each particular group of people that receives the Gospel of Jesus Christ in each particular context and culture. Traditional Malawian choral music sung by young people attempts to verbalize Malawian reflection on God from the grass-roots background and culture. It tries to advance and extend the wisdom of God and his relation to his people. In the South African context, Naudé (1995:19) rightly concludes that an analysis of recorded and transcribed hymns will serve as an illustration of “doing theology” within the parameters of this broad definition.

4. This definition of “good music” could also be broadened in terms of it being comparable with dynamic processes of interpretation in the Bible/New Testament.

Of course, of paramount importance is the question concerning the *criteria* that will be used to interpret the data compiled during the research (*cf* also 1.4). These criteria are closely linked to my hypothesis, and could be summarized as follows: the broad framework is both theological and liturgical, which implies the understanding and implementation of sound liturgical guidelines for meaningful liturgical renewal. In this regard, I intend to bring to fruition the biblical, and especially the dynamic New Testament process or style of *reconfiguration*. How we can make sense of a Messiah who was crucified on the cross. How we reconfigure our new situations so as to make sense, to solve new problems in new experiences. By this I mean: observing how the authors of New Testament documents reinterpret, redefine and rearrange historical events to make sense of, and “fit into” a new situation and, in so doing, create a new event, a new theology that is relevant to the corresponding time. *It is my hypothesis that a dynamic and relevant liturgy operates in exactly the same way, that it is always an ongoing reconfiguration of the Gospel in the light of new circumstances and new challenges.* Of interest to me are the underlying perspectives and principles that govern this process of reconfiguration, this ongoing dialogue between the (old) Gospel and (new) culture. By developing this theme of *liturgical reconfiguration*, I hope to combine New Testament and liturgical criteria for evaluating my empirical findings.

1.3 THE AIMS

Therefore, the aim of this project is to analyse the traditional Malawian choral music as sung by young people in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod, together with comparative studies of other Gospel groups and the implications for the Malawian Church. With careful and critical consideration of the (theological and other) themes that have arisen in choral music due to the Church’s negligence to use traditional Malawian music, this study hopes to enrich and advance⁵ Malawian liturgy by means of what the younger generation compose and sing.

5. The process of dissemination may include the publication of a monograph, but rather liturgical education through workshops, lectures and especially the endeavour to bring opposing groups together, as it is a presupposition of this research that young and old, traditional and renewal-minded need one another to progress towards a more holistic liturgical experience.

The objective is to show that by analysing the nature and context of traditional Malawian choral music sung by the youth in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod, one will identify the neglected areas and the implications thereof for the effective serving of the Church members. Furthermore, this project aims to enrich and advance contextual liturgy in the Church and, in so doing, enable the reduction of the current tensions in congregational worship by implementing meaningful “blended worship” (Long 2001:12).⁶ A worship that Long rightly calls a “seeker-oriented” style of worship that has greater appeal to people inside as well as outside the church, particularly to young people (2001:7).

1.4 THE METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN (CONCEPTUALIZATION)

1.4.1 The basic practical theological framework

In brief, this study’s basic practical theological framework consists of the following two elements: analysis of traditional Malawian choral songs as sung by the Malawian youth and indicative descriptions.

Here, Dingemans (1996:92-93) provides a summary of the ideas that practical theologians agree on, consisting of four phases: an interdisciplinary description of the practice or analysis of the situation; an explanation of the situation; the normative phase; then the phase of making suggestions and recommendations.

a) An interdisciplinary description of the practice, or analysis of the situation

Chapters 3 and 5 of this dissertation deal with this phase. Sigurd Bergmann (2003:69) describes the same phase as that which sociology of knowledge paraphrases as function with the notion “Social construction of reality,” and it analyses how circumstances in society affect the subject’s handling of information, knowing and knowledge. This consists of simply identifying the

6. Long (2001:12) describes “blended worship” as follows: “Blended worship – a style that mixes tradition and contemporary, old and new, substance and relevance. ‘Blended worship’ moves back and forth between these two styles.” In the Malawian case, “Blended worship” combines the English translated hymnbook with the traditional Malawian contemporary choral music in a relevant form of worship.

praxis or situation and describing its distinctive and constituent features (Seung-Jim 2002:7). This method will be more “empirical,” issuing in a “thick description” of the research. This stage is the analysis of practice itself (Dingemans 1996:92).

b) An explanation (explanatory phase) of the situation

Chapters 3 and 5 of this thesis discuss this phase, which seeks an explanation of the situation where strict verification of empirical findings takes place. It involves working with a thick description that covers a broad narrative that covers reality at large from a hermeneutical perspective and includes analysing and explaining the social practice from the perspective of politics, economy, cultural practices and beliefs. As Bergmann (2003:89) rightly states, human experience is placed at the centre, where interpretation of life occurs, closely connected to the symbolic conceptualization of an ethnic group’s world-view and religion.

c) The normative phase

Chapters 2 and 4 of this thesis deal with the normative phase. After the analysis of the situation, the normative phase is where examination of the praxis itself takes place to find people’s normative ideas. This phase uses the insight that each kind of knowledge is socially determined and that different groups develop different interpretations of reality and patterns of rationality (Bergmann 2003:91). So, historical methods and research of the community are used or, in the personal history of believers, people in the congregation are even interviewed.

d) Making suggestions and recommendations

Chapter 6 of this dissertation deals with this stage, since all practical theological work aims at making suggestions and recommendations in order to improve and transform the existing practice (Dingemans 1996:92), Chapter 6 contains suggestions and recommendations that are pertinent to the proposed vision and direction of improving and transforming the existing situation.

1.4.2 A literature study

A literature study will be done in order to identify the liturgical and New Testament perspectives necessary to construct the theological framework within which the study is anticipated to take place. This will provide ways of examining life in sets of assumptions about the nature of reality (Babbie 2004:43) from what others have written on the topic. I shall also delve into literature on the Malawian context and culture.

1.4.3 Empirical research

The research will be narrowed down to traditional Malawian choral music in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod, as sung by the young people. The research design will make use of a qualitative approach, although in some cases a quantitative approach will also be applied for statistical purposes. Here, figures will be used to explain factors such as quantity, distance, age and statistics.

A prolonged period of time will be spent in the field with young people in order to: examine and observe their patterns of behaviour, customs, way of life, etc.; hear what they say about their liturgical experiences in the Malawian Church; try to determine the meaning that young people attach to daily life through the songs that they compose and sing; and to find collective efforts to address and solve their social problems ("Participatory Action Research"). As Reason and Bradbury (2001:81) state: in participatory research, people who share problems in common decide what problems to tackle, and directly get involved in research and social change activities. The reason for this emphasis on popular participation is that participatory research is also a social practice that helps marginalized people to attain a degree of emancipation as autonomous and responsible members of society (2001:81). So, participatory research must lead to action research in solving whatever problem might be identified. In a general sense, participatory research entails a researcher's active engagement in a group's everyday activities (Wepener 2006:9). The difference lies in the fact that, with participant research, the researcher also takes part in activities, while this is not the

case with non-participatory research (2006:9). And, the more structured a technique, the less likely the researcher is to find facts, the existence of which he/she had not previously considered at the outset of the study (Naudé 1995:46).

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is an approach to social research in which those being studied receive control over the purpose and procedures of the research. This intends to counter the implicit view that researchers are superior to those whom they study (Babbie 2004:296). From a theological perspective, Hendriks (2004:217) says that the incarnational approach must be anointed with the attitude of a servant, with love and humility, with the ability to be one with the people, to hear them and help them to discern God's will in their contextual situation. Here, the researcher's function is to serve as a resource for those being studied – typically disadvantaged groups – as an opportunity for them to act effectively in their own interest (Babbie 2004:296). The researcher observes that, in such a way, people continue with their daily routine and the researcher is also often able to withdraw in order to intellectualise and write down the research (Wepener 2006:9). In the process, people being researched see themselves as researchers and automatically regain power over knowledge that helps in finding a solution to a specific problem. This helps the researcher to form a holistic cultural portrait of the young people and be able to describe and interpret their perceptions, habits and thoughts, as well as the social structures that bind them together. As Jan Vansina (1985:36,55) indicates, maximum information about the recording situation, the performers and researchers should be gathered in order to impart integrity to any empirical research. Of course, the core of this process of observation is the collection of the traditional choral songs (*cf* further 1.5: Methodological considerations).

As regards the empirical component, the following should also be noted: as indicated, a qualitative approach will be followed in the research; an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry, but not a specific set of questions to be asked with particular words and in a particular

order (Babbie 2004:300). This will be done, although keeping in mind that the questions to be asked must be fully internalized to allow the interview to proceed smoothly and naturally (2004:300). In this case, it will be a kind of a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction in the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent (2004:300). And, in order to obtain valid information from people, there must be trust between the researcher and the researched, which can only be attained through human closeness, not separation (Reason & Bradbury 2001:83). This is in addition to the recording of songs, which will be the main source of gathered data.

Whilst in the field, knowledgeable informants, for example choir leaders who can direct me to people with much information about traditional Malawian choral music, will be searched for and interviewed. Religious leaders will be approached for permission to do research of this kind in congregations where they are serving. Interviews will also be conducted with people who have left the CCAP Nkhoma Synod and joined other churches, in order to determine whether their leaving the CCAP is in any way connected to what is sung in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod.

1.4.4 The area of research

A sample of congregations were chosen in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod: Malingunde, Kaning'a and Mchizanjala in Lilongwe district, Liziri in Kasungu district, Mpatsa in Salima district with an additional area of the Chiwe area, also in Lilongwe district.

In Kasungu, Liziri CCAP was chosen because it is a very remote (rural) congregation, 48 kilometres north-east of Kasungu Boma. This congregation is far removed from any town, trading centre, or clinic. Two rivers surround it: Chitete to the west and Liziri to the east, which makes travel extremely difficult during the rainy season as there are no bridges over these two rivers. Farming is the people's only occupation. Beside the church, there is a primary school and three very small grocery shops containing very few items, which mostly include a few bars of Maluwa soap (the cheapest in Malawi)

that can be used for both laundry and ablutions, a few matches and perhaps some packets of salt. In addition, there are a few family houses (average 2 to 3 houses, mostly thatched with grass), a garden, and then just bush.

The people in this area do not live in a village type of setting (all in one place). Rather, they all live near their own gardens. Most of the people came from different parts of the central region in search of farming land. As a result, this area is not so highly populated compared to the size of the congregation's total border area. Another reason for choosing this area in Kasungu is that I have worked at Mtunthama CCAP as a church minister for three years and eight months, and as a visiting minister at Liziri CCAP for a year. At the time when I decided to embark on this research, I already had a good rapport with these people. Therefore, it was possible to focus on local and particular issues with the purpose of addressing the reality and problems that the faith community, as well as society, were facing (Hendriks 2004:33). Mvera and Kongwe CCAP were chosen specifically so as to investigate the developments in music from the missionary times in general to the present day.

1.4.5 Stumbling blocks

In the project, I anticipated problems as the research would try to cover places in the Lilongwe and Kasungu districts, which are far apart, with additional concentration on Mvera and Kongwe CCAP in the Dowa district, Chiwe CCAP in the Lilongwe district and Mpatsa CCAP in the Salima district. To reach all these places would necessitate some logistical planning. Travel in some areas would be very difficult due to poor roads. In other areas, travel would be problematic due to the lack of possible means of transport to those places and also financial constraints. Identification of the true composers of specific songs might be another problem, as many choirs sing almost identical songs in various places. In some areas, not receiving access to work with choirs might hamper the research. In such circumstances, I would have to take informed samples.

Since the research would depend much on the outcome of the recorded songs (the themes and topics that would be abstracted), the research plan had to remain tentative and open to change depending on the direction in which the themes and topics led.

1.4.6 Before going to the field

I had to start by asking permission from the CCAP General Secretary to visit some of the congregations of the Nkhoma Synod so as to record the traditional Malawian choral music sung by young people. This would also allow me to meet choirs in the congregations. I had to notify ministers in charge of each congregation of the intended trip to record traditional Malawian choral songs; and give the ministers the dates of my visit to their congregations so that they could inform the choirs involved in the recording. Some structured interviews had to be conducted with composers, choir leaders and those conversant with traditional Malawian choral music. The composition of choirs, number of members, age and sex of each member had to be duly noted.

Whilst in the field, the congregational ministers hosting the choirs would be the first people to meet at the congregations. These Church leaders would be shown the letter of permission from the General Secretary to record traditional Malawian choral music from choirs. The recording would include as many songs as possible to attain a clear picture of what young people say through their songs.

The following items would be needed for the field work: a tape recorder for recording the songs; blank cassettes; batteries for the tape recorder; a prepared questionnaire or structured interview, which would try to include all the possible questions that I believe would ultimately help to provide the required information from informants (constructed in dialogue with the Department of Sociology); note pads for recording relevant information; a travelling bag; and a computer to process the information.

After the recordings, I would need time to conduct interviews with composers, choir leaders and those conversant with traditional Malawian choral music. Here, the mode of interviews used would be structured as well as informal. In the structured approach,

the informant could narrate all that is required on the issue and I would ask only for some clarification on certain areas. In the informal approach, prompting the informants through certain probing questions might be needed. At the end of each interview, the informant's bio data would be taken, including: name of the informant, village, traditional authority, district, date of interview, etc.

1.5 METHODOLOGY: SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

“As social life evolves, as new populations arrive and shift, as communities grow and decline, our sense of belonging, of value, of vital interests shifts, as well. New visions of God's reign, new ways of worshipping, new congregational efforts at education or amelioration emerge alongside other social arrangements. At the same time, old institutions fade away and as some are dying, others are being born” (Ammerman 1997:2-3). This is the scenario of the Church in Malawi's state of affairs. After 1994, the year a multi-party system of government was introduced, very many institutions experienced changes. Malawi is in the midst of a fast-changing world with the most difficult of communities and multiple problems, so difficult to adapt to.

Some changes affect only small segments of life, while others seem to turn everything upside down (Ammerman 1997:3). The latter seems true for Malawi. After 1994, communities, churches, villages, trading centres, towns, and cities experienced dramatic changes, which forced each group and individual to struggle to regain a sense of their future. The changes affected all areas of life: economic, socio-political, security, morality, dress-code, way of church governance, education systems, health systems, agricultural systems, community transformations, privatization of parastatal organizations, migration of new populations, and the freedom to create religious institutions, just to mention a few. These changes had their own influence on people's way of life, including the songs the youth sing.

Every Sunday, so many youth choirs characterize the CCAP Nkhoma Synod congregations during services at the stations, as well as prayer houses. These choirs fill

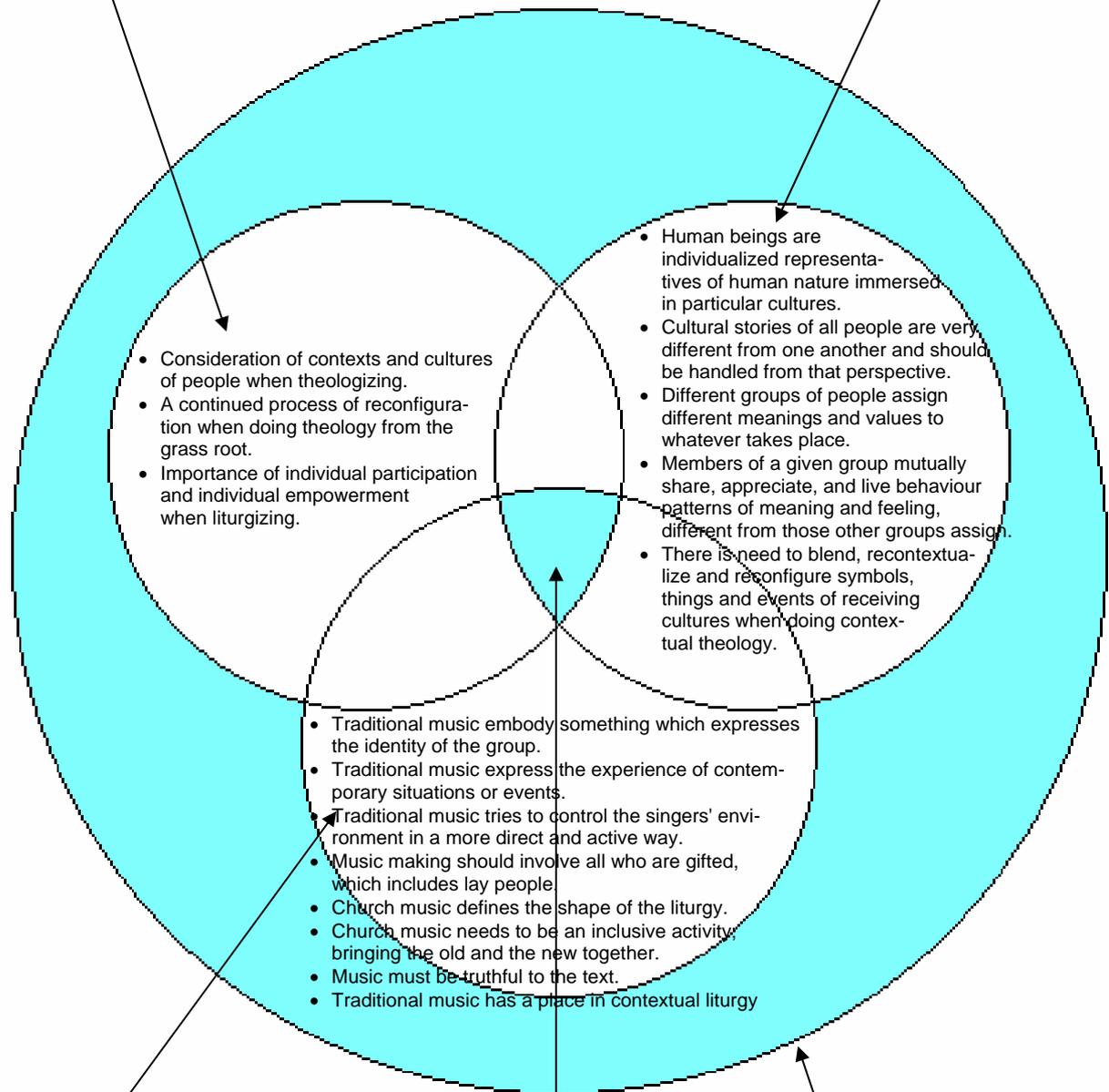
churches to present their songs to the Lord. Naudé (1995:32) rightly states that orality, as a hermeneutical category, has been totally absent from systematic theological work, and that even specific work done in the field of the African Independent Churches (hymnal and/or sermon analyses) lack overt sensitivity for the specific oral quality of the material. Malawi is not exempt from this. A country that has a high illiteracy rate requires an approach to unwritten theology for millions of people to be incorporated into a broader, ecumenical framework. This explains why most of the material to be used would be of the oral tradition obtained from oral interviews in sample areas and from recordings of traditional songs, sung by the youth. This also takes into account that illiterate, small-scale communities have scant means of expressing doctrinal dimensions (Smart 1989:21).

However, this research hopes to illustrate that the doctrinal element in a semi-literate, small-scale community is overly present in the narrative and social dimensions, and that it is precisely the outsider theologian's task to play a role in the construction of what one may call a "local theology" (Naudé 1995:2).

A diagram will explain the methodology. It uses four circles, three of which are intertwined, creating a common circle at the centre. These circles represent chapters 2, 3 and 4 of this paper. In each chapter, the theological and hymnological findings will be carried forward and used in chapter 5 where theology of the songs recorded will be analysed. The fourth circle, which encircles the other three circles, therefore represents chapter 5. In this process, I hope to reveal the importance of doing theology from the grassroots level (especially a theology based on an oral tradition), as well as the importance of taking into consideration "the user" in every liturgy.

Chapter 2: Theological qualities

Chapter 3: Cultural anthropological qualities



Chapter 4: Hymnological qualities

Chapter 5: Synthesis of chapter 2, 3 and 4 – Malawian church music and empirical research

Chapter 6: Singing towards the future

- **Chapter 2: Theological qualities**

Chapter 2 discusses and analyses broadly how the writers of the New Testament identified themselves with the symbolic world of first-century Judaism and Hellenism and how they reconfigured such historical events to create new interpretations, which led to new experiences and new events. Furthermore, how the perspective of the New Testament revolved around the Hebrew Scriptures. The writers of Mark and Philippians are cited to show the approach they took to appropriate traditional material to new situations. Subsequently, a “family-orientated approach” for the Church is suggested.

- **Chapter 3: Cultural anthropological qualities**

Chapter 3 discusses the way missionaries interpreted theology in the light of the cultures of the people whom they evangelized. The consequences of such an approach to theologizing are examined, based on the liturgy used. The possibilities of doing contextual theology in the light of the liturgy then follow.

- **Chapter 4: Hymnological qualities**

Chapter 4 examines traditional Malawian Choral Music, the developments that have taken place, and the possibility of developing both English/Scottish, as well as traditional Malawian music. Then, some Malawian musicians are cited to illustrate how both types of music are important in worship. A discussion then follows on the place of traditional music in contextual liturgy, theological–liturgical evaluation of music and the problems that may be encountered if new songs are included in a liturgy.

- **Chapter 5: Malawian Church music and empirical research**

Chapter 5 works on an empirical study of what the youth sing, themes that develop in the songs, and theological consequences of the analysed themes. Then, the possibilities of blending some of the songs with the existing hymnbook are described.

- **Chapter 6: Singing towards the future**

Chapter 6 makes some suggestions for hymnological development in Malawi. The suggestions are based on the findings in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Since this field research is related to Participatory Action Research (PAR), it is my great desire, after the findings, to return to people in the field for action, using the suggested points in chapter 6, with the aim of improving music in the Church.

There are four appendices: Appendix A presents Traditional Malawian Songs sung by the youths in Malawi; Appendix B is a map of Malawi; Appendix C is an Interview Schedule, Questionnaire; and Appendix D is a letter of permission from the General Secretary of the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod, to record traditional Malawian songs sung by the youth.

CHAPTER TWO

DYNAMIC THEOLOGICAL–LITURGICAL PROCESSES OF RECONFIGURATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses and analyses broadly how Jesus' early followers reinterpreted their different contexts, which resulted in the emergence of the individual writings that constitute the New Testament today. It examines processes of experience and interpretation – how followers of Jesus within Jewish communities wrote what we know today as New Testament writings. During this discussion, I remain fully aware that in no way can one describe the symbolic worlds of first-century Judaism and Hellenism. It is impossible to produce a “thick description” of the Jewish world-view, because of the plurality that prevailed in Judaism.

This chapter will not concentrate on an analysis of all early Christian literature as the New Testament writings represent only a small portion of what was written and circulated at that time. To this effect, in his book, *Earliest Christianity*, Martin Hengel (1986:5) noted that the writing and reproduction of books were a much more wearisome business than they are today. In antiquity, a whole range of complex problems was associated with the nature of books and the transmission of ancient texts.

Therefore, this chapter cites two phases represented in the New Testament. The coming of Jesus to the pluralistic first-century Mediterranean symbolic world is the first phase. Here, Mark 3:31-35 is cited to represent phase one of the positive disruption caused by Jesus' coming. This is a narrative genre, to show how new contexts influenced the meaning of words. The word “family” is cited as the centre of life, and how Jesus reconfigures its meaning to change the hearers' mind is explained.

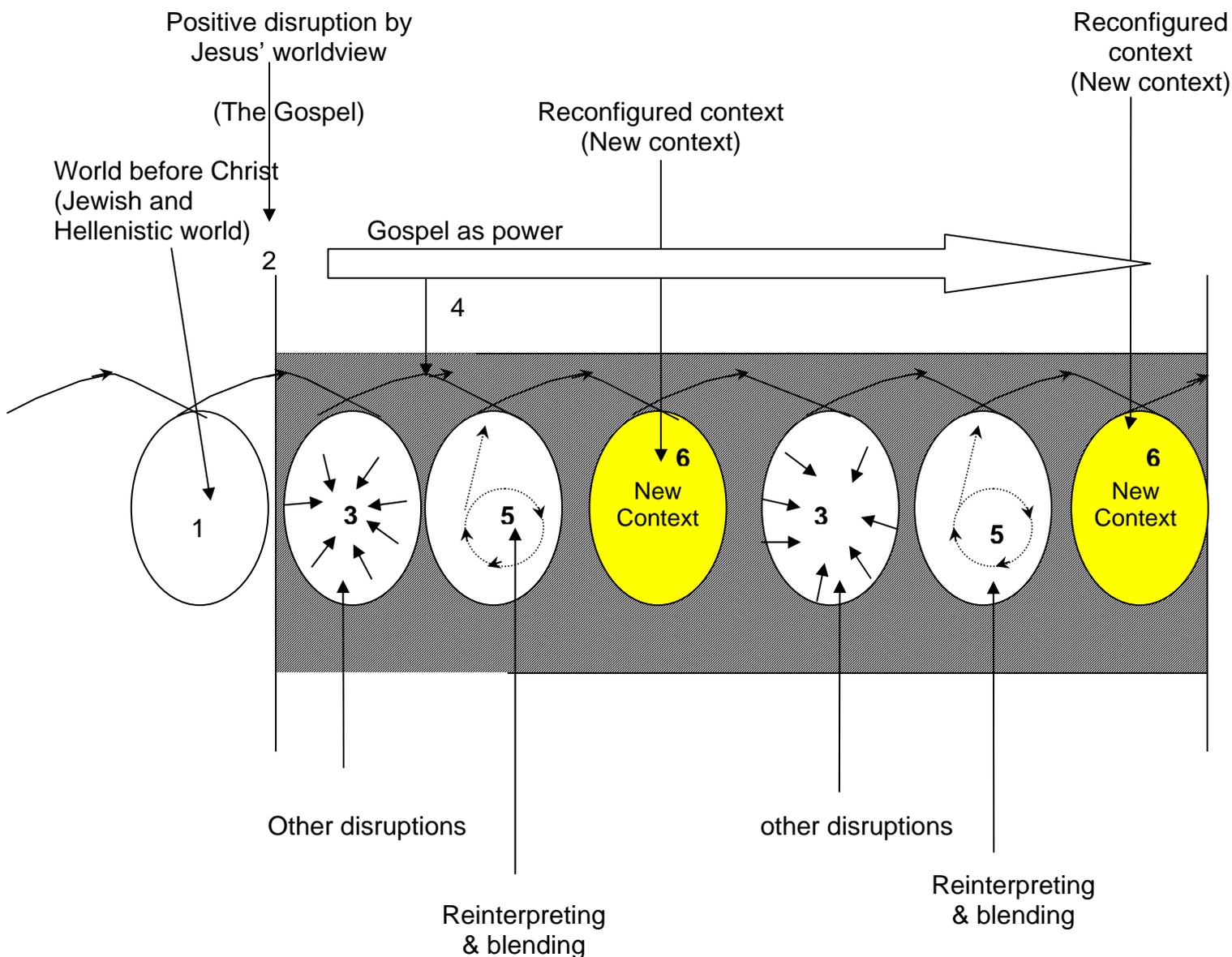
Jesus' followers moved out of Jerusalem to all parts of the world, causing disruption with the Good News of Jesus Christ. This represents the second phase. Here, I work through the epistle genre of Philippians 2:5-11, an old Christological hymn. In this letter, his followers continue what Jesus had started.

Whilst doing this, I remain sensitive to the possibility that, here, the two writings do not necessarily follow in chronological order. By starting with the book of Mark does not necessarily mean that Mark was written first. Philippians could have been written before Mark. However, here, the citations have been made following the order of events. Chronologically, it is true that the arrival of Jesus happened before his followers moved out of Jerusalem to all parts of the world.

A similar movement within this thesis at large is observed and discussed. However, this chapter discusses the coming of Jesus into an existing first-century Mediterranean culture, whereas, the following two chapters (3 & 4) discuss the Chewa culture and the missionaries' arrival with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Chapters 5 and 6 describe the new context after reconfiguration, when the first paradigm could no longer hold, but now was reinterpreted, hoping for a coherent present life and a better future. To achieve this, an examination of the songs that the youth in Malawi are singing took place.

Below is a diagram to explain these movements by Jesus and his followers into the pluralistic first-century Mediterranean world:

PROCESS OF RECONFIGURATION



The above diagram illustrates the process of reconfiguration that takes place as a result of other disruptions. To facilitate understanding, the diagram has been numbered as follows:

- 1 = the first-century Mediterranean world with its Hellenistic and Jewish cultures before the positive disruption by Jesus' worldview.
- 2 = the beginning of Jesus' worldview - the advent of the Messiah.

- 3 = various disruptions in life that force people to reinterpret, blend and reconfigure.
- 4 = the Gospel as power to recreate (the shaded area).
- 5 = reinterpreting and blending of experiences or events to create a new context.
- 6 = a new context produced as a result of reinterpretation and blending of experiences or events.

Such a process is an ongoing interaction between experience and interpretation. This is why numbers 3, 5 and 6 are repeated in the diagram to reflect ongoing interaction. The big arrow above the diagram represents the uniqueness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ's power of disruption, as opposed to other disruptions in life. All the other circles are connected to illustrate movement from one experience to another in life.

Whilst there are questions concerning the origin and appearance of the New Testament writings, this chapter does not intend to answer the question as to how these writings could have been written, or whether, or not, God's involvement was by direct divine inspiration. Furthermore, there is no attempt to answer questions surrounding Jesus' life and resurrection. Instead, this chapter tries to describe a very real human process that involved and aided the divine inspiration in the reinterpretation of the Old Testament (the Torah, prophets and writings) and its appropriation also to Jesus. By this, the two cited genres enable one to see the real human process of reconfiguration, thereby introducing an alternative world to the first-century world. This means that, although not much emphasis is placed on a historical discussion of early Christianity, some historical perspectives may indeed be implicated.

Furthermore, this chapter shows that the symbolic worldview of first-century Judaism, within the Hellenistic culture, was no longer acceptable for those who believed in Jesus. Their whole existence now depended on the new event of his resurrection.

To explain this process, the North-American New Testament scholar, Vernon K. Robbins, was chosen as the basic source of reference. His approach provided useful analytical and exegetical tools, through which I could understand my own context,

including the process of reinterpretation and reconfiguration. However, I am aware of the fact that, in many ways, Robbins's approach reflects a context outside Africa and, furthermore, is based upon the works of Kenneth Burke, Clifford Geertz, Roger Fowler and MAK Halliday, and had been substantially influenced by Wayne A Meeks (Robbins 1994:4). To put the discussion into perspective, this is why there is also reference to some scholars from Africa, such as Elna Mouton, Musa W Dube, Elochukwa E Uzuku, Kofi Agawu, Chris Kamlongera, John Lukwata, and others. Words, such as "reinterpretation," "blending" and "reconfiguration," will form the core of the whole dissertation. By grappling with these words, I intend to achieve my goal of substantiating the viewpoint that the first-century worldview (Judaic and Hellenistic) failed to contain the Jesus followers' experiences and interpretations, which guided them towards redefining historical events to adapt to a new situation.

In attempting such a discussion, social questions will naturally emerge, such as who were the writers of these writings; when were they written, why were they written, and to whom were they written? In what contexts were they written? Why is there such a variety in outlook, form and symbol? Why is there such a diversity of movement? Why do these writings still make sense to people today? These questions will not be answered fully, although some elements of their answers will be noted.

After examining how the writers reinterpreted various individual contexts by means of different literary, historical and rhetorical types, this chapter shows, in general, why the New Testament appears so analogous to the Hebrew Scriptures and why the writers seem to have retained the Hebrew Scriptures' characters and symbols. The process reflects how a rhetorical process was implemented as a powerful tool of persuasion.

However, from another angle, this chapter attempts to reveal how the New Testament writings differ from the Hebrew Scriptures. As Naudé (1995:5) indicates, experience is always interpreted and there are various degrees of interpretation. By taking very seriously the dialectic of similarity and difference between the New Testament and the Hebrew Scriptures, one attains an understanding of how reinterpretation took place.

This accounts for the first disciples' attitude toward religious cult, an attitude that they inherited from their Master himself. Christ's seemingly contradictory attitude toward the Jewish cult sometimes is perplexing (Chupungco 1982:7). On the one hand, He revealed himself as a faithful Jew who frequented the temple, preached in the synagogue (Mt. 9:35), celebrated the Passover, and took part in ritual sacrifices or, at least, sanctioned them. On the other hand, He denounced the cult's legalism, declared himself Lord of the Sabbath (Mk. 2:28), announced the destruction of the temple (Mt. 24:2) and the advent of the new form of worship in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:23).

In this discussion, questions will be tackled, such as: how did the early Christians' new social settings influence their old contexts and cultures? What impact did these new experiences have on the old symbols and myths? What was the early Christians' approach to adapt to their new situations?

Since most of the New Testament writings pay attention to the first-century world's social realities, the writings deal with groups of first-century social people. Vansina (1985:22) rightly states that every community in the world has some representation of the origin of the world, the creation of humankind, and the appearance of their own particular society and community.

In an attempt to describe such a united system of social reality, a family-orientated approach as a forerunner to a church (ecclesiology) is suggested, where being united, and sharing a common vocation and destiny is experienced. Examples are provided to explain how the New Testament writers reconfigured events and how the books of the New Testament reveal regular liturgies that the first Christian church used.

The primary liturgical actions of such social religious groups are also considered. They include questions such as: what personal relationships appear in the New Testament writings that seem to express a liturgy? What evidence can be found that self-giving encounters between God and a worshipping community took place in a liturgy?

This means that this dissertation deals with liturgical issues - how the liturgy can continually be reinterpreted without separating the discussion from theological issues. So, throughout this thesis they are treated together, because the two work alongside each other in worship. The combination of theological–liturgical criteria for evaluating empirical findings according to the New Testament, is the approach to be followed.

This seems to be a fairly new approach – that of combining a theological and anthropological approach with a liturgical approach. As Bergmann (2003: 89) rightly says, an anthropological approach is where human experience is placed at the centre. The interpretation of life occurs in close connection with the symbolic conceptualization of an ethnic group’s worldview and religion. Here, the primary concern is the preservation of an understanding that Christianity is about a human being and her/his fulfilment (Bevans 1992:47). This does not mean that the Gospel cannot challenge a culture, but such a challenge is always viewed with the suspicion that the challenge is not from God, but from a tendency of one culture (Western, Mediterranean) to impose its values on another (Bevans 1992:47).

Bearing in mind that the study of liturgy is wide, with many angles, the whole research concentrates on those issues relevant to doing theology from grass-roots level. This will highlight the possibilities of having a liturgy that is dynamic and relevant to the corresponding time.

A discussion follows how such reinterpretation can take place – with reference to issues that compel people to reinterpret.

2.2 EXPERIENCE AND REINTERPRETATION

In the introduction to this chapter of the dissertation, the two phases represented in the New Testament were brought into a broader picture by citing Mark’s narrative genre and Philipians’s epistle genre, which reflect Jesus’ positive disruptions in the first phase, and that of his followers to all parts of the world, in the second phase.

I now wish to discuss the causes of reinterpretation. What causes reinterpretation? How does reinterpretation take place? Who reinterprets? What is the importance of reinterpretation? What is the result of reinterpretation?

A whole class of original messages makes no mention of news, but expresses experience (Vansina 1985:7). This experience is what may be called “the past” – what has already happened or what has already taken place. This includes personal reminiscences, etiological commentaries on existing objects (iconatropy), linguistic expressions (folk etymology), traditions (explanatory glosses), and literary expressions of experience, as they occur in oral art (1985:7-8). It is a recollection of the past that also enlivens and empowers the present (Johnson 1999:114).

Interpretation occurs when there is disruption of the existing group’s social system. When a social group’s daily way of life is interrupted and its social arrangements and constructions disturbed, the group members’ lives are threatened and the way they organize themselves is also disturbed. Their perception of themselves and their existence is also threatened. Vernon K. Robbins (1994:xi) explains this idea by stating that boundaries give definition to our data by creating the contexts for their interpretations. At times, people shift their boundaries for the purpose of including new data, when they create new arenas of exploration for the purpose of examining new relationships, and when they entertain new points of view for the purpose of establishing new conversations. With these changes, new meanings begin to nourish old data, new possibilities begin to refurbish old situations, and new hopes begin to heal old frustrations. Because the resurrection faith of the early Jesus followers was rooted in paradox, it created an urgent need for interpretation (Mouton 2006:58). All these sources are reflexive: the product of thought about existing situations, as well as about existing messages (Vansina 1985:8). As new experiences place old ones in a different perspective, the human story is constantly revised (Johnson 1999:115). They represent a stage in the elaboration of historical consciousness and are among the main wellsprings of what we often call “culture” (Vansina 1985:5). Former obscurity

becomes clear and former insignificance now looms large as our present situation shapes our past (Johnson 1999:115).

In such situations, the group tries to explain what is not easily understood, to understand life's experience in a particular situation so that life can continue to be lived together as a group. This is what Jesus' early followers were compelled to do. They were forced to interpret new experiences and changing circumstances in the light of a pluralistic first-century Mediterranean symbolic world, constituted by diverse, complex combinations, *inter alia* of Roman rule, Greco-Roman (especially Hellenistic) culture, and Judaism's religious symbols (the Torah, prophets and 'writings') (Mouton 2006:58).

This means that a complex interplay of designation and appropriation takes place in the process of assigning meaning by means of invented traditions and an appeal to the past (Post, Rouwhorst & Van Tongeren 2001:650). Such an explanation touches every level of the group's life, their symbols, the rituals that mark their existence, their use of language and meaning of words. Such contexts produce a sequence of figures, concepts and actions through which people deliberate together, evaluate one another, and establish common values, attitudes and goals through commendation and censure (Robbins 1994:5). Their individuality is not at issue, but how they are patterned, how their existence can be explained in terms of society and its component groups and institutions, and how they simultaneously manifest the existence of society and its component groups and institutions (Holy & Stuchlik 1983:2).

Tolerance for divergent interpretations of symbolic worlds varies, because they are based on each group's memory or identity that derives from a past. Without such a past, there is no present and little hope for the future. Individuals, as well as a community, reconfigure their identity based on what has taken place in their past. At times, the interpretation of a myth may be so fundamentally new that it constitutes a different myth. In such circumstances, the foundations of the symbolic world shift. The main aim for a group to explain a new situation is the maintenance of stability of life for survival. Reinterpretation means that a group reworks its social system because of an internal

or external interruption that has affected its system of living as a group.

The early Christians experienced such situations of interruption of existing social systems. The nature of the Christian experience demanded interpretation, as well as proclamation, that centred on the person of Jesus. The one who appeared to the disciples as the risen Lord, identified Himself as the same Jesus who had died by crucifixion (Johnson 1999:114). The man they had known as the one who preached, healed, and suffered, they now knew as the powerful bestower of the Spirit (1999:114). That a man who died such a sinner's scandalous death was now alive and perceived to be the source of forgiveness of sins of others, was a conviction and an experience that created multiple problems for human understanding – particularly for those whose lives were thus transformed (Mouton 2006:58). Jesus' followers saw in Him the one who stood at "the beginning" and "the end" of their lives, who gave them opportunities to live and work for the coming of his kingdom.

For such a community gathered by the Spirit to continue its existence, it was necessary for them to come to grips with Jesus' story. The continuing community's identity and the living memory of Jesus were blended and shaped into a new story for their existence. Continuous experiences of God's life-giving Spirit in the present – in diverse and changing social contexts – would constantly challenge them to (re)interpret inherited traditions, and to (re)imagine the future (Mouton 2006:58). The living collective *memory* of Jesus' life, death and exaltation would thus be inextricably intertwined with the formation of their identity and ethos as a community (2006:58).

The process of reinterpretation by a group is continuous, because confrontation with other happenings is not a single event. The effect on the group's identity (whether internal or external) is profound and each response to every confrontation has some impact on the group's former symbols. Members' experience of changing a group's myths and symbols may result in the abandonment or reshaping of their existing symbolic world, as the myths and symbols had failed to explain their human experience. Precisely in this context of instability and change, a need for continuity, for

tradition that links the present with the past, arises and, in so doing, affords a foothold for identity and direction (Post, Rouwhorst & Van Tongeren 2001:649). In such a case, the myths and old symbols are interpreted in an entirely new way, because of the event that forced the process of reinterpretation in the first place (Johnson 1999:17).

This dialectic of experience and interpretation, as regards humanity's continuous experiences in the face of new challenges, deserves some attention. Such an approach places the New Testament within the symbolic world of first-century Judaisms and enables present-day receivers to interpret the symbols of Judaism in light of their experience of the crucified and resurrected Messiah (Johnson 1999:17). The memory of Jesus made the early Christians remember the past, not only as a past event, but also as the present here and now. This contributed towards the continuing experience of Christian communities. Such an approach provides the framework for investigating present readers' current experiences in relation to the first Christians' experiences, which forced the reshaping of that symbolic world due to new religious convictions and experiences.

The following discussion attempts to show the processes that seek the involved patterns, as the group's story unfolds.

2.2.1 A process of reconfiguration

Section 2.2 has discussed the ways in which processes of reinterpretation take place. What forces reinterpretation to take place? Such a discussion is deeply connected to a process of reconfiguration that involves blending and reinterpreting. So, a discussion of the two words, "blending" and "reinterpretation," as a process of reconfiguration, now follows.

Reinterpretation involves blending things together to create a new product of reconfiguration. From the above discussion, it appears that reinterpretation occurs when an existing social system is disrupted - when an external or internal interruption confronts an existing social structure. There is a suggestion of continuity, but this continuity does

not truly exist (Post, Rouwhorst & Van Tongeren 2001:648), because of a confrontation or disruption that arises. This confrontation or disruption results in the borrowing of new elements that are integrated in the existing social structure - the outcome of which will be completely new. In other words, it is a “break in continuity” characterised by invented traditions. This process of a new way or existence of life arising involves the mixing of existing elements with new experiences, which, in turn, may involve various elements being brought together to achieve a certain standard. Quality results from new experiences that have something to offer to existing social structures. It is a process of mixing two or more things as, for example, one would mix an egg with milk. The outcome will be completely different, but very satisfactory.

This is analogous to what the New Testament writers did by bringing the new experiences of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection to the symbolic world of first-century Judaisms within the Hellenistic culture. Such a process is what can be called “blending.” The New Testament writers blended the existing world experience with the new experience of the Jesus story and ultimately created a new context that reconstructed the existing context. For flexible adjustment to new settings, they, in fact, did not invent a new language, but rather *reinterpreted*, *rearranged* and *reappropriated* available symbols and traditions, particularly from within the Torah’s symbolic world (Johnson 1999:35-38).

Therefore, the following section attempts to define the term *reconfiguration*.

In this context, reconfiguration may be defined as the reworking of an existing social group’s understanding of biblical texts, by virtue of placement attribution or rewording of meaning to adapt to a changing world. This involves an attempt to relate language primarily to one particular aspect of human experience, namely that of social structure (Halliday & Hasan 1986:4). This might occur without stating explicitly that the words have been written somewhere for the existing social group members to follow. This is reconstruction or restructuring, the outcome of which will be completely new, yet well understood by the social group members and concerns the modes through which

people make sense in aid of their worlds (Holy & Stuchlik 1983:24).

Such a process involves revising the tense and syntax of statements that, ultimately, may be significant duplicate parts of words in a new form of sentence or clause or the reworking of language – meaning an expanded manner that amplifies either the description of the situation or the saying, or both (Robbins 1996a:48). As reflected in the New Testament writings, such a situation befell Jesus' first followers. As Mouton concludes, the “relevance” of these writings would, however, not (necessarily) have been the same in early times and places. It is particularly in their diversity of settings, genre and style (representing a huge chorus of voices, speaking from various times, places and circumstances, witnessing to the dynamic relationship between a living, speaking, acting God and living, speaking, acting human beings in the *everyday concrete reality* of their lives) that these texts could address different contexts through the ages (Mouton 2006:60). This means: the ways in which people understand their world and communicate about it with one another (Holy & Stuchlik 1983:24).

All these processes of blending and reinterpretation result in reconfiguration. Vernon Robbins (1996a:50) defines “reconfiguration” as: “Recounting a situation in such a manner as to make the later event new in relation to a previous event. Because the new event is analogous to a previous event, the new event replaces or outshines the previous event, making the previous event a foreshadowing of the more recent event.”

Here, there is reworking of specific events and traditions due to new experiences that influence existing social systems in search of a new meaning of existence following a new event. It is precisely in this context of instability and change that a need arises for continuity, for tradition that links the present with the past and, in so doing, affords a foothold for identity and direction (Post, Rouwhorst & Van Tongeren 2001:649). In his book, *Cultural interpretation*, Blount (1995:11) quotes Halliday, a sociologist, by saying that language occurs in a “context of situation.” There is always a need to emphasise the situation as the context in which texts unfolds, and in which they are to be interpreted (Halliday & Hasan). Language does not occur in isolation, but comes to life only

when functioning in some particular environment. The general principle is that all language must be understood in its situational context (Halliday & Hasan 1986:8). This implies that the meaning of words varies from context to context. The context critically influences the meaning (Blount 1995:12).

Halliday (as referred to by Blount 1995:12) also recognizes a second kind of linguistic context - that of culture - a broader concept that specifies the global social environment of the speech event. The social context defines the limits of the options available. The word "social" indicates that one is concerned particularly with the relationships between language and social structure, considering the social structure as one aspect of the social system (Halliday & Hasan 1986:4). To this extent, the behavioural alternatives are context-specific. This means, all messages are expressed in the language of a culture and conceived, as well as understood, in the substantive cognitive terms of a culture (Vansina 1985:124).

From this discussion it is clear that, although the New Testament writers were all witnesses to Jesus Christ, their approaches differed because of the contexts in which each of them found themselves. The social conditions around them guided them as to how to redefine historical events to adapt to a new situation. The construction of tradition leads to differentiation where a set of distinctions, as rooted in the past, differentiates this group from other groups (Post, Rouwhorst & Van Tongeren 2001:649). In an analogous way, the approach to these texts must vary in respect of time and social setting with an ongoing dialogue between the (old) Gospel and the (new) culture.

In this respect, I agree with Robbins (1996a:1), who speaks about "socio-rhetorical criticism." He says that "the prefix socio" refers to the rich resources of modern anthropology and sociology, which ask the interpreter to open the text to the past, present and future world we see, hear and imagine as 21st century people (for him, 20th century people) (1992:xxiii). The ability to reconstruct the impact of social setting upon communication opens a door, which had hitherto remained a locked barrier

between literary and social theories (Amador 1999:134), whereas “rhetorical” refers to the way language in a text is a means of communication among people. Rhetoric provides the means whereby texts are turned into the data necessary to describe the developing social issues of early Christianity (1999:136).

This notion of what is “with the text” goes beyond what is said and written; it includes other non-verbal elements – the total environment in which a text unfolds (Halliday & Hasan 1986:5). Here, knowledge is transmitted in social contexts, through relationships, such as those between parents and children, teachers and pupils, or classmates, which are defined in the culture’s value systems and ideology (1986:5). For this reason, the whole collection of New Testament writings – in all its diversity and even divergence, complexity and coherence – has to be kept alive if the church is to affirm its identity in every time and place (Mouton 2006:60).

In this instance, rhetorical analysis and interpretation pay special attention to the subjects and topics that a text uses to present thought, speech, stories and arguments (Robbins 1996a:1). It asks the interpreter to hear the text as a story, to listen to all the voices in the story, including that of the narrator, and to observe all that is happening (1992:xxiii). So, socio-rhetorical criticism integrates the ways people use language with how they live in the world (1996a:1). It serves to build a bridge between the text and the situation in which texts actually occur (Halliday & Hasan 1986:5). Because, in a society’s myths, we find the linguistic expression of its deepest self-understanding (how it came about, why it differs from others and what its future will be) (Johnson 1999:14), its language can well be understood within that shared life.

Socio-rhetorical reading is an approach to literature that examines the values, convictions and beliefs, both in the texts people read, and in the world in which they live. It deals with human reality, religious beliefs and practices through multiple approaches to written discourse in texts. Interpreters should not turn a blind eye to these factors, but should explore them in order to be faithful to the text. There is a need to study the New Testament authors by studying their works within the wider context of ancient Jewish

scriptural interpretation (Hauser & Watson 2003:296).

New Testament texts are not simply historical, theological or linguistic treaties. Rather, their written discourse is a highly interactive and complex environment. In other words, interpreting a biblical text is an act of entering a world where body and mind interact to create and evoke highly complex patterns and configurations of meaning in historical, social, cultural and ideological contexts of religious belief (Robbins 1996a:14).

This is exactly what New Testament writers did to the symbolic world of first-century Judaisms and Hellenism, as they reconfigured historical events for the life and growth of the church. They included patterns of thought and action characteristics both of Jewish and Greco-Roman social, religious, or literary traditions and conventions in the books of the New Testament. Here, I have discussed a process of reconfiguration that involves blending and reinterpretation of new events to bridge the two differing events.

That the Old and New Testament writers revolved around an analogous symbolic worldview in one way or another will now be shown in brief.

2.3 NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS ANALOGOUS TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SYMBOLIC WORLDVIEW

In 2.2.1, three words, namely “reinterpretation,” “blending” and “reconfiguration,” were discussed. How confrontation with an existing social structure interrupts social systems, which force reinterpretation and blending to take place in order to come up with a relevant meaning for life to continue, was shown. This included the way social conditions around people guide them as regards redefining historical events to adapt to a new situation. The questions still remain: why are the Old and New Testaments analogous to each other? How did this happen? What forced the authors of New Testament writings to arrive at such an approach? Why were some issues discontinued and others continued when writing the New Testament books?

The discussion below tries to show the way Old and New Testament writings revolved around an analogous symbolic worldview.

A closer look at the New Testament writings reveals the diversity of these books. The diversity of the contexts in which they were written is probably the very reason why they were written. Each writer responded to a particular social condition that shaped the way in which a text was written and, in turn, the way in which it was understood. Although, of a unique nature, it is remarkable how analogous these writings are to those of the Old Testament. Terminology in the New Testament that identify “the Scriptures” (Mt. 21:42; Lk. 4:21; Jn. 5:39; Ro. 1:2, etc.), particular divisions of the Bible, e.g. “the Law and the Prophets” (Mt. 5:17; Lk. 16:16; Jn. 1:45; Ro. 3:21), “the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms” (Lk. 24:44), or individual biblical works, apparently, varies slightly from contemporary Jewish usage. This is significant because the New Testament writers presume a relationship with Israel (including their contemporaries in various Jewish groups) very different from the relationship that developed in subsequent centuries (Hauser & Watson 2003:285). Many Old Testament elements, such as names of people, Moses, Abraham, Noah, Elijah, Jonah (just to mention a few), and symbols also appear in these writings. The heritage of the Gospels in the New Testament is mainly Jewish. The stories and sayings therein refer specifically to Jewish figures – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Elijah – and social categories – the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, Priests, Chief Priests, elders and the High Priest of the Jerusalem temple - all of whom who are Jewish. This seems to affirm that the New Testament writings have a strong background in the Hebrew Scriptures and, therefore, are in continuation with God’s intention in the Hebrew Scriptures.

However, from another perspective, the New Testament writings seem to contradict and even seem to be a discontinuity of the Old Testament. For example, the Torah condemns the putting a person to death on a tree (Deut. 21:22-23). Yet, the New Testament writings affirm Jesus’ death on a tree as being in accordance with the will of God, so that people’s sins may be forgiven (Ac. 5:30-32). Jesus’ crucifixion and being

resurrected from the dead outshines the first symbolic meaning of dying on a tree. Therefore, the first meaning is reshaped to suit the new event. Thus, New Testament writers drastically reconfigure the first meaning of dying on a tree.

The symbol of the cross is reinterpreted and, through the resurrection, becomes an honourable deed for the benefit of those who adhere to Jesus by faith (Mouton 1997:126). The question may be: why this contradiction, if indeed there is a contradiction? Why this discontinuity of the Hebrew Scriptures? However, understanding why precisely these words are used may involve reconstructing traditions of interpretation that New Testament writers presupposed (Hauser & Watson 2003:287).

The whole complex system of actions and words constitute the self-understanding of a group, including their physical and linguistic products (Johnson 1999:14). Stories and myths that accompany them shape such understandings of belonging. The wider pluralistic world may not know such myths, and when tensions arise with alternative symbolic worlds, the group may respond in various ways to maintain their identity. When myths and symbols fail to interpret the group's experience, these myths and symbols are reshaped or abandoned to suit new situations.

In this case, the New Testament writers identified themselves with the symbolic world of first-century Judaism, for example, the calling of Abraham (Ge. 12:1-2); the promise of inheriting the land (Ge. 50:24; Ex. 3:16-17; Jos. 1:2-4); identification with David's Kingdom (2Sa. 7:11-16); as a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God's own people (Ex. 19:5-6, *cf* 1Pe. 2:9); and the idea of the promised Messiah, as a heavenly Son of Man who would initiate the reign of God on earth (Da. 7:13-14). So, the writers reinterpreted these historical events to suit their new situations. In doing so, the writers created a new event, a "new theology" that was relevant to the corresponding time.

Such a re-reading and reinterpretation of the Torah's texts, the prophets and writings enabled the Christians to place Jesus' experience within their symbolic world, and

those Jews who did not share their experience or conviction would never accept the reading of these texts (Johnson 1999:138). So, the New Testament writings were written as witnesses and interpretations also for other believers in coming generations. In the process, the new recipients continued to engage in their diverse literary interpretations of the symbolic world of first-century Judaisms and Hellenism, as they translated Jesus' story for the continuing life of the church.

The following section examines some historical, philosophical and religious developments in the pluralistic first-century Mediterranean world.

2.4 AN OVERVIEW OF SOME ASPECTS IN THE FIRST-CENTURY MEDITERRANEAN WORLD

Section 2.3 discusses an overview of the reason why New Testament writings have a strong background in the Hebrew Scriptures and therefore are a continuation of God's intention and the reason for the discontinuity of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Now, a discussion of some aspects of historical, philosophical and religious developments, before being reconfigured by Christianity, follows. It includes ideas of Hellenization, the Hellenistic religion, philosophy and religion and also Jewish religion.

The first-century Mediterranean world was diverse and combined three major elements: Roman rule, Hellenistic culture and the religious symbols of Judaism. Because of this, the first-century people had diverse experiences that led to interpreting, recontextualizing and the blending of events to suit the needs of their pluralistic world, yet from a particular worldview. The interaction between the Roman rule, the symbols of Hellenism and Judaism became the roots of Christianity. The "Greco-Roman world" is the term that historians use to describe the lands surrounding the Mediterranean from the time of Alexander the Great to the first three or four centuries of the Roman Empire (Ehrman 1997:19). Because of such diverse settings, all existing groups of that time needed a greater effort to make life possible, be it in legitimate religious symbols, or other activities.

A discussion of Hellenistic ideas will now be presented below.

2.4.1 Ideas of Hellenization

Politically, the Mediterranean world was under Roman rule from the time of Alexander the Great, 356 to 323 B.C.E., until the mid-second century of the Common Era. Rome imparted political stability to the ideas of Hellenization that had already been diffused by Alexander's conquests (Johnson 1999:23). A brilliant military strategist, he quickly and boldly – some would say, ruthlessly – overran Greece to the south and drove his armies along the coastal regions of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) to the East, into Palestine and then Egypt (Ehrman 1997:19). He finally marched into the heart of the Persian Empire, overthrowing the Persian monarch, Darius, extending his territories as far away as modern-day India (1997:19). The Roman version of empire provided both security and the frame of legal legitimation for the force it required (Johnson 1999:26). Through a complex system of governance, the Romans maintained a remarkably long-lasting peace. This rule extended to Africa and Asia, areas that were relatively safe. Through its governors, the senate ruled these areas. Populations that were refractory, or threatened by invasion, were under explicit military governance of prefects or procurators. There were military colonies and installations throughout the empire and manpower was used to quell local disturbances, although Rome did not depend entirely on violence to enhance its power. It extended the right of citizenship even more widely.

The conquest by Alexander, who crossed the Dardanelles to the Persian East in 334 B.C.E., brought cultural transfusion. Hellenistic culture had a widespread influence after Alexander the Great's exploits from 331 to 323 B.C.E., and even in Judea the anti-Hellenistic reaction under the Maccabean priest-kings could not reverse the inertia of the progressive, universalistic cultural movement that pervaded the Mediterranean world (Robbins 1992:2). Poets, philosophers and historians all arrived with the conquests. Wherever the soldiers went, they intermarried with the indigenous women. Conquered cities were turned into Greek city-states and they established new cities where convenient. Greek became the universal language. In the process, religious

syncretism was encouraged whereby local deities were merged with gods of the Greek Pantheon. In the process, rhetorical forms and the figure and concept of the sage intersected with established traditions to provide a common cultural base for Greek, Roman, Jewish and Christian communities (Robbins 1992:2). And, within this setting, small forms, such as the proverb, the apophthegm, and the Chreia provided a bridge between the oral and written culture (Robbins 1992:2). A great variety of larger literary forms – oration, diatribe, essay, symposium, epistle, and biography – represented the meeting ground for rhetorical forms and patterns of influence from the wise personages in the culture (Robbins 1992:2).

This brought into being the Hellenistic religion, of which an overview now follows.

2.4.2 Hellenistic religion

The Roman Empire arose in the context of the Hellenistic world and took full advantage of its unity, promoted the use of the Greek language, accepted aspects of Greek culture, and even took over features of the Greek religion to the point that the Greek and Roman gods were accepted to be the same, only with different names (Ehrman 1997:19). This complex unity, achieved culturally through Hellenization, and politically through Rome's conquests, is summed up by the term "Greco-Roman World" (Ehrman 1997:19).

Pagan religions never centred round sacred writings to guide the individual's belief and practices, and there was no such thing as a separation of church and state; on the contrary, since the gods made the state great, the state responded by encouraging and sponsoring the worship of the gods (Ehrman 1997:22).

A general discussion follows on how philosophy and religion were viewed in the Greco-Roman world.

2.4.3 Philosophy and religion

Philosophy and religion were not regarded as irreconcilable entities. According to Ehrman (1997:30), Greco-Roman philosophy was concerned with teaching, how a person could attain well-being in this world, a world that is, at best, full of meaningless and boredom and, at worst, wracked with pain and misery. This was a religious response as a mood and variety of a perception of the world. Gnosticism viewed the world in a profoundly pessimistic way. It taught that human life is alienated from its true source and is imprisoned in materialism, and worldly existence is captive to cosmic forces inimical to God and humans. Therefore, the religious response is to seek escape through esoteric knowledge and ritual escape from the power of materialism and the force of fate at work in the world's social and political structures. Such an escape cannot be complete until death, when the soul sheds its garment of flesh in its ascent to a heavenly spiritual home (Johnson 1999:30).

Throughout the empire, philosophical ideas were widely known due largely to their typical mode of communication. On street corners and thoroughfares of major urban areas philosophers of all types were found proclaiming their views and urging others to adopt them in their own lives (Ehrman 1997:30).

Related to this were philosophical ideas that developed in philosophical schools proclaiming philosophy to be a way of life. To others, it even became a religious calling. This was evaded in those schools that brought their students into a full community life (e.g. the Seythians) with the idea of sharing of goods, Plato's doctrine of the state, or the "primal community" of the Pythagoreans in southern Italy (Hengel 1986:157). The Pythagoreans literally applied the ancient proverb, "Friends hold all things in common" and pooled their material goods. The Epicureans did not practice organized sharing of possessions, but were generous in their expressions of friendship (Johnson 1999:34). The *sentences of Sextus*, which also spring from popular Pythagorean philosophical sources, imparted ethological foundation to this idea, which both Christians and Pagans could accept (Hengel 1986:157). These schools offered a sense of identity

and a real experience of community, which went deeper than any offered by the clubs and associations that were so common in the Roman Empire (Johnson 1999:35). Because of this identity, those in authority sometimes misunderstood them, to the extent of them sometimes being exiled.

However, for all the philosophies, the attainment of well-being involved an exercise of reason, a mental effort of reconfiguring one's understanding of the world and the nature of reality (Ehrman 1997:31). Here, only an exercise of the mind could provide a person with the necessary tools to live full-time internally, and protect one from hardships that strike externally (1997:31).

This examination of Greco-Roman literature, featuring religio-ethical teachers, suggests that fundamental socio-cultural influences in Mediterranean culture intermingled with Jewish influences to provide for the overall integration of Jesus' world-view (for Robbins, traditions) in the New Testament (Robbins 1992:5).

Here, I wish to elaborate on some of the Jewish religious beliefs.

2.4.4 Jewish religion

The framework, or symbolic world, shared by all Jews was found in the Torah (Israel's sacred writings), which, apart from the five books of Moses, included the prophets and the other writings. The Jews looked to these books for everything they might need, be it knowledge or wisdom. Dependence on the Torah identified all Jews in all nations and generations as a unique people with its own common story. This was so, because they heard the narratives together, and considered themselves a people in direct continuity with those called by the Lord from Egypt, redeemed from slavery (Ex. 12:29-13; 22), gifted by the covenant in the wilderness (Ex. 19:5-6), and more: a people awaiting the complete fulfilment of the promise God made at the dawn of history to the patriarch, Abraham, that in them, all nations of the earth will be blessed (Gen. 12:3). The greatest promise that they received was that of the land that the Jews would possess (Gen. 50:4). In their later years, many hoped for the complete restoration of the Davidic

line by an anointed ruler, the coming of the Messiah, who would liberate them from “this age” (foreign oppression).

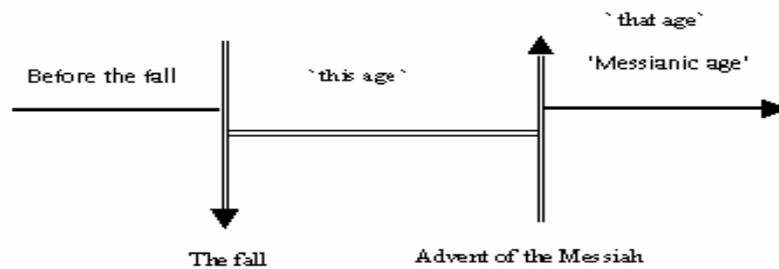
With this in mind, the Jews had to obey Him who called them. They were God’s own possession among all peoples, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Such a relation demanded the people to be faithful to God, and to be holy because He is holy (Lev. 11:44, 19:2). They were not to have any other gods before Him or make any graven images before Him (Ex. 20:1-6). This was in contrast to the other nations who did not follow monotheism, as they believed in many gods. Being Jewish required worshipping one God and admitting to no others. Instead, the Jews had a responsibility to love their God with all their hearts, souls and minds (Deut. 6:5).

The Jewish faithfulness to the Torah bound them together as one people who, together, believed in one God. They were one family who shared the same symbols of the Torah. They were a united people, whose members depended on one another within their diverse ideological groups. The Torah united all the Jewish groups despite their differences in interpretation-. The well-known “sects” of first-century Judaisms represented political, as well as theological, differences (Johnson 1999:45).

The Jewish faithfulness was also observed in their understanding of eschatology, which I will now discuss.

2.4.5 Jewish understanding of eschatology

In the Jewish understanding of eschatology, a growing expectation arose, implanted by the Old Testament prophets’ proclamation that the Day of the Lord was approaching. The advent of the Messiah would inaugurate it, and God’s judgement would radically bring “this age” to an end. After acknowledging the useful insights attained from Oscar Cullman and George E. Ladd, in D. Roy Briggs’s (1985:324) own diagram in *Guide to the New Testament* Volume 5, he attempts to reproduce a view of the course of history that dominated the faith of Old Testament prophets and first-century rabbis. In this perspective, the whole of world history is divided into three aeons or dispensations.



Briggs argues that, prior to the Fall, there was a perfectly good age or dispensation (Ge. 1:31). With the Fall, came “this age” or dispensation when humanity became lost in sin and misery. In due course, while under alien pagan rule, for the Jews “this age” also signified the era of oppression of God’s people. But, they believed that the Day of the Lord was approaching, which the advent of the Messiah would inaugurate (some circles spoke of Messiahs), then God’s judgement would bring “this age” to a radical end. In its place, the eschatological “that age” – also called “the last days,” “the age to come,” or the “Messianic age” – would dawn and have no end. Here, the Old Testament, as well as the Jewish eschatological expectation, looks forward to a single day – the Day of the Lord – when God will act to establish his reign on earth. When this takes place, there will be one particular day when God will come in glory to save his people and, in judgement, condemn the ungodly for all eternity (Briggs 1985:324-325).

With this story, Jews in every nation and generation identified (or identify) themselves with such a symbolic worldview and myth. The Jews were a chosen race, set apart by the one and all-powerful God. As such, they were a people (Abraham’s family) to whom were promised the inheritance of land (Ge. 50:24; Ex. 3:16-17; Jos. 1:2-4). And, in that Promised Land, there would be no more oppression, but real peace that flows like water. By God’s judgement, the evil rule would have gone, and his reign on earth would have come forever and ever. They expected a victorious King of peace to come and rule over them (Zec. 9:9).

The following discussion cites two phases (mentioned in this chapter's Introduction). In the New Testament (Mk. 3:31-35), Jesus' own teaching represents the first phase. The second phase is that of Jesus' followers moving out of Jerusalem to all parts of the world (Php. 2:5-11).

2.5 JESUS' WORLDVIEW RECONFIGURED THE FIRST-CENTURY HELLENISTIC AND JEWISH WORLDS

Section 2.4 discusses an overview of some aspects of the first-century Mediterranean world before reconfiguration from a Christian perspective.

I now wish to cite Mark 3:31-35 to prove how new contexts influence the meaning of words. Here, I investigate specifically how the word "family" had been used in this text, after being reconfigured by Jesus. This includes the way Christian teaching influenced existing contexts and cultures and, at the same time, examines the way new experiences changed the lives of Jesus' followers, and how Jesus' worldview impacted upon old contexts and cultures. In doing this, I shall examine the way contexts influence language, how different contexts impart different meanings to words, and how early believers related to one another in new social settings.

Philippians 2:5-11 will also be cited to show how Jesus' followers continued to spread the Gospel that Jesus Himself had started. In this text, the writer dramatizes Jesus' death in a hymn, by giving it a new frame of reference.

To understand Jesus and the emerging Christianity, it is reasonable to think that Judaism was the most important religion of the Greco-Roman world (Ehrman 1997:32). Jesus Himself was Jewish, as well as his earliest followers. He was born to Jewish parents and raised in Jewish culture; He worshipped the Jewish God, learned the Jewish Scriptures, kept Jewish customs, became a Jewish teacher, and preached to Jewish crowds (1997:32). He was crucified for allegedly claiming to be a Jewish king. The question could be asked: what did it mean to be Jewish in the first century of the Roman Empire? How did the first believers experience Christianity?

In a search for a new meaning of existence, the first believers' experience of Christianity compelled them to rework the Christian event with their first-century worldview to fit into the new existing social system. Jesus' worldview caused them to perceive their lives in a new and radical way, which compelled them to reinterpret their new experience by means of available symbols. The first believers' new contexts brought new meanings to words and symbols used. As language does not occur isolated from the context that uses it, the new contexts influenced the meaning of words as they redefined historical events to fit into their new meaning of social and religious life.

The advent of Jesus brought a richer setting to the existing world. The final complete revelation of God in his Son, Jesus Christ, opened up a new clearer perspective concerning the course and the meaning of history. In Jesus' coming as a human being, his proclamation and wonderful works, his cross and resurrection, his ascension and outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a new age began to be fulfilled decisively for the future. In Jesus, it became clear that the Messiah had come, yet He is still to come: a coming that has already begun (Briggs 1985:325). In Jesus, God has sieged the world with His Kingdom.

Here, the key to Christianity's success lies not in its teaching, but in its experience of power. Its claim to have actualized the "good news of God" to humans distinguishes the movement. It led to a fundamental release from the cosmic forces that, in the perceptions of the age, dominated human existence; Christians were no longer subject to those "powers and principalities" (Johnson 1985:77,93). Nor did their old existence and belonging have much impact on their new way of life because of their new experience.

The following pericope, Mark 3:31-35, shows how the coming of Jesus brought a richer setting to the existing world.

2.5.1 The reconfiguration of "family" in Mark 3:31-35 in relation to 2.4.4 and 2.4.5

New Testament writers utilized the social conditions around them when redefining historical events to match their new meanings of social and religious life. In his book,

New boundaries of old territory, Vernon K Robbins (1994:135) shows that the interludes in Mark carry the reader through the complete cycle of relationships between a teacher and his student-disciples in Greco-Roman culture. The stages of discipleship that these interludes introduce reflect the intersection of Jewish traditions of prophet-teachers with Greco-Roman traditions and of itinerant preacher-teachers who gathered student disciples and systematically transmitted a system of thought and action to them until their death. Here, the writer of Mark creatively blends the two traditions with Jesus' teaching for those who follow Him. Thus, ultimately, the Gospel of Mark was written, which was somehow unique and, therefore, differed from the literature that was available to the author. Such a blending seems to be dominated by Greco-Roman cultural influences (as noted in 2.4.1-3) of teaching-learning as noted in the way Jesus spoke to those who sat around him in Mark 3:31-35.

Mark 3:31-35 has been selected to try to prove how such new contexts influenced the meaning of words. This is to show that the situation in which linguistic interaction takes place, gives the participants a great deal of information about the meanings that are being exchanged and the meanings that are likely to be exchanged (Halliday & Hasan 1986:10). Writing from a peasant perspective, and probably for Judeans and Gentiles in the regions of northern Palestine around Galilee or Syria, the writer of Mark's Gospel presents Jesus, in a teaching-learning process, who announces: "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk 1:15). In this text, Mark presents Jesus more as a teacher and identifies the meaning of repentance and believing in the narrative of the calling of the disciples to follow Him (Mk 1:16-20). To "follow him" is what Mark 3:31-35 implies: "Doing the will of God." Those who do God's will create a community that has responsibilities and new relationships among its members. This text recognizes a new meaning of "family" ties within the Christian communities. The word "family" functioned in a particular environment of "doing the will of God," because the context compelled them to do so. The writer redefines the idea of "family" to suit the new social system that has been created. A discussion of the nature of membership in Jesus' "family" now follows.

2.5.2 Parents, as source of the family

In the peasant society of Jesus' world, the family revolved around the father. The parents were the source of the family, not only in the biological sense, but because their interaction with their children created the structures of society (Stegemann & Malina 2002:72). Malina (1981:95) says, for kinship norms, there are lines between and among people, delineating between "us" and "them" in a regular yet often kaleidoscopic way. Kinship norms indicate, regulate and prescribe how closely related one must be in order to be one conjugal family, one extended family and one people. It deals with the selection of marriage partners as well as with the quality and duration of the marriage bond (husband and wife) and the extended family bond (relatives beyond the intermediate conjugal family).

The above understanding means that each person inherits a status from birth. Such a status is linked to existential issues of identity and belonging. In a family there are both personal and collective origins and destinies. The questions could be asked: what was the nature of first-century kinship? What was the family like, and how did one become a member of a family? The discussion below tries to answer these questions.

2.5.3 Kinship and marriage

Malina (1981:94) explains clearly the cultural cues guiding people to perceive and evaluate the persons, things and events that they experience. Kinship refers to patterns of such social norms that regulate human relationships, which are directly based upon experiences of birth and the birth cycle, from the womb, through developmental stages, to death. Basically, kinship norms fill biological interactions among human beings with meaning and value and symbolize human biological interactions and the ongoing results of such interactions. This is established among persons by their being born of certain parents or by the possibility of births resulting from the union of two (or more) human beings. Marriage refers to such a union of two (or more) human beings insofar as it relates to kinship; hence marriage is a subset of kinship

norms (1981:95).

So, those who marry live in a group consisting of parents and their family. A union between a man and a woman as husband and wife is legal - the state of being married.

I shall now discuss the role of the father in the new family.

2.5.4 The role of the father reinterpreted

The family was the centre of the first-century Mediterranean world and, in the family, the father was central. Beyond the family, lay the village, beyond that the administrative city, and further still the limits of the Roman Empire encompassing “the world.” This understanding of society served as an analogy for the concept “kingdom of God” as referred to by Stegemann and Malina (2002:73). The father’s role in the family was not only that of God’s representative, but also that of the guarantor of proper worship of and obedience to God. One had to belong to a family to enjoy God’s blessing and to receive identity, support, community, protection, status, wealth, and honour; it was the basic social unit and the source of societal life and recognition (Trainor 2001:19).

No mention of “my father” (in Mk 3:31-35) - a status so central in the first-century Mediterranean world - seems to deny Jesus’ biological connection to Joseph, as his physical father. In terms of identity and kinship and expected behaviour, the relation of Jesus to Joseph seems to have been reinterpreted by identifying Him with the believing community. In this text, Jesus’ relationship with Joseph has been left out completely in this new family. Jesus has a different Father, other than Joseph. And, since he called God his “Father,” the silence may imply that his total act of obedient submissiveness to God was that of God being “his heavenly Father.” Then, the statement, “whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother” (v. 35), seems to emphasize this point. In this case, “God” takes the place of a physical father. This may be so, because only the character of a “father” in a family is missing in this statement, therefore implying God as “his Father.”

Now a discussion of the nature of Mary's role with Jesus follows.

2.5.5 Sleeping arrangements – understanding of family relationships, blended

In a family, the mother assumes a very important role in rearing a child. A child's bed is at the centre of its world during infancy (Stegemann & Malina 2002:75). In contrast to the relationship of a child to a biological mother, the believers' new context as "children" in a family changes the role and meaning of words about a family. In the new family, the mother does not assume an important role in rearing one who believes in Jesus. Instead it is "doing God's will" that assumes a very important role in rearing "a child" (someone who believes in Jesus).

Although a child may have other models for primary identification, often those who share sleeping arrangements with him/her become the child's models for primary identification (Stegemann & Malina 2002:75). In his American context regarding sleeping arrangements, Aarde examined 64 societies and came up with a hypothesis that different situations have a profound effect on a child's primary identification. If the parents sleep together, they both bestow and withhold resources, so that the envied status would fall to either parent. On the other hand, in cases where the parents sleep apart, the mother attains vast importance. Here the question may be asked: does the father sleep with the child more than the mother? In many cases, this is not so. According to Stegemann and Malina, the juxtaposition of privilege is between the child and the mother and, because she sometimes withholds resources, she is the person envied.

Since, before coming together with Joseph (Mt. 1:18), Mary was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit, the child Jesus most probably enjoyed the mother's exclusive attention; she took full responsibility for him. But, in the presence of his mother Mary, the question, "who are my mother and brothers?" (Mk 3:33) seems to incur some problems and questions: how can a son ask that question about his own mother? What was the reaction of those who were sent? What was Mary's own reaction? Such an

answer seems to reinterpret the common perspective of first-century people, giving a new understanding of family relationships. The writer spiritualizes motherhood and brotherhood as those who do “the will of God” (v. 35).

From a human point of view, this has a very negative reaction on the part of all who heard Jesus speak these words. This seems to imply Jesus’ different perception of Mary as his mother. Jesus’ context brings new meaning to the word “mother.” Mary would only become his mother on condition that she joined the people who were doing “the will of God” (Mk. 3:34). Here, “doing the will of God” is not explained. Perhaps it is the denial of oneself, taking up one’s own cross and following Jesus (Mk. 8:34). This seems to be implicit. More appropriately, “doing the will of God” involves repentance and believing in the Gospel (Mk. 1:15). So, in Mark 3:31, “his mother” is rooted in a context different from “my mother” in verses 34 to 35.

In Mark 3:31, “his mother” is understood from a context of natural human inclination, whereas “my mother” in verse 35 is a derivative of a recontextualized spiritual context. In this case, those who brought the message through the crowd to Jesus (v. 31) obviously felt that an external family relationship, such as that of mother or brother, constituted a valid prior claim on Jesus (Cole 1989:143). But the writer shows that such a claim of family relationship is that of those who do “the will of God” (v. 35). The writer uses language of kinship and family relationships to describe the religious community (Robbins 1996a:128). This reasserts the distinction between Jesus’ natural kin and those who really belong to “his family,” between family members who presume membership of his family and the disciples (Trainor 2001:104). Ultimately, those who presume themselves to be insiders because of their kinship become outsiders. And those considered to be outsiders are physically closest to Jesus and constitute “his household.” The family “standing outside” (v. 31) and the crowd “sitting around him” (v. 34) highlights this. Only the crowd is able to speak to Jesus directly and the family must communicate via the crowd, and he praises those who sit around him as his genuine household.

A discussion of a blended context – what it has been reconfigured into - now follows.

2.5.6 A blended context – what it has been reconfigured into

Robbins (1996a:3,40-64) describes intertexture as that which concerns a text's configuration of phenomena that lies outside the text. Oral-scribal intertexture concerns the specific use of language in daily speech. Social Intertexture concerns phenomena like the clothes people wear, the structure of families and households, political arrangements, military activities and distribution of food, money, and service, whereas cultural Intertexture concerns modes of understanding and belief, such as the ideas people have about their importance, their opportunities, and their responsibilities in the world.

From such an understanding, as interpreters explore the intertexture of a text, they are continually examining phenomena outside and inside the text being interpreted. And in a context of comparison, the texts' particular configuration of phenomena in the world takes on a richer quality (Robbins 1996a:30).

In apocalypticism, there is the doctrine of "two ages," a sharp distinction between "this age" and "the age to come." "This age" is under the dominion of sin and death, allied with the powers of darkness, but nevertheless running its predetermined course to its eschatological end (Verhey 1984:12). Compare this with Mark 1:15: "the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel."

The writer of Mark explores phenomena outside his message, where the original receivers were persecuted, and encourages and exhorts that community to believe that the Christ whom he represents was Himself rejected, betrayed, denied, deserted, condemned, handed over, crucified and mocked, but also chosen and vindicated by God. This living Christ Himself exhorts the community to follow him (Verhey 1984:16). By being members of this new family, their old self is removed and they receive hope. This means that the old identity, belonging and experiences of all who believe in Him are radically transformed. Relationships and responsibilities are reconfigured. The

meanings of words are redefined to fit into a new social system, as noted in an understanding of “my mother,” “my brother,” and “my sister” (v. 35). Jesus blended the commonly known original meaning with a new understanding of “family.” The writer reconfigures the events to suit the members’ new relationship. The old idea of blood relationships of “family” is reinterpreted and recontextualized to convey a deeper and dearer meaning. Here, the text is a product of its environment and has a specific function in a specific context. The old physical and natural relationship is blended with the spiritual, and reconfigured into a new and more profound meaning that centres on “doing the will of God” (v. 35).

The new relationship is now spiritual and inward, not outward and “natural,” as Israel generally assumed in the time of Jesus. The new relationship is only in the light of the searching demands of the Gospel (Mk. 10:29), overriding all natural human relationships, however close they may be (Cole 1989:144). Such a relationship claims an experience of God’s favour that is available, not only to one nation, but to all humans. The way of being admitted into such a “family” is not physical birth resulting from the union of two human beings. Rather, it is based on the common experience and participation in doing “the will of God” (Mk. 3:35). It is a relationship with a historical and profound concept of the family of believers in Christ with a common obedience and destiny, that centres on doing “the will of God,” regardless of origin. It is a family that has entered the kingdom of God through repentance and belief in the Gospel of Jesus (Mk. 1:14-15). Ultimately, such a family will look for ground from which its members can express their experiences of God.

Now, I shall discuss how that which is theological, can be expressed liturgically.

2.6 SOCIAL-RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES EXPRESSED IN LITURGY

Thus far, this chapter has shown how specific events impact on existing environments in a search for a new meaning of existence. New contexts influence meanings of words and bring about new functions in particular environments. The following discussion

describes how liturgy is the context where a worshipping community may express social religious experiences in an existing environment. The self-imparting encounter between God and a worshipping community takes place in liturgy. Here, among other contexts, in the lives of women, men, boys and girls, something really happens that brings about perception of their lives in a new expressive manner. The different experiences of various religious groups compel them to interpret and express new experiences in a new way using available symbols.

For the continuation of their religious life, the early believers' experience prompted them to use both their old culture and the new Gospel in their encounter with God. Philippians 2:5-11 will be cited in 2.6.3 and 2.6.4 in an attempt to describe how the first believers blended together the old (culture) and new (Gospel), in expressing their self-imparting encounter with God.

Now I shall attempt to briefly describe the city of Philippi before reconfiguration took place, although there is no real information regarding this city.

2.6.1 The city of Philippi before the coming of Christianity

In the Hellenistic world, philosophical ideas that developed from philosophical schools provided models for life. Apart from mythical figures as examples, philosophers functioned as models (*cf.* 2.4.3). Philosophers, such as Socrates and Diogenes, were good examples of philosophical lives for contemporaries to imitate. Luke Johnson (1999:33) describes how Cynics attracted people who wanted to be called philosophers, but did not want to work at it, and how Satirists left wonderful portraits of these would-be philosophers, who had all the right materials (for Johnson, equipment = rough cloak, bag, staff, long hair and beard). This illustrates how people searched for models whom to imitate in the Hellenistic world. Both positive as well as negative models were presented in order to follow the specific injunctions or learn from them. Ancient rhetorical theory stresses this use of models. Examples of models abound in the hortatory letters of Seneca, Pliny, Isocrates, and the Socratics (1999:129).

Considering Philippi's location in North-Eastern Greece in the Macedonian territory and having been made a Roman Military Colony (Ac. 16:12), many war veterans settled there. Access to Philippi was easy because of its location, situated within one of the two most important East-West highways, which illustrates their significance for the Pauline mission. It was situated farther west, within the major communication routes between Rome and the East, the Via Egnatia. The two branches of route began at the Adriatic coast of Greece, one from Dyrrhachium (modern Durrës, Albania), and the other from Appolonia (modern Pojan) some 80 kilometres to the south, meeting at Clodiana (Meeks 1983:17-18). Then, it ran up the valley of the Genusus, crossing the river to Candavia, skirting the northern side of Lake Lychnitis to Lychnidos, across the mountains to Heraclea, Edessa, down the valley of the Ludias, across the Axis to Thessalonica, and on to Philippi (Meeks 1983:18). From here, one could continue by land to Byzantium or take a ship from Philippi's Port Neapolis (modern Kavalla, Greece) across the Troad (Meeks 1983:18). The two Macedonian cities, Philippi and Thessalonica, which were so important for the Pauline mission, were also important in the Roman scheme of control (Meeks 1983:45).

On the other hand, philosophical influence was automatic because of the philosophical ideas that circulated at the time. The travellers combined their trade with the time-honoured method of migrant philosophers and sophists, attaching themselves as teachers to wealthy households. In this case, their teaching happened to be "to worship God after the manner of Jewish tradition" (Meeks 1983:19). The double colonization and the later constant passage of troops through Philippi, because of its strategic location, assured a much more Latin character to this city than to any of the other cities. For example, Meeks (1983:45) quotes Barbara Levick who counts 421 inscriptions from Philippi, of which only 60 were in Greek.

In his book, *Earliest Christianity*, Martin Hengel (1986:156) relates how a conjunction of the early Christian ethos and the universal ideal of antiquity was most likely to come about where a New Testament author introduced his Greek rhetorical training as a

writer and stylized certain phenomena of early Christianity in accordance with the tradition in which he had been educated. An example is given of the ideal of self-sufficiency in popular philosophy. A reference to asceticism introduces a further theme from the early Christian criticism of private property, namely, the demand for inner freedom. Paul, probably influenced by popular philosophy, put forward this thesis:

All things are lawful, but not all things are helpful.

All things are lawful for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything (1Co. 6:12).

For this reason, Paul stresses his self-sufficiency almost like an itinerant cynic philosopher:

I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want (Php. 4:11f).

This emphasis on self-sufficiency, presumably combines an ideal from Jewish wisdom with ideas from Greek popular philosophy. According to Pirke Aboth 4.1, Simeon ben Zoma (c. AD 100) gave the following definitions:

Who is mighty? He who rejoices in his portion as it is said (Ps. 128:2): "When you eat of the labour of your hands, happy are you and it shall be well with you! Rabbinic legend put these words into the mouth of elders of the South in their dialogue with Alexander the Great" (Tamid 32a); it may be compared with the famous answer of the first cynic Diogenes to the same ruler's offer: "Ask of me whatever you will." "Get out of my light" (Hengel 1986:202-203).

Yet, an essential difference between Paul and the philosophical ideal exists. Here, Paul blends the literature that was available to him, to come up with a document that was unique, yet, with many different constituent forms and styles, united into "new"

wholes (Robbins 1992:4).

Meeks (1983:46) describes how the city of Philippi was different from the other Pauline towns in having been primarily an agricultural, rather than a commercial centre. The Italian colonists were dispersed in villages throughout the plain and in the surrounding valleys, and the farming around their villages was the basis of the area's economic development. The city always remained very small – not more than six hundred to eight hundred metres from wall to wall along its east–west axis. As regards language, in Philippi, the substantial population's normal language was Greek (Meeks 1983:49).

Apart from this, about the city of Philippi, the only source that can be traced is Acts 16:11-40, which mentions something of a pagan, as well as a religious background.

In this text, “A slave girl,” who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying (Ac. 16:16), indicates something of a pagan background. Paul and Silas's activity angered the owners of the city to the extent of dragging them into the market place before the rulers and condemning them, because, as Jews, they disturbed the city by advocating customs that, for Romans, were illegal to accept or practice (vv. 19-24). Religious background, and a prayer on the Sabbath Day outside the gate to the riverside, a place of prayer (v. 13), is also mentioned. Here, in the liturgy, the rituals included: a worshipping community meeting, sitting down, an exposition of the Word of God, time for those who had heard the message to respond (v. 14), and then baptism (v. 15).

The two examples prove that Philippi comprised both pagan and religious backgrounds. In Acts 16:13, mentioning “on the Sabbath” seems to imply that the religious background was Jewish (Jews in the Diaspora): those who had since accepted Judaism – God fearers - those who worshipped God (v. 14). This means that, as soon as Christianity was established in a non-Jewish milieu, it had to adapt to, and transform whatever was good and noble in paganism (Chupungco 1982:9).

Now, will be shown how Christianity changed the whole city of Philippi after the Christian message was preached.

2.6.2 The city of Philippi blended with Christian teaching

The letter of Philippians does not explain whether Paul visited Philippi, or not. The only information that can be found has already been cited on 2.6.1, which raises some questions as to the relationship between the Epistle and the apostle's book of Acts. The questions may be posed: which book was written first? How dependable is the information in Acts 16:11-40, in respect of the understanding of the Letter to the Philippians? Does the information in Acts 16:11-40 illustrate the power of Jesus foretold in Philippians 2:1-11? Of course, some scholars suggest that the Philippians first heard the Gospel about ten years earlier when Paul and his companions visited Philippi (during Paul's second mission journey) and founded the church there. Even this explanation does not answer the question: which book was written first?

In this passage, the coming of Paul and Silas with the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings total disruption to the Philippian community. The way this community organized itself was totally transformed because of Paul's teaching as the city-dwellers felt the impact of Paul and Silas's presence so intensely. The Gospel of Jesus Christ was presented at the place of prayer (Ac. 16:13). Now: the Lord was the One who opened people's hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit (v. 15); baptism was in the name of Jesus Christ (v. 15); the new teaching of Jesus Christ that Paul and Silas offered to the worshipping community placed Judaism under siege (v. 13); men (i.e. Paul and Silas) joined the household of Lydia, a gentile worshipper of the Jewish God and an alien merchant ("a seller of purple goods") (v. 15); Jesus' name was the instrument to fight the rule of a spirit of divination in a slave girl (v. 18, cf. v. 16); and, to fight this world's authority (vv. 26,31,39), the coming of Jesus' Gospel brought about tension and total confusion (v. 22). Even when in prison, Jesus' followers worshipped God through prayer and singing hymns and other prisoners also heard the good news of Jesus that these followers preached (v. 25). Now, God's authority was replacing the powers of

this world, as the earthly powers were collapsing (v. 26). A new way of salvation was now revealed (v. 34) and the powers of this world were now forced to bow before God's authority (represented by the policemen's apology) (v. 39, *cf* Php. 2:9-11).

Now, I shall attempt to provide a brief description of the city of Philippi after being blended with Christian teaching.

2.6.3 A blended context – Philippians 2:5-11: what it has been reconfigured into

Scholars have pondered over the originality of this wonderful, so rhythmic hymn of Philippians 2:5-11. Some scholars have ascribed it to an author other than Paul; yet, others have not doubted the Pauline authorship. The arguments came about because of insufficient evidence, manuscript or otherwise, that approve the hymn's originality.

Regarding matters of literary form, language, and theology, the arguments are finely balanced on both sides of the issue. In matters other than form and style, the scales are slightly tipped in favour of an origin for the hymn that predates Paul (Cousar & Charles 2001:121). For example, a number of important Greek words occur in the passage, which are not found elsewhere in the Pauline letters (e.g., "form," "equal to," "highly exalted," "something to be taken advantage of"). More unique is the second part of the hymn (vv. 9-11) that speaks of Christ's exaltation without mentioning his resurrection, which is typical of Pauline letters.

Because of these arguments, this chapter will treat this hymn as having a different origin and the apostle having presented it as his own in this context. In the hymn, Paul displays creativity and invention to such a degree that he makes the hymn his own. It appears that he uses what was available to achieve his intention. This chapter has shown such an approach (*cf* 2.6.1). The hymn generates the language and themes that dominate the letter, and provides fundamental issues for his appeal to the Philippians (Cousar & Charles 2001:121). Therefore, Philippians differs markedly from the ancient theorists' examples of friendship letters.

I shall now discuss how Philippians 2:5-11 presents Jesus: down from heaven, and adopting the image of a servant.

2.6.4 Jesus adopting the image of a servant leader

In this hymn, Paul presents two major movements of Jesus' career: first, humiliation (vv. 6-8), and second, exaltation (vv. 9-11). Instead of presenting Jesus in a life that includes the passions of the flesh, as was the case in pagan life, Jesus discards his eternal glories, his status and his rights by emptying himself, adopting the image of a servant (vv. 6-7). Here, a matter of following the desires of body and mind is reserved. Jesus never showed any own interests but, instead, humbled Himself in obedience to the Father. He voluntarily decided to empty, as well as humble Himself – an extreme example of self-denial.

To persuade readers to follow Jesus, Paul presents Him here as a positive example of a life-giving approach, as opposed to a bad example of seeking one's self-interests, as might have been the case in philosophical circles. The Philippians' attitude had to be similar to that of Jesus Christ. They were to inculcate Jesus' life as the foundation of their practical thinking. Their daily way of life, social arrangements and constructions were to be organized under the social reality of what Jesus Christ presented. The whole community's way of thinking was to be shaped by Jesus' way of thinking. Paul then proves that such an invitation to Jesus' way of life is possible, as he himself had followed it, by saying, "[I] may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death" (Php. 3:10). Epaphroditus is another example of such a life, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life (2:30), and Timothy, by not seeking his own interests but by the interests of others (2:20,21).

Through these examples, Jesus becomes a "Master example of a servant leader," by his coming down from heaven in the image of God and taking on that of a servant. The Philippian community was to follow his example by regarding others more important than themselves.

This way of living, as shown by Jesus, was extremely odd in the Greco-Roman culture and alien to its ethical system - a total reversal of what was considered as the norm of life at the time. This means that a need existed to blend the group's story with Jesus' story of humility in order for their social structure to work. People of authority or status were to adopt Jesus' example by being humble, lowly, mean, insignificant, weak and trivial - counting others better than themselves (Php. 2:3). They were not to think too much of themselves, but be humble, emptying themselves in service to one another.

In Jesus, they recognize the exemplar of their daily way of living (Php. 2:3). And, in its work, their spirit replicates Jesus' pattern (v. 1). There is a positive approach to humility in relation to God and others. With this example of what Jesus did, Paul quotes a previously composed hymn in praise of the pre-existent (vv. 5-6), incarnate (vv. 7-8), and exalted Lord (vv. 9-11) to achieve his intention of encouraging the Philippian community. Through being humble, lowly, mean, insignificant, weak and trivial, then being crucified and raised, Jesus received a name above all names. He was highly exalted. Jesus' life of humility was to reconfigure the Philippians' old life in order for the social structure to work, and also in order for God to reward them (*cf.* vv.9-11).

Such humility is evident between parents and children in a family situation, where all that happens results in a continual reconfiguration.

Therefore, an attempt to describe briefly how "the old" and "the new" can be blended to create a new and clearer context, now follows.

2.7 A FAMILY-ORIENTATED APPROACH

"A family" is the only possible place where "the Old" and "the New" meet in a relevant form and an amicable manner. Life in a family is historical, as the members live in the space of time in history; it is social, as association with one another exists; cultural, as it has a way of living with which it identifies; ideological, as there is always reconfiguration of selection, analysis and interpretation of new experiences. A member of a family has an origin, identity, destiny and belongs. He/she is a part of that family in the totality

of his/her existence.

The process of living involves challenging experiences that ought to blend with the existing context to fit into the new situation. This is analogous to the Roman house with its noble traditions of family life. The church was able to celebrate her liturgy in a personal and intimate ambit (Chupungco 1982:11). The symbolism did not escape Ignatius of Antioch. He described the church as God's family gathered before the bishop, who represented the Father and who presided over her in the company of presbyters, who represented the council of apostles, while deacons, who represented the Servant of God, Jesus Christ, waited on (1982:11). All this is reflected in the family of believers who accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

In "a family-orientated approach," reinterpretation of historical events to fit into new situations is possible, as the members have the same origin (the source of power being the Holy Spirit), destiny and symbolic worldview. They consider their contexts and social experiences together, because they are one body, one family.

Now, I shall prove that a family-orientated approach is a good example of the way a group or community members reinterpret and reconfigure different situations to fit into their new contexts.

2.7.1 Critique of the family-orientated approach

Most of the miracles Jesus performed concern families. At first, the miracles were family experiences, then the news extended to those outside. It is noteworthy that when such miracles were performed, the family members had to reconfigure their new experiences. Their perception of life changed because of what Jesus had done. For example, when Jesus turned water into wine (Jn. 2:7-8); when He healed the following: the man with an unclean spirit (Mk. 1:25-28); the paralysed man whom the four friends had carried (Mk. 2:3-5); a man with a withered hand (Mk. 3:1); a man who had been ill for 38 years (Jn. 5:5-9); a man born blind (Jn. 9:1,6-7); and when he raised Lazarus and the widow's son from the dead (Jn. 11:41-44; Lk. 7:11-17). Many other miracles

that Jesus performed centred mostly on families. There are indications that what happened to a family member transformed the whole family's approach to life.

Reactions to what Jesus did were joyous. At the same time, there had been ongoing reconfigurations of their existence in the light of these new experiences and dialogues between the old existence and the new (what Jesus had done). The old context blended with new challenges to produce a reconfigured situation. This eventually transformed the individual or group's understanding of life. Now, their perspectives were reshaped in the light of Jesus' activities.

The central point in the "family-orientated approach" is that the parents (the old) bear the children (the new); the old need the new and the new need the old. They need each other for their existence. There is both continuity and discontinuity for the parents, as well as the children.

The parents (the old) have their traditions, while the youth (the new) have a mind of renewal, which is relevant to the corresponding time, while the parents (the old) have the origin and identity of their existence. "The old" cannot live without considering the present context. In the same way, the youth (the new) cannot live without "the old," because they stem from them. There is interplay between "the old" and "the new." On both sides, there is a need for continuity and discontinuity of things, as they live together. They need to blend some experiences to make life possible in a relevant way. To achieve this, all the members' strengths must be reconfigured within the parameters of the new challenges. Here, every member must do everything with love for the sake of "the other." In the process, there will be positive interference, because the dialogue will be to the advantage of all members.

In a "family-orientated approach" the children are born into some kind of symbolic world, and most simply accept it as the natural way of things and pass this understanding on to the next generation (Johnson 1999:15). Then they begin to come to terms with their surroundings: the language of their parents, their food, their attire,

family and household structures, the running of politics, religious beliefs, and questions regarding their existence. In the process, reconfiguration of phenomena takes place in their world, as they begin to participate in life and become part of the family, as well as of the wider community.

When there is crisis in the family, for example, they will, in one way or another, all be involved and reconfigure issues together, reinterpret historical events together to fit into a new situation.

At first, in the “family-orientated approach,” the parents have the materials to impart to the children, but soon the children also contribute to the family’s affairs. “The old” is blended with “the new” and establishes a reconfigured context. From grass-roots level, all members are involved and empowered to participate. Together, they participate actively in the reinterpretation of new situations and the rearranging of family experiences to fit into new social settings.

As the children begin to associate with others outside the family - by playing, schooling and chatting - they unknowingly import new things into the family. Sometimes, the children are more excited about new things than about existing things within the family. When these new things are introduced to the parents, they either accept or reject them. This is the process of reinterpreting, blending and reconfiguring. When the parents introduce and accept new things, these things will influence them in one way or another. At the same time, what the parents do will influence the new things. Ultimately, both will have influenced each other and a completely new setting develops. This portrays the family members’ full participation in a family-orientated approach.

Apart from the children influencing the parents, the wider community also influences them. They are not just part of the children, but also part of the family’s outside world. They must contextualize their context by blending it with what the wider community provides and, ultimately, create a reconfigured context. Both the internal and the external experiences continually compel them to reinterpret events. Eventually, new

understandings are created and new theologies done that are relevant to the corresponding time.

A family needs to adjust itself to the demands of the wider community, of which it is part. Sometimes, it must withstand the tensions from the outside world that are in conflict with the inside life. All this constitutes the process of reinterpretation, blending and reconfiguration in the light of new challenges and, ultimately, it creates stability and survival of “the family.”

As the family’s continuing experiences (the new) reshape the parents’ (the old) memories of the past (noted by internal and external influences), a new understanding of existence is produced. As new experiences replace old ones, the family’s story is constantly and continually revised. These new experiences remain a preparatory reminder of new reconfigurations for the continuing existence of “the family.”

2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed issues that force reinterpretation to take place in a social group’s daily way of life, for which a process of reconfiguration has been explained. It described how Old and New Testament writings revolved around an analogous symbolic worldview. Thereafter, an overview of the first-century world prior to reconfiguration was discussed.

This chapter also described the approach that the two New Testament writers of the books of Mark and Philippians followed to accommodate their new situations. Furthermore, a description followed of the way they identified themselves with the symbolic world of first-century Judaisms and Hellenism and then examined the way they reconfigured these historical events to create new events relevant to the corresponding time. It also explained how important it is to consider the highly interactive and complex environments in which these books were written.

A “family-orientated approach” was suggested, as this is where diversity among

members is visible and often respected. Within a family, an ongoing reconfiguration of the Gospel in the light of new challenges may take place. Such an approach was then critiqued to portray the dialogue between “the old” and “the new.” In so doing, attention was paid to the way in which “the old” context can blend with new challenges to create a reconfigured, better situation than the previous one.

In this chapter, the following three vital theological qualities have emerged for doing contextual theology and are taken into account in chapter 5 of this dissertation in a theological analysis of the Traditional Malawian Choral Songs that the youth sing:

- Consideration of people’s contexts and cultures when theologizing.
- A continuous process of reconfiguration when doing theology from the grassroots.
- The importance of individual participation and individual empowerment when liturgizing.

The next chapter provides, in some detail, a historical overview of the theological as well as liturgical development in Malawi, pointing out how the writings were theologically interpreted in the light of the liturgy, the outcome of such an interpretation, and an explanation of the Chewa culture and religious beliefs before the arrival of Christianity. Amongst others, the rituals that were performed at the Chewa rain shrines, the *Gule wamkulu* (Chewa Secret Society) and the Chewa understanding of eschatology will be described. Then, a discussion of the aftermath of traditional theology that had a hostile impact on the Chewa culture and religious beliefs follows.

A possible solution for doing theology, i.e. doing contextual theology in the light of the liturgy to fit into new challenges, is suggested. Such a possibility will involve the reinterpretation and blending of historical events in the light of the Gospel, as well as reconfiguration of the liturgy in the light of new challenges. Ultimately, this process of reinterpretation and blending will produce a liturgy that is relevant to the people who present it, because it has been influenced by the context.

CHAPTER THREE

A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THEOLOGICAL–LITURGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MALAWI

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 discussed the approach of the writers of Mark and Philippians to fit into their new situations. The authors did this by showing how they identified themselves with the symbolic world of first-century Judaisms and Hellenism, where they reconfigured historical events to create new events. Then, a “family-orientated approach” was suggested. This chapter gives an overview of the theological–liturgical development in Malawi - how the Gospel was brought in the light of the liturgy that evangelization assumed.

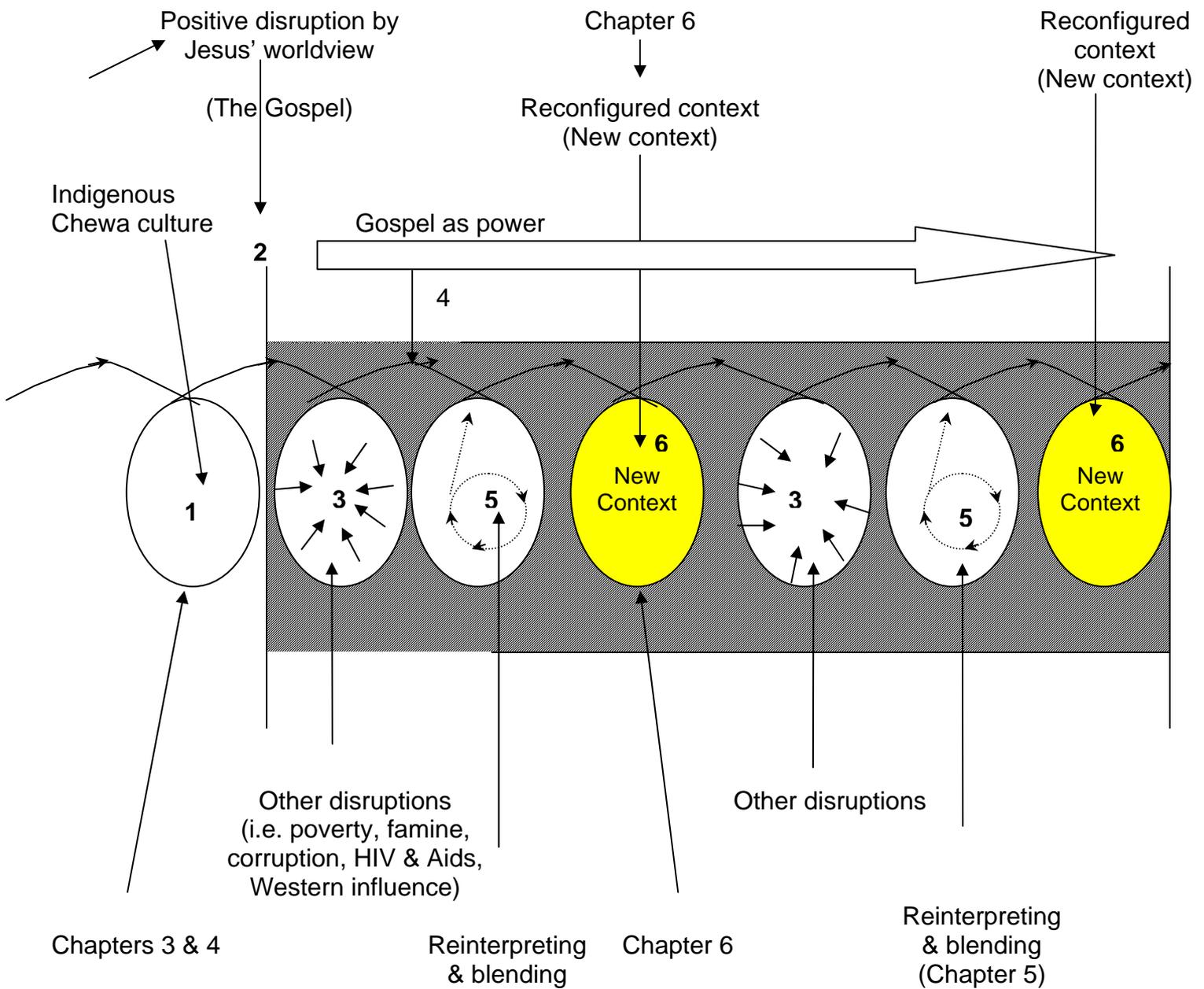
It includes an examination of the positive features that the missionaries brought in their evangelization and how they interpreted theology in the light of the cultures of the people whom they evangelised, also touching on the theology that they brought and how they expressed it through liturgy to the Malawian people. A view of their evangelizing also describes how they took the people’s everyday life into account.

An assessment of the aftermath of traditional theology follows, including the impact of traditional theology on the Malawian people and the cultural conflicts that developed. This involves relating these conflicts to the contemporary Malawian culture.

The possibilities of doing theology in the light of the liturgy follow. These involve blending elements of the Gospel, Chewa culture and the official hymnal songs to create a relevant liturgy that is sensitive to its receivers.

This chapter also presents an analogous diagram to that of chapter 2. It differs from the diagram in chapter 2 in terms of time and culture, and deals with the Chewa world,

other than the Jewish and Hellenistic worlds dealt with in chapter 2. The diagram also reflects movement within the thesis at large. Chapters 3 and 4 describe the Chewa world and the missionaries' arrival with the Gospel of Jesus. Chapter 5 discusses the youths' initiatives in Malawi by composing and singing traditional Malawian songs. They are reinterpreting and blending traditional songs with the Gospel of Jesus Christ for a coherent present life and a clearer future. And Chapter 6 contains suggestions and recommendations, shown in the diagram's reconfigured new context:



The above diagram portrays the process of reconfiguration that takes place as a result of disruptions. It has been numbered for easy following of these descriptions:

- 1 = Represents the indigenous Chewa culture (Chapters 3 & 4).
- 2 = Disruptions by missionaries with the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Chapters 3, 4 & 5).
- 3 = Other disruptions: poverty, famine, corruption, HIV/Aids, and Western influence (Chapter 5).
- 4 = The shaded area represents the Gospel as power (Chapters 4 & 5).
- 5 = Reinterpreting and blending as a process of reconfiguration (Chapters 4 & 5).
- 6 = The reconfigured context – a new context created as a result of an ongoing interaction between experience and interpretation (Chapters 4, 5 & 6).

In the diagram, numbers 3, 5 and 6 are repeated to reflect the ongoing process. The big arrow above the diagram denotes the uniqueness of the power of the disruption caused by the Gospel brought by missionaries and those who succeeded them. All the circles are connected to one another to illustrate movement from one experience in life to the next.

3.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE 19th-CENTURY CHEWA WORLD BEFORE THE COMING OF CHRISTIANITY

The 19th-century Chewa worldview was diverse. It combined elements of Chewa rule, Chewa survival from the Ngoni invasions, the economic crisis, as well as the equipment of their religious cults for survival. Because of this, people had the dynamics of experience and interpretation to fit into such a diverse world. The interaction between the Chewa rule, culture and religion, which are discussed below, should have been the basis for receiving Christianity and the Chewa context should have influenced the theology that was introduced to it.

Now, a brief discussion of the three basic religious beliefs of the Chewa before Christianity arrived, follows.

3.2.1 The three basic religious beliefs

Although it is difficult to determine all the religious crises of the mid-19th century, recent research (McCracken 2000:42) proves that various religious institutions in Malawi were undergoing considerable pressures when the missionaries arrived. In fact, most people in the Malawi regions shared three basic religious beliefs. Firstly, a belief in the existence of witches, who were held responsible for otherwise unexplained misfortunes; traditional doctors, who frequently made use of the *Mwavi* poison ordeal, could detect them. Secondly, a belief in the spirits of the dead, who functioned as intermediaries between the living and the world beyond; and thirdly, in a High God, worshipped by means of a number of large and influential territorial cults (McCracken 2000:42). The Chewa shared these three basic religious beliefs as they struggled to survive.

An attempt to describe the Chewa theological understanding of the High God follows.

3.2.2 The Chewa theological understanding of the High God

Of the three religious beliefs mentioned above, this chapter only provides an overview of the Chewa belief in the existence of a High God. They believed in the existence of a High God, who was known by many names that described his attributes. He was the Great Spirit, who could not be worshipped directly, but via the lesser spirits that co-existed with this High God. This confirms what David Gitari (1994:21) says in his book, *Anglican liturgical inculturation in Africa*, namely that Africans are notoriously religious and each people had its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates so fully into all the departments of life, that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it.

This High God had many names, one of which was *Leza* (mercy heart) implying that He is a merciful God with a merciful heart and is slow to anger. In her book, *Women, Presbyterianism and patriarchy*, Isabel Phiri (1997:28) explains that *Leza* is a word derived from the verb *kulera*, which means nurturing or rearing. However, this is not

the true meaning of the word *leza*; in fact, it means “being merciful,” “to be merciful,” or “being slow to anger.” In this case, *lera*, which means nurturing, has no connection to the word *leza* as she describes it. This explanation does not reflect the real use of the word in the Chichewa language. *Lera* is derived from the verb *kulera* that means nurturing or rearing. This explanation removes any connection of the word *leza* to *lera* that has a completely different meaning - that of rearing children.

The word *leza* also implies the short form for the rainbow, symbolizing the High God who overrules the earth. Other titles for God also include *Chiuta* (a big shade) coming from a shepherding language: this High God cares for his people, He provides for them and protects them, and gives them shade in which to rest after being fed. The name *Chiuta* also derives from the Chewa word, *uta* (bow), and prefix *chi* (big) (Phiri 1997:27). A combination of these two results in *Chiuta* (a big bow), which signifies victory, implying that the High God is a God of victory at war. Furthermore, *Namalenga* (Creator) = the High God is the Creator of all things; *Mulungu* derived from the Chewa word *lunga* (upright or righteous) = this High God is “an upright God,” “a righteous God” who entertains no evil, his followers must live an “upright” or “righteous” life. The name *Mulungu* also means big spring of water, implying that this High God is the source of water for life, which originates from Him. The spring of water is a symbol of the spring of life, since no living being can survive without water. *Chisumphu* (giver of rain) means that all the rains come from Him. He is the Great Spirit above all spirits, who provides rain to all living creatures. *Mphambe* (lightening) implies that this High God is an awesome God who can kill and punish, if one is not faithful to his instructions, given through mediums. A Chewa, who was experienced at a shrine, saw the power of the High God in these attributes.

An example of a Chewa rain shrine now follows.

3.2.3 Ritual performances during the Chewa rain-shrine liturgy

Many rituals were performed during the Chewa rain-shrine liturgy, but they cannot all be discussed here. However, one thing is clear: such a High God was worshipped communally in territorial rain shrines. During the whole liturgy, a woman was in the forefront as a prophetess (Phiri 1997:23). She was the High Priestess given the title, *Makewana* (mother of children), and, during the ceremony, had to officiate at the making of sacrifices and the conducting of public or communal prayers (1997:23).

In those days, all priests among the Chewa were subservient to this High Priestess at Msinja at the foot of the Dzalanyama range in the Lilongwe district. They did so through the spirits of their ancestors, using certain women as prophetesses or mediums (Phiri 2004:29). A woman, qualified for this role, made utterances warning or instructing the community of coming events while in a trance. Songs would be sung to invoke spirits of the dead to come and dwell in the woman for a particular role. And, if her prophecy came true, the community recognized her as a prophetess (2004:30).

Whenever there was a calamity that affected most of the tribe, such as droughts and famines, people flocked from many parts of the land to Msinja for public prayers and supplications. Men of rank in the field of worship systematically organized the prayers (Phiri 2004:30). The husband of the *Makewana*, whose official title was *Thunga*, a very rare snake species, was responsible for lighting the fire on the altar, where sacrifices were made. There was a drummer called *Tsang'oma*, who summoned people to prayers. After the sacrifice, a temple cleaner removed the ashes of the burnt offering (2004:30). Then, a keeper of vessels ensured that the vessels were clean and safely kept. Somebody was also appointed to organize the accommodation for all the pilgrims who came for the sacrifice or worship. The place was well organized – a person was even assigned for the regular maintenance work at the *Makewana's* house. While praying for rain during a drought, the *Makewana* sat in a pool of water crying and pleading for rain (2004:31). Often, the rains started when they returned from the shrine. In all these rituals, there was total discipline, in full obedience to the High God,

who provided rain for his people.

Another interesting feature of the Chewa is their secret society called *Gule wamkulu*, which I shall now discuss.

3.3 THE *GULE WAMKULU* CHEWA SECRET SOCIETIES

A distinctive feature of the Chewa culture is its secret society called *Gule wamkulu* (the great dance). This name is used superlatively to indicate the dance's superiority over other dances, and is an umbrella name for various kinds of *nyau* dancers. It is associated with the spirits of the dead functioning as intermediaries between the dead and the living, and is related to one of the three basic religious beliefs of the Chewa - that of the spirits of the dead.

The dancers are called *nyau* from the shaking of their attire that produces a constant rhythm – *nyau-nyau* (literally shake-shake). They put on masks and very old torn clothes or sacks that shake every time they move, dance, or even when motionless. These masks are supposed to fully conceal the performers' identity in public. Each actor's identity is top secret, and they are regarded as spirits of the deceased ancestors who return in the form of *Gule wamkulu* to dwell temporarily among the living (Kamlongera 1992:37). Every person who puts on these masks assumes power of authority over other persons. These masks elevate all who wear them to a unique status that is above all human beings.

Cullen Young and Hastings Banda (1946:7) describe *Gule wamkulu* in these words:

Nyau is a primitive Masonic brotherhood, with its special vocabulary and phraseology and with its rigid restriction to initiates only. It is also a curiously parallel institution to "carnival" as practised along the Mediterranean shore. It has the same masks and antics, the same temporary relaxation of customary law, the same appearance of licence.

Both men and women perform this dance. In his book, Breuger (2001:131) wrongly indicates that women cannot join the *Nyau* association. In fact, women also wear masks as *Nyau* dancers and, often, women initiated into the *Gule wamkulu* are the most powerful in society, even in decision-making.

Tradition has it that this dance started in a land called Phokera in the Dowa district. According to the Chewa oral tradition, initially, women performed *Gule wamkulu* in conjunction with girls' initiation into womanhood and their incorporation into the adult society (Kamlongera 1992:36). Another version says that *Gule wamkulu* started as a mere dance for ordinary amusement, but later, people of rank in society adopted it as the greatest and most sacred dance of the community.

The strictness and sometimes cruelty that is attached to *Gule wamkulu* members, compel outsiders to associate the dance with witchcraft, especially taking into account that all the activities of *nyau* dancers take place in graveyards. Unlike in some societies, here graveyards are generally bare with not much growing in them. In Malawi, many cemeteries are overgrown with indigenous trees. Cemeteries are sacred and one may not enter them, unless there is a funeral in the village, and only the village headman has the authority to allow a person to enter a graveyard.

Everything is so secretive that no one can see what is taking place where *nyau* dancers operate. That is why the description "secret society," as it is notably known, applies. A non-member is strictly prohibited even to pass close to this secret place. A red flag is erected close to it as a sign of danger and warning to any uninitiated person who wants to pass by this area. In fact, no Chewa man can claim full male status if he has not experienced the initiation and instructional processes. A Chewa man may remain unmarried and yet have adult male status, but not if he is uninitiated - initiation being the real "coming-of-age." Marriage to an uninitiated man is almost unthinkable in any Chewa group (Young & Banda 1946:7). The initiation of a young man into the *Nyau* must be regarded, not as an optional incorporation into a private association, but as a true initiation, a formal incorporation into the group itself (Breugel 2001:129). The

Gule wamkulu members' great zeal causes others to conclude that the *nyau* dance is a kind of religion.

The intention of this whole discussion is to show firstly that the youth have implemented some *Gule wamkulu* melodies into the Christian songs, as reflected in the analysed songs. Secondly, through the songs, the youth have revealed how secretism continues among some leaders of the church, even after becoming Christians. Such leaders pretend to be devoted Christians externally, whereas, in fact, they continue to live secretly in sin. Thirdly, the analysis of the songs has revealed that there is an element of negative strictness and cruelty among church leaders in their dealings with the youth in the church. This also seems to be connected to *Gule wamkulu* secret society principles. Fourthly, the songs have revealed that the youth have been denied their identity and belonging, as opposed to what a *Gule wamkulu* member would enjoy.

Now, a discussion of some concepts of the *Gule wamkulu* follow.

3.3.1 Concepts, rules and places of *Gule wamkulu*

In almost all circles of life, there are certain concomitant rules, so too with the *Gule wamkulu*. Here, we seek to examine the functions, structure and content of the *Gule wamkulu* performance as an aesthetic indigenous art form in which music, dance, educational process, and drama are totally integrated to constitute one indivisible, symbolic and reflexive restored behaviour (Kamlongera 1992:35). There were certain strict rules that applied to all who became members of the *Gule wamkulu*. In their book, *Our African way of life*, Cullen Young and Hastings Banda (1946:46-51) discuss in full detail some of the instructions received by anyone who becomes a member.

Once initiated, one was not allowed to reveal anything that one had seen, learnt or that takes place at the secret place. One always had to keep it a secret. If one disclosed something, one would be treated harshly, sometimes even being killed for revealing what happens at the *Gule wamkulu*. Stories have been told about those actually killed at *Gule wamkulu*, and who were purported to have left to work in South African mines,

commonly known as *Ku Joni* (short form of “in Johannesburg”). *Nyau* senior members (*akulu a Nyau*) have judged cases, without bringing them to the chief’s court (Breugel 2001:130). From a positive angle, this encouraged all members of *Gule wamkulu* to be disciplined. When one was initiated to become a member, certain codes were learnt and memorised, which identified the initiated from the uninitiated. These codes were vital for the members because, whenever they met *nyau*, they would answer the *nyau*’s questions with signs.

These secret places where the *Gule wamkulu* live, are called *dambwe*, and a village that owns *dambwe* is said to be a *mzinda* (a city), which is analogous to what people regard as real cities, such as Cape Town, Blantyre, Harare, Lilongwe, etc. This implies that any village that was a *mzinda* was as rich as a city can be, because it had everything that could give them the wisdom they needed. Such requirements may have included instructions, power, authority, skills, talents, dancing skills, administrative skills, and comfort when bereaved. Anything could be found at a *mzinda* and, for a village to have *mzinda*, was a source of pride and great honour. When Christianity arrived, any effort to prevent the Christians and catechumens from attending the *Nyau* dance, the people interpreted as an attempt to challenge the chief’s authority and to break down the village structure (Breugel 2001:127). The chiefs regarded the missions as destroyers of their former prestige and advantages attached to their position (2001:127).

Christoff Martin Pauw observes the tension that arose in respect of many traditional practices with a religious connotation. As some indigenous people started to take leadership roles, such as church ministers, they became even more aggressive than the missionaries. Pauw (1980:331) notes that national church leaders and Christians sometimes displayed even more determination not to compromise than did missionaries. During the 1920s the church made a concerted effort to have the *Nyau* suppressed. Rev Namoni Katengeza (1980:331) is said to have played a great role in this. On one occasion when he made “a splendid stand,” he informed the Provincial

Commissioner that “even if missionaries agree [to allow it to continue] they [the Malawian Christians] would still oppose it because they had God’s Word and know that it was evil.” The leaders of the church entirely opposed the Commissioner’s suggestion that a Christianised version of *Nyau* should be introduced, while the Nkhoma Presbytery refused any compromise, reiterating that anyone involving himself in *Nyau* would be liable for suspension from the sacraments for a period of from six to twelve months (1980:331).

This struggle somehow ended on 25 September 1929 between four DRC missionaries and approximately 20 leaders of the Nkhoma Presbytery on the one hand, and approximately 30 leading *Nyau* headmen on the other. This meeting reached an agreement at last, to the effect that teachers would not teach the children of parents who supported *Nyau* to despise *Nyau* ceremonies, while the *vinyau* undertook to return their children to school after their initiation in *Nyau*, instead of stopping them altogether from attending (Pauw 1980:333). Such a struggle between the indigenous people and those who professed Christian teaching proves how deep *Gule wamkulu* is in the Chewa society. It also shows how the indigenous people differed in their views about how to handle Christianity and also how to deal with some traditional practices as a result of Christian teaching.

Each village had its own *dambwe*, and a time would be set for the *dambwe* to be launched, upon which *nyau* dancers would come from different *dambwes* of the surrounding villages to perform together during the night, and sometimes during the day, called *Chizangala*. The *nyau* would be accompanied by cheering supporters who sang songs in support of their *Gule wamkulu*. Here, there was unity in diversity. They came from all surrounding villages as one, with one accord regardless of their differences, for the course of the one function. Unity was noted for a particular course and for a particular member of the secret society, as they came together, danced together, mourned together. Everyone belonged and possessed identity for his/her life. In all this, the Chewa were so united with one another, and *Gule wamkulu* was the

strongest binding force for them as a community.

From this discussion, it is clear that *Gule wamkulu*, whose performance relies on group co-operation, is a powerful contributor to the Chewa culture. There must be good co-ordination between song composers, drummers, dancers, and persons exercising carved, basketry or burlap mask crafts (Kamlongera 1992:57). The dancers are central to the performance, but the audience is also an integral part of it. The audience's participation forms a recognised aspect of the whole performance – part of the accepted stylistic conventions – and is integral to the artistic style of a given oral poem (Finnegan 1979:122). Dancers cannot dance without the audience actively participating by clapping hands, taking up the chorus and commenting on the actors' performance, and the audience passes judgment on the performance by failing to join a chorus, when the actor abandons the song that the audience knows well, and introduces a lesser known one (Kamlongera 1992:57). There is always an understanding between the actor and the audience. If the audience does not understand the actor's needs the performance may fail. Most elements of the Chewa way of life originate from this dance.

If one wants to know more of the Chewa, one must examine closely what takes place at *dambwe*, which forms most of the Chewa way of life. *Gule wamkulu* has a huge impact on a Chewa, if not on the whole Chewa culture. Much is reflected in the life of a Chewa that originates from the *Gule wamkulu*. Matters, such as how one responds to issues, thinks, reacts, remains silent in public, the jealousy that one may display, acting in secrecy rather than openly, how one sings and dances, how one hides an issue and, sometimes, the hard-heartedness that one shows. All these mostly originate from the *Gule wamkulu* secret society, where the wearing of facial masks has such an influence. Therefore, studying or knowing *Gule wamkulu* enlightens an outsider to a Chewa's true life.

I will now discuss the *nyau* dancer.

3.3.2 “Physical spirits” of deceased persons - *Nyau* dancers

The *Gule wamkulu* was linked to performances at funerals, the enthroning of a chief or village headman, when commemorating a deceased person, during initiation ceremonies, when performing other rites of passage and sometimes when celebrating a bumper harvest.

Today it plays a major role in both male and female initiation ceremonies. Other occasions for *Gule wamkulu* performances include funeral ceremonies of either a chief or any other important member of the community; commemorative rites for the dead (*mpalo*); festive occasions such as independence anniversary celebrations; and political rallies (Kamlongera 1992:36). At these events, artistic talents are displayed in visible and audible form through songs and dramatic sketches that are performed to entertain, as well as ridicule and satirize, the behaviour of some members of the community (1992:36).

Nyau dancers were said to be spirits of the dead who have risen from the grave to visit and entertain the living, to encourage, educate, instruct, rebuke, warn and sometimes harass or harm the living relatives. The participating audience believes that the actors are the ancestors' spirits who must be feared and revered. Thus, the performers in this category freely sing and dramatize sketches about the corrupt village chief and court counsellors, foolish husbands whose possessive wives henpeck them, lazy or impotent husbands, the stupid and selfish chief who does not protect the interests of his people, the untidy and quarrelsome wife, the uncle who wants to bewitch his nephew, the bad father- or mother-in-law or the good for nothing son-in-law (Kamlongera 1992:38-39). This means that the *Gule wamkulu* performance is functional in that the performers and the participating audience regard it as a means of expressing their suppressed desires that can be released legitimately in the world of the *Gule wamkulu* performance (1992:58). Above all, the performance conveys a sense of beauty, as well as relevant social messages through the songs, language of the drums, clapping of hands, the characterization and actors' symbolic physical movements, participation of the

audience and their initiation of the masks, and the ululating and rattles that accompany these dramatic performances (1992:58).

After visiting and entertaining the living, these “spirits” return to their various graves, awaiting the High God’s final day of judgement. This belief proves that the Chewa believed in “one final future day” of judgement. It also implies that they believed in temporary resurrection of the dead between “the now” and “the day to come.” This is noted in the “coming to life of dead people” in the form of *nyau* spirits (the masked persons – *Gule wamkulu*) - continuous contact between the living and the living dead.

According to the Chewa, the characters of dead persons’ spirits will not change from their characters when alive. If the dead person was troublesome whilst on earth, his/her *nyau* spirit would also be troublesome when it visited the village. If the dead person was reserved and quiet whilst alive, his/her *nyau* spirit would be the same when temporarily risen from the dead. This implies that, in the Chewa belief, no change of character took place after one died. A thief or witch on earth would remain a thief or witch after death, and a good person would remain a good spirit after death. Dying never changes a dead person’s character in the spiritual world. Only the physical appearance changes. The dead person’s body is now transformed physically into a masked form, normally called *nyama* (animal). They believe that those who were initiated into *Gule wamkulu* ate this *nyama* at *dambwe*. That is why, when *nyau* dancers come out of *dambwe*, their supporters shout *Nyama! nyama!* (literally meaning animal! animal!), whilst following the dancing or walking *nyau*. Only to the uninitiated, the *nyau* are called *zirombo* (wild animals) and therefore fearful.

It is said that when a *nyau* spirit returns to *dambwe*, it is slaughtered for meat. Its spirit leaves immediately when the body is killed and rises into the air or into any surrounding tree within the graveyard, where it dwells. The next appearance to people would imply resurrection with a new body, but with the same old masks. The notion of eating *nyama* at *dambwe* has encouraged many young boys to be initiated for full membership in the *Gule wamkulu* secret society. This agrees with what Namoni Katengeza

says in Pauw's (1980:333) book, namely that the *Nyau* chiefs lied to him about the *Nyau* activities. This happened later, after the missionaries' arrival also caused young Chewa children to leave school. Van Breugel (2001:127) clearly proves this, as, in 1933, Hodgson reported that under the colonial administration the number of *Nyau* members had greatly increased, although he felt the dance itself had diverged to some extent from its original purpose and degenerated into mere amusement.

According to WHJ Rangeley and I Linden, Van Breugel (2001:127) confirms the fact that the *Nyau* started to enlist boys was a reaction of the *Nyau* associations against the steadily growing influence of the mission schools. This proves that there were conflicts between the *Nyau* community and the Christian missions and seems to be one of the reasons why many elderly Chewa people were uneducated; they opted for *Gule wamkulu* instead of attending mission schools.

How a Chewa viewed the future life will now be discussed.

3.4 THE CHEWA UNDERSTANDING OF ESCHATOLOGY

In the Chewa understanding of eschatology, there was a growing expectation, implanted by the teaching of oral history, from the experiences of the mediums' instructions from the *Gule wamkulu* secret society, as well as the old people, that in the age to come the High God would judge the world. Chapter 5 will link this understanding to the songs that the youth are singing. The Chewa saw "this age" as the work of witchcraft signifying evil, wars, famine, sicknesses, poverty, jealousy, envy, hatred and oppression of all the High God's people (those who followed his instructions); and that those who died whilst doing good without any act of witchcraft or any other contributor towards death, would go straight to the "resting place" that the High God had prepared for them. But those whose lives were cut short by acts of witchcraft or other evil people, would wait "on the way" (in the spiritual world) for those who killed them, until they too had died. Then, both parties would wait together "on the way" for the judgement day, when those who were killed would become God's witnesses against

their murderers. The High God would then pronounce judgement on the killers and have them thrown into an eternal fire and those who were killed whilst doing good deeds would join those who had already entered the “resting place.”

Between the times when these two groups died and “the judgement day,” those “who killed” would try to go to the “resting place” but those “they had killed” would obstruct them “on the way” until the day of judgement. Because they were still “on the way” they were free to visit the living in the form of *nyau* dancers (animals, such as snakes, lions, hyenas, leopards and perhaps even strange animals).

By means of this story, the Chewa believed that, if they did evil, fire would eventually burn them when the High God comes to judge the world. This warned every Chewa to be ready for the judgement day, and if they died “a good death,” they would go directly to the “resting place.” No wonder a Chewa would tell a person who had died “a good life,” “*akapumule ku zolemetsa zapansi pano*” (he/she should now go and rest from the hardships of this world). They visualized a good life for innocent Chewas after death. This means that Chewa people hoped to inherit “a place of rest” prepared by the High God, where there would be no more oppression or evil; the evil had disappeared through the High God’s judgement.

After having discussed some Chewa beliefs, an overview now follows of some positive elements that the missionaries had implanted in African people’s indigenous cultures and which had completely reconfigured the indigenous people’s social settings.

3.5 POSITIVE ENTITIES THAT MISSIONARIES BROUGHT TO AFRICANS

One can hardly deny the many positive elements that missionaries brought to Africa through their mission work. As one studies mission work in central Malawi, a number of positive elements may be noted.

As he travelled from southern Malawi to the central region, J du Plessis (1905:44) noticed a number of developments in some mission stations. Du Plessis and his team

reached Mlanda Mission Station late in the night of Saturday, 31st May 1903. Here, developments, such as a school with 190 children, were visible, carpentry work was being taught and a number of indigenous people were employed in making bricks for a substantial school building (1905:44). At Mvera, there was a similar development, also of industrial work, where many indigenous people were eager to handle the saw and the plane (1905:84). About this area of carpentry, Pauw (1980:191) quotes W.H. Murray who explained:

We do not turn out highly skilled artisans; that is not our object. We would far rather see one of our boys setting up for him as a carpenter in his own village and turn out single doors, windows, tables, chairs, bedstead, etc for sale to his neighbours, gradually rising in the scale of civilisation, than have him enter the employment of a European.

Such a view has both a positive as well as a negative connotation to the training of Africans. Training an African to become a carpenter is a positive exercise. Yet, it is an oppressive move to limit an African from entering a European's employment.

In mission stations, a number of indigenous people were also involved in cattle farming. For many years, from as far back as 1900, when W.H. Murray brought the first few cattle with him, they were imported from South Africa from time to time. They were mostly thoroughbreds of various breeds, Africander, Friesian, Jersey, Shorthorn, Herefords, Pau Angue and Alderney, obtained with the aim of improving local breeds, although this did not succeed (Pauw 1980:192).

Regarding schools: around Mlanda on the plateau, Mr Hofmeyr had already started five out-schools which he or Mr Van Heerden visited periodically (Du Plessis 1905:45). By 1903, there were no less than 320 children registered at Khola, which was the largest of Mr Hofmeyr's out-schools.

At Malembo Mission Station, Albert Namalambe, a teacher and the first convert of the Dutch missionaries' predecessors, the Scotch brethren, was in charge of agriculture.

His garden furnished bananas and paw-paws (Du Plessis 1905:58).

At Mvera, there was education and agriculture. Here, Mr West showed Du Plessis his potato, pea, bean, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce and onion beds. At Mvera, the missionaries had also started medical work and had a skilful medical staff member in the person of Dr. W.A. Murray (MB.Ch.B.Edin). In fact, a small medical facility had started to develop in the very early stage of mission work. For instance, Murray treated 200 patients during the four winter months of 1890 (May to August) (Pauw 1980:69). During 1902, a hospital was erected at Mvera and a nurse appointed (Du Plessis 1905:85).

According to Christopher Martin Pauw (1980:151), shortly after settling at Mvera, a station school was opened on 2 January 1890, with 22 children. Tomani, who had come from Cape Maclear, and whom Rev Bain had originally trained, was the first teacher in the school (1980:67). Chief Chiwere personally brought some boys from his village to attend the school (1980:151). One of the primary functions of the educational programme was to teach people to read the Bible (1980:175). In July 1890, Albert Namalambe visited Mvera from Cape Maclear and brought two teachers from there to start a school at chief Ndindi's village on the Lakeshore (1980:69). In the process, the mission rule was that all who wished to join the catechumen classes had to be able to read.

At Santhe in Kasungu, a school was started and chief Santhe himself was the first to register. In six months' time, he could read the New Testament. Since the mission's establishment, he had voluntarily forgone his beer drinking and even forbade the brewing of this liquor in his village. He also led his people in worship and offered public prayer on their behalf (Du Plessis 1905:108).

In the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod, one of the missionaries' great achievements was the blending of *Gule wamkulu* initiation with the Gospel. As Kamlongera (1992:36) rightly indicates, *Gule wamkulu* was initially performed in conjunction with girls' initiation into

womanhood and their incorporation into the adult society. Thus, blending this traditional ceremony with the Christian Gospel was of great importance. Such a reinterpreted ceremony created an alternative Christian initiation, which has been the missionaries' greatest achievement as regards blending of traditional elements with Christianity.

Already in 1891, A.C. Murray commented on the disruptive effect of traditional initiation ceremonies (*Chinamwali*) on school attendance, especially of girls (Pauw 1980:333). In due course, the issue became more crucial and, when the church took a definite stand on the *nyau* on 25 September 1929, it also resolved to forbid *Chinamwali* and begin a Christian version to be called *Chilangizo*. This was the outcome of some experimental attempts by some of the lady missionaries, together with a few Christian women, to give puberty instructions to girls on a Christian basis (Pauw 1980:333). Presbytery then laid down a detailed outline of how the *Chilangizo* should be conducted, stating that both boys and girls should receive instructions (1980:333). This has been extremely successful in respect of the girls, and has, until today, become an integral part of the life of the church (1980:333). Such a venture greatly assisted in the edification of young boys and girls. As a result, *Chilangizo* has made a great impact on the people's lives in the central region of Malawi. In Malawi, statistics show that, due to *Chilangizo*, HIV/AIDS has had less impact on the people in the Central region compared to the other regions of Southern and Northern Malawi.

In the light of the above discussion, mission and proclamation of the Gospel may never ignore the problems of disease, poverty and ignorance that it encounters. Missionaries and preachers are moved by Christian compassion to help the people, and not merely to obtain an excuse to preach the Gospel (Pauw 1980:147). No wonder mission work took a comprehensive approach that included evangelism, education, industrial, medical and literary work as part of proclamation's primary task. It is true that the strong guiding motive in the Dutch Reformed Church's mission was threefold: 1) proclaiming the Word of God as their supreme task; 2) evangelism, the aim of

proclamation, to lead people to conversion to Jesus Christ; and 3) building up a church amongst the gathered believers (1980:148). The result involved the traditional view of the other elements of mission work that came strongly to the fore, namely the auxiliary (other) services, which the missionaries rendered. At a mission station, there were a church and a school or a hospital, the church being the starting point. There was a school where one learnt to read the Bible, a hospital where one received treatment in order to be healthy for church activities and services, and also a farm where one learnt how to grow crops and keep animals. Ultimately, schools were literally the church's seed-beds or nurseries that provided up to 90% of the new members each year. And training the teachers and evangelists was only one step in the whole scheme, which, in due course, would provide the church's leadership, a most vital element in pursuing the ideal of a self-governing church (1980:182).

The following section describes how missionaries interpreted theology in the light of the cultures of the people whom they evangelized.

3.6 HOW THE BIBLE WAS INTERPRETED THEOLOGICALLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE LITURGY – FAILURE TO BLEND WITH THE EXISTING CULTURE

When one speaks of theologizing, one definitely also must address the expressive part of theology, which is liturgy. Everyday life is full of rituals, around which life revolves. By means of rituals we participate in the reality that the ritual invokes and actually takes up in the far-reaching sense of what is performed in and through ritual (Lukken 1994:100).

For a long time, theologizing seldom took into account the faith communities who constitute the church. This was because of the missionaries' approach to evangelizing right from the beginning. At the 1884 Berlin conference, where the European imperial powers met to divide the map of Africa among themselves and to draw up a constitution for the procedure, the role of missionaries, among other agents of imperialism, was recognized and received its rightful place (Dube 2000:4). The constitution read,

“Christian missionaries, scientists, and explorers, with their followers, property and collections, shall likewise be objects of especial protection.” This “protection” implies several things. Firstly, as Bible readers (this text having presumably informed their perspectives of justice), missionaries were not ethically opposed to their countries’ imperial projects. Secondly, this “protection” could imply that missionaries were useful in promoting their countries’ imperialism. Furthermore, the same culture informed and influenced all other imperialist agents, which include the biblical faith (Dube 2000:4).

Also, the Church in Malawi was not spared. Dube quotes Andrew Walls’s analysis that mission occupation sometimes preceded annexation or political penetration; sometimes it followed; and sometimes, as in Uganda, Nyasaland, and Bechuanaland, it was intimately associated with the establishment of British rule (Dube 2000:4). During the years of Christianity coming to Malawi, an anonymous short story, orally narrated and passed on, became popular. The story held that, when the missionaries came to Malawi, they taught the people not to worry about this life, but to look towards life to come, in heaven, when they will have riches and rewards. Although poor in this world, their home was in heaven, where their riches were. However, to quote Mark 10:23-26, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God, a concept that is clearly noticeable in the songs that the youth are singing in Malawi, as observed in the analysed songs in chapter 5.

This concept of remaining poor in this world and waiting for heaven where riches were stored for them, seems to have permeated many lives and seems to be reflected in how the first black church ministers in Nkhoma Synod lived. They would not wear shoes - only white missionaries would do so. In some congregations, for example Kongwe CCAP, special chairs were reserved for white missionaries, which no black Christians could use. According to one of the old ministers of Nkhoma Synod, Rev S.P. Chalera (interviewed 8th May 2007), he remembers Rev Steagmann, one of the missionaries who, on 3 October 1945, said: “In the church, we are one, not in body [flesh], but only in spirit.” Even in Malawi, this implied apartheid elements - that the

blacks should not worry about this world - only the whites. Right from the beginning, A.C. Murray is quoted as writing the following in his diary:

We are not sent, I think, to civilize people, but to convert them. Not to give them a high secular education, but to “teach” them those who will be our helpers as evangelists, catechists or teachers, learn what is necessary for their work, but as far as the people in general are concerned, let us impress the Word of God upon them in all possible ways, and furthermore, teach them to read the Bible for themselves in their own language (Pauw 1980:60).

Such an analysis reveals that Malawi, the then Nyasaland, was a victim of this imperialist project, as mentioned in this analysis. Furthermore, Bevans (1992:1-2) observes that classical theology conceived theology as a kind of objective science of faith. It was understood as a reflection on a faith in the two theological sources of scripture and tradition, the content of which has not, and never will be, changed, and is above culture and historically conditioned expression. Theology was conducted from above as an elitist enterprise (except in the case of minority Christian communities, commonly referred to as “sects”) (Bosch 1991:423). Its main source (apart from Scriptures and tradition) was philosophy, and its main interlocutor, the educated non-believer (1991:423). Liturgy followed in the same footsteps, regarding itself above culture, and universally valid.

Bosch (1991:448) quotes Thaurén in that, by the time the large-scale Western colonial expansion began, Western Christians were unconscious of the fact that their theology was culturally conditioned; they simply assumed that it was superior to other cultures and universally valid. Since Western culture was implicitly regarded as Christian, it was equally self-evident that this culture had to be exported together with the Christian faith. In his book, *Anglican liturgical inculturation in Africa*, David Gitari (1994:21) rightly contends that expert anthropologists, missionaries and colonists were convinced that Africans did not have anything that one could call religion; Africans did not believe in

any being you could call God, or a Supreme Being. He even quotes Emil Ludwig as saying, "How can untutored Africans know God? ... How can this be? ... Deity is a philosophical concept which savages are incapable of framing" (1994:21). Amalorpavadass (1990:122) concludes that Western experts dismissed what Africans had as primitive, native and pagan. They forgot that a missionary from any country, whether from Europe or America, comes from a particular church and is a child of his/her own national culture.

A missionary who imposes Western culture in the name of orthodoxy, as the pure form of Christianity, who asks the new converts to make a clean break from their ancestral culture and religious tradition, or who forbids some prevalent practices within that church because they derived from local culture and other religions, is acting with the cultural bias of the sending church or nation (Amalorpavadass 1990:122). Dube (2000:5) quotes Josiah Strong, a Congregationalist minister, who said that the English language, already saturated with Christian ideas and gathers up into itself the best thoughts of all ages, is the great agent of Christian civilization throughout the world. This means that Western colonial expansion and Christianity could not be distinguished from the colonial powers and that what colonialists did could easily be associated with the missionaries who came from the same European culture. Eventually, more power was in the hands of a few, turning culture into an ideology, which resulted in theology and liturgy becoming instruments of domination.

This is clearly noted in the words of David Livingstone, a doctor, botanist, explorer, ethnographer, and mapmaker who declared: "Civilization – Christianity and commerce – should ever be inseparable." Livingstone appealed to his compatriots to colonize Africa: "I beg to direct your attention to Africa ... I go back to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity; do carry out the work which I have begun" (Dube 2000:6). This explains how colonization was connected to the coming of the white man, how it was connected to his use of the Bible and how the black African's possession of the Bible was connected to the white man's taking of African people's

lands (2000:3).

A discussion of the results of insensitive theology and liturgy brought to the receiving Malawian culture, now follows.

3.6.1 The effect of insensitive theology and liturgy on the receiving culture

The consequence of an insensitive type of theologizing and liturgizing was that the local culture, in which evangelization took place, was marginalized and was almost destroyed. The English language and the Anglo-Saxon culture are “saturated with Christian ideas,” hence its eligibility as a “great agent of Christian civilization” (Dube 2000:5). This is reflected in the liturgy used in Malawi and the daily life of some African people. The missionaries and their institutions propounded a violent and exploitative ideology of traditional and indigenous elements. The Western way of thinking was superimposed on non-Western Christians, as is reflected strongly in the music sung during worship. In some countries, the Western language completely absorbed the people’s original language. This was observed in Malawi, especially in the Roman Catholic Church. There was an assimilation of language into weaker races, thus being “Anglo-Saxonized.” The indigenous people’s rights were denied and the African society’s religious foundations were profaned and even destroyed (Abraham 1990:34).

An example of this is the destruction of sacred places where the indigenous people prayed to their god, and the destruction of secret societies where initiations took place - the total ban on *Gule wamkulu* as heathen. In addition, African art was also denied, for example, the banning of Malawian instruments and music, which were considered profane, and the failure to use vernacular language during worship in some quarters.

In many cases, traditional theology brought about oppressive liturgy, which led to oppressive measures on Malawian people. Thus, the mission church played a part in dominating people, and foreigners continued political, economic and cultural sovereignty (Power 1995:232). The situation of apartheid in South Africa and in some South African churches is a clear example of a violent and exploitative ideology of

racial discrimination that Bible readers propounded and their institutions supported, based on biblical texts (Dube 2000:6). This followed white settlers dispossessing South African peoples of their lands and property. These settlers claimed to be a “chosen race” with the right to take the land, settle on it, and displace the indigenous people in the best possible way, which, later became apartheid (Dube 2000:6).

The consequences of the missionaries’ approach were oppression, segregation and divisions within the Africans. This developed as a result of the missionaries’ origins and denominations – divisions along denominational lines. An African, who lived as a member of one community under the authority of a village headperson, would now identify him-/herself on a denominational line by saying, “I am a Roman Catholic,” “I am an Anglican,” or “I am a Presbyterian.” Now, a village, where these people lived as one community with one common goal and belonging, was divided, because of the way Christianity was brought to them. This is evident even today in villages or towns, where funeral ceremonies are very much associated with the *denomination* to which one belongs, other than the *community* to which one belongs. If the deceased was a member of the Roman Catholic Church, those more active and present are Roman Catholics. If the deceased was a Presbyterian, those more active are Presbyterians. Whereas, before Christianity, the people were united and all worked together as communities. What happened to one member of a community was the whole community’s concern.

One even wonders how it happened that people *in Europe*, could sit down and conspire to share a continent such as *Africa*. They came under the banner of “The scramble for Africa.” Indeed, they scrambled for the land of Africa and distributed it among themselves, whilst the owners of the land watched. They even made their own boundaries. The indigenous symbolic world was destroyed, their identity and destiny confused. Such an act is analogous to what happened to Jesus on the cross. As He suffered the pains of crucifixion and all the evils upon Him, as He struggled with life, the soldiers were taking his garments, sharing them among themselves without being

concerned with the suffering that Jesus was experiencing (Jn. 19:23). Africa was sieged, her raw materials exploited to the full, leaving Africans the poorer.

Eventually, Africans were on “the periphery” of power. On the other hand, the Europeans were at “the centre” of power - an all-European affair. Africans were turned into Europeans’ slaves on Africans’ own land. The European liturgy imposed on Malawians in the central part of the country wanted only foreign expressions. So, all was foreign. No Chewa dance, instrument, religious belief or any ritual that took place at the Chewa rain shrine or *dambwe*, was considered for the liturgy.

Lupande, Healey and Sybertz (1996:70/6) quote the Pope in a section entitled “Positive values of African Cultures” (Nos. 42 & 43): “Africa is endowed with a wealth of cultural values and priceless human qualities which it can offer to the churches and to humanity as a whole.” The Pope identifies some of these African cultural values as a profound religious sense, a sense of the sacred and the spiritual world and the need for rites of purification and expiation. Unfortunately, Chewa cultural values were never taken into account when theologizing and liturgizing. Ultimately, this resulted in breaking the link between liturgy and the life of people using it. The liturgy, as such, lost its social relevance (Lukken 2005:179). The result of this was crucial and is an experience that compels us to search for answers for ourselves, as well as to have a critical conversation with Westerners (Dude 2000:7). There is a need to examine the Bible’s ethics and politics, the question of Western imperialism and the Bible, and the question how we should read the Bible given this history of its role, its readers, and its institutions (2000:7).

With regard to Christianity, all these prerequisites for authoritative communication have come under deep suspicion, have lost credibility, and must be revisited fundamentally (Mouton 2005:12). At the heart of these symptoms lies the basic need for an accountable view of both authority and submission – the authority of people and their words (texts) in general, and the biblical texts in particular (2005:12). At the same time, if authority must be truthful, liberating and healing in order to communicate life,

obedience and submission likewise must be free, voluntary, mutual and subversive, according to Christ's example (2005:12-13).

Now, a discussion of the consequences of traditional theology and liturgy follows.

3.7 THE AFTERMATH OF TRADITIONAL THEOLOGY AND LITURGY

The aftermath of traditional (classical) theology and liturgy left cultural aspects in limbo. The liturgy, which was European in expression, was still used. As a result, owing to several centuries of westernization, the people have become so alienated from their culture and have acquired such a colonial mentality and reflex so as to adhere to foreign culture as the only guarantee of the Christian faith's authenticity and purity (Amalorpavadass 1990:123). I recall one Sunday, in the church to which I belong, when a choir had sung so beautifully that a member of the congregation started clapping hands in appreciation (according to Chewa culture). But, this did not go down well. The minister, who was leading the worship, stopped him and said: "Stop clapping hands! We are in the church. We do not clap hands in the presence of God." This deeply affected the member as well as the congregation; everyone looked at him with compassion, while he held his tongue. This was enough reason to leave this church and join another denomination but, thank God, he did not do so. This seems to imply that a church symbol is greatly valued in my church, because "this is where God dwells." It also implies the extent to which European thinking has been indoctrinated in the people - not to clap hands in church!

Clapping hands, using instruments, dancing whilst singing or even shaking one's body was never allowed in my church. It was only in the 1980s, when Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement had a powerful influence on mainstream churches in Malawi, that such influences brought changes to the church. In a way, Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement that has a Western background, assisted mainstream churches to rediscover their members' own roots. What previously was not allowed in the church gradually entered the church. Clapping of hands became evident here and

there, as well as the singing of choruses, using traditional instruments and dancing whilst singing. All these entered the church without the leaders' authority. The Gospel that the missionaries brought, was now merging with the Malawian elements of expressions and gestures. Such a reconfiguration was a decision that the majority imposed on the minority (Atkins 2004:120). One cannot identify the one who actually instigated the change.

Nonetheless, not everyone leading the worship service accepts these expressions. And those who exercise the traditional expressions do so unofficially, since the inclusion in the liturgy has not been endorsed officially. Only what has been written must be followed in a liturgy. But here, the one leading the worship may just slot in a chorus anywhere he likes, and so the liturgy changes. All have welcomed only the use of instruments, whilst some still resist the dancing of choirs whilst singing.

The reaction to these changes is twofold. There are those who are adapting and becoming familiar with the new form of a changed liturgy, while some feel uncomfortable with such changes and still resist such developments. Those not in favour are mostly the old people, who were with the missionaries and have good memories of them. They compare their old memories and experiences of the liturgy with what other leaders are trying to do in changing the liturgy. They weep and say, "Worship is being diluted these days." These are what Long (2001:2-9) calls "worship wars."

In favour of change are mostly the youth, those who feel free to welcome change, those who have travelled afar and seen much, and also those who associate with other Christian groups, associations and fellowships after church services. The latter people, after returning from these gatherings, want to introduce in the church what they have experienced there. Such gatherings take place either every Sunday afternoon after the church service, or during a weekday lunch hour in market places, halls or any other venues they may find. The problem is that those who have not yet shared in experiencing these gatherings do not agree with them and, therefore, do not support these changes.

Such a response to the existing liturgy seems to imply dissatisfaction with what the liturgy provides. They go out to find local music and gestures, where they become strongly aware of God's activities and discover something of themselves that meets their spiritual enrichment.

A second example of the aftermath of traditional theology in the church is how ministers and elders, who lived with the missionaries, speak. These people felt positive about the missionaries, the way they spoke the vernacular language of Chichewa, what they liked and how dressed. The missionaries' lives shaped those who stayed and lived with them to such an extent that they tended to imitate the way the missionaries spoke. When preaching, these ministers and elders change their tone of speaking. They speak in a slow-motioned tone, like a European who is learning the Chichewa language. According to them, such tones help to bring reverence to worship, i.e. Godly language. They even change the way they walk when entering the church. They realize that they are entering a holy place, so they must do everything in a "spiritual" way also to become holy. They move with a slow motion (chameleon-like) with both hands holding the Bible and the hymnbook, as they reverently enter the church. All these external gestures express their "holiness," as they approach the Holy God.

The implication of these imitations seems to uplift the European culture so that, if you want to speak to God, you must assume the European culture; yet, no culture is superior. This also explains how deeply the African identity, self-esteem and culture have been destroyed.

The discussion that will now be tackled concerns a liturgy hostile to the Chewa traditional culture and religious beliefs.

3.8 A LITURGY HOSTILE TO THE CHEWA TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS: FAILURE TO REINTERPRET, BLEND AND RECONFIGURE

As always is the case with Reformed theology, only three characteristics are held to determine whether a church is true or not. Firstly, the true church is where the Word of God is proclaimed in truth; secondly, where the two sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion are properly celebrated as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ; and thirdly, where discipline is spiritually enforced on its members.

The first two signs have received attention, but the third, that of discipline, received the most serious attention. The rules pertaining to Christian living and lifestyle are revised each year and added to the existing rules pertaining to Christian living and lifestyle (for Kamnkhwani, text) (Kamnkhwani 1990:7). Another dimension of the penetrative influence of the Gospel of salvation on the people was how the early missionaries discerned critically between Christian and pagan characters. They tried as much as possible to distance themselves from the traditional dance called *Gule wamkulu* (the great dance) and its pagan, evil practices. They codified the pagan practices, which believers should not practice, such as witchcraft, sorcery, superstition, the poison-cup and all sorts of such practices not in agreement with the Gospel (1990:7).

In his observation on the writings of the missionaries, H.A. Kamnkhwani, a church historian, noted their different descriptions of the people among whom they worked. These descriptions were based on their own observations and personal contact. Kamnkhwani (1990:53) notices that the missionaries' judgement of several aspects differed. Some wrote very negatively about the cultural background of the Malawian people, while others were much more positive. He cites Elmslie's book, *Among the wild Angoni*, on the history of the Angoni people, and Alexander Hetherwick (*The Gospel and the African*, 1934) who tried to understand the people sociologically and anthropologically to enable them to do mission work among them. While tracing the people's development from their first encounter with the missionaries to the present, Kamnkhwani regards the missionaries' presentations and descriptions as historically

significant. However, contemporary African historians and sociologists are critical, when reviewing the missionaries' books written about indigenous people. According to them, the missionaries were biased and misrepresented the people's culture and religion.

Upon reading books written by missionaries, it seems that there is truth in this perception. For instance, in his book, *A thousand miles in the heart of Africa*, Du Plessis (1905) seems to write only about his visit and the developments that have taken place in the various mission stations. He inspects what the missionaries have done, their experiences, and what they intended to do. He provides no details about the people's culture or beliefs, but writes only about the missionaries' achievements and the difficulties they faced, which is a biased approach. Kamnkhwani quotes A.C. Murray's book, *Ons Nyassa akker*, published in 1931. Murray (1990:57) mentions that, when he received an invitation from Chief Mpezeni in 1898 to send a missionary to teach his people, he sent two evangelists with a gift for the chief and a letter to the government official, Captain Margesson. In his letter he asks that the two evangelists should pave the way for "the coming of the white missionaries." Here, a bias is noted in that, firstly, the evangelists' names are not even mentioned and secondly, they are not regarded as "missionaries." The question might be asked: why is this so? Who is a missionary? What made him omit such important information? What is the true meaning of "a missionary"?

Such an approach seems to imply a real bias in the way missionaries wrote the history of the mission churches, which undermines anything African and puts it on the periphery, as it was disregarded.

Kamnkhwani (1990:67) also quotes Dennis who says:

The missionaries' attitude in many areas has been, in the eyes of many Africans, one of total hostility to traditional culture and religion. Countless customs and institutions could be listed against which one or other

mission in one or more tribes has at some time or other directed its assault.

Historically, it is true that the missionaries discouraged many African cultural and customary practices. In his book, *The Gospel and the African*, published in 1932, Alexander Hetherwick (1932:108-109) (after discussing the Nyanja and Yao cultures and religious beliefs) admits the missionaries' failure to acquire the African people's thinking in these words:

All this is but the foreshadowing of that great Christian truth which the Scottish church has almost forgotten We are thus able now to realise in some small measure how much there is in native belief and thought already cherished by him, to which the Gospel can at once make an appeal.

After acquiring a sense of Malawian culture, this is an innocent statement from an innocent missionary admitting that something somewhere was wrong about the mission approach to the Gospel. The missionaries never took into account that African heritage is embedded with much meaning in the people's rituals and symbolic language; and that one cannot understand Africans unless one comes to terms with their symbolic language (Gitari 1994:25).

No wonder, therefore, that liturgical development in Malawi followed suit. The liturgy never took into account the Chewa culture and religious beliefs. Most of the elements that make a Chewa a Chewa, were never implemented, although the first translation of the Bible was done by DRC missionaries. The Chewa cultural environment, such as the Chewa understanding of God, the rituals that were performed at Chewa rain shrines, the impact of *Gule wamkulu* on the life of a Chewa, the Chewa understanding of eschatology and the entire elements of a Chewa culture and religious beliefs failed to shape the liturgy. All along, Western Christianity with its sense of superiority as the only and unique, as total and universal, tried to understand, analyse, interpret and deal

with other cultures, starting with itself (Amalorpavadass 1990:116). Consequently, the bath water was thrown out with the baby (the Chewa culture's good elements were thrown out with the bad elements). Not everything in the Chewa culture and religion was bad, on the contrary.

Since it is in the liturgy that the convergence of the Gospel (old) and the culture (new) takes place, the liturgy that developed in the Chewa church adopted the same "face" as its theology. Adaptation to European practices was enforced, as they were considered to be Christian. For instance, African music and the concomitant dances could not be accommodated in the Chewa church liturgy, and was considered to be pagan. Only hymns imported from Western countries were allowed and were completely unknown to the Chewa. Even the historical theological emphasis through which the hymns came about, was alien to the Chewa people's Christian experience.

In contrast to this type of theology and liturgy, a discussion of the possibility of doing theology and liturgy from the people's grassroots level now follows.

3.9 DOING THEOLOGY IN THE LIGHT OF THE LITURGY

It has been noted how traditional theology was oppressive by nature, how it revolved only from above, and how it took into account only two sources, that of Scripture and Western tradition. New contexts of being evangelized were not really considered - the theology was static. Bosch (1991:427) justifiably states:

Traditional theology had been defined once and for all and now simply had to be indigenized in Third World culture without however, surrendering any of its essence. Western theology had universal validity, not least, since it was the dominant theology. The Christian faith was based on eternal, unalterable truth, which had already been stated in its final form.

It was a theology that knew neither the dynamics of culture, nor the world in which people live. Therefore, it was a source of oppression.

This general dissatisfaction with traditional theology, in both the First and Third Worlds, resulted in a new direction in doing theology, called contextual theology. Sigurd Bergmann (2003:87-112) discusses in detail theories that form a basis for contextual theology. In his discussion, he follows the North American, Catholic mission scholar, Stephen Bevans, who differentiates five models for contextual theology. These models are: the Translation Model, Anthropological Model, Praxis Model, Synthetic Model and the Transcendental Model. In his book, *God in context: A survey of contextual theology*, Bevans offers a full discussion of these models. Bergmann (2003:95-106) adds his own theory to those of Bevans, i.e. A Human Ecological Model.

Fredrick Schleiermacher (1768:34) was an important figure who spoke against traditional theology. He interpreted the Protestant Reformation as no attempt at restoring the primitive or apostolic church, as what has once been, cannot simply be brought back in a later period. The Christian church is always in the process of becoming. The present church is both the product of the past and the seed of the future. As such, theology is a reflection of the church's own life and experience (Bosch 1991:422).

Thus, by questioning traditional theology and concluding that theology was influenced or determined by the context in which it had evolved, Schleiermacher was an important theologian. In this thinking, he opted for a theology that was sensitive to contexts as opposed to traditional theology, since every text has a peculiar social setting that must be reinterpreted. By the 19th and especially the 20th centuries, this view was accepted in critical theological circles. In fact, interpreting a text is more than just a literary exercise. It must take into account the social, cultural, economic, political and religious analysis of the people about whom one theologizes. One must know the dynamic relation within a threefold dialogue of Christianity with the major realities of life: 1) dialogue with society as a whole, chiefly with the dominated, oppressed, and marginalized groups; 2) dialogue with religions, philosophies and ideologies, and 3) dialogue with all cultures, especially the local ones (Amalorpavadass 1990:127-128).

This thinking later involved the integration of indigenous elements with the Gospel, resulting in what was called “inculturation,” a word formulated from the term “culture.” In general, culture is about “the way of life of a particular group of people.” James Wm. McClendon Jr. (2000:50) defines culture as a set of meaningful practices, dominant attitudes, and characteristic ways of doing things that typify a community (or society or civilization). In brief, their culture imparts significance to what a group of people do. The prefix “in-“ added to the word “-culture” creates the word “in-culture” or “in-culturate” (the verb), meaning in general: “bringing something into” a culture. And “inculturation” is the noun that in general means: “a process or art of bringing something into a particular culture.”

Kenneth R. Ross (1996:120) defines “inculturation” as incarnating the Gospel in a given cultural context through the process by which ... the way people respond to the Gospel faith; the way they celebrate that response ... liturgy; the way they live it ... Christian living. He continues to say that inculturation is a total process; it includes all that has been received from God. In defining the same word, Bosch (1991:453) says, “Inculturation comprises much more than culture in the traditional or anthropological sense of the term. It involves the entire context: Social, economic, political, religious, and educational.” The Gospel must remain the Good News while becoming, up to a certain point, a cultural phenomenon, while it takes into account the meaning systems already present in the context. On the one hand, it offers the cultures “the knowledge of the divine ministry,” while, on the other, it helps them “to bring forth from their own living tradition original expressions of Christian life, celebration and thought” (1991:455).

Such an understanding of the word is more from the top (the theologian side), than so much from considering the *interconnectedness* of what is inculturated with the knowledge of those who use it at grass-roots level. It reflects more on the interpretation of Christianity embedded in the context – academic theology (Bergmann 2003:79). The ongoing processes of *experience* and *interpretation* of those advocating for “incul-

turation” are not so much with those using it. The thinking derives more from those in the academic circles than those using it at grass-roots level. As the Good News takes into account the meaning systems already present in a context, those who bring this Good News, in one way or another, impact on those receiving it. There is need for a link between those in authority (those advocating for inculturation) and those at grass-roots level (those using the inculturated indigenous elements), who feel the impact of that, which has been inculturated. This will include a contextual analysis in relation to people’s experiences and interpretations in light of the Gospel of Jesus.

This means that a step further for this thought of inculturation is needed; laity involvement in all that happens in theology and in liturgy is needed. The theologian must temporarily consider him-/herself no better than those with whom he/she is working. This is pastoral theology that originates in the believer’s experiences. It expands and deepens theology’s basis in reality and increases its reflexive conditions (Bergmann 2003:81). It puts academic theology in the position to develop practically and theoretically, and differentiate new relations in spheres where Christian spirituality and interpretations of life arise (2003:81). Here, theologians must discard both their status and right by emptying themselves, taking the form of servants (*cf.* Philippians 2:6-7 for Jesus’ career in humility), where they voluntarily decide to empty, as well as humble, themselves – a very example of self-denial (*cf.* chapter 2.6.4). Theologians need not dominate in the choice of indigenous elements to blend with the Gospel. Rather, through their daily way of life within the social system, the people at grassroots must accept a greater role than those in authority in the whole process of reconfiguration. Experiences in the social context must influence knowledge (2003:76), which means that the theologians’ role is to mediate the discernment of such an alternative world, a world characterised by God’s radical presence in Jesus Christ and the Spirit (Mouton 2005:16). Those at the grassroots must get the chance to reinterpret their contexts in the light of Jesus’ Gospel for their life to continue through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Such an approach will put *Jesus* at the centre of the whole process, rather than the theologian or the people at grassroots, because both will be searching for Jesus' alternative world that brings peace and love to their own context and culture. At the same time, doing contextual theology will incorporate all of Bergmann's six theories mentioned in this chapter, which will be of assistance. Piet Naudé (1996:20) quotes Finnegan who argues that we should extend the term "literature" to include "the unwritten forms of millions of people throughout the world, now and earlier, who do not employ writing," whilst retaining the insight that there are obviously considerable differences in performance and transmission. It is clear that, for something to be locally accepted, it must be relevant. The representation and interpretation of oral religious expressions must take serious note of the fundamental insights pertaining to an oral hermeneutic (1996:23).

My fieldwork among the youth in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod is a good example of salient theological implications, if an outsider wishes to "hear" the voice of oral theologians. Only an oral hermeneutic can guard against misunderstandings, such as "repetition of a phrase implies its importance for the performers," which becomes a necessity to preserve the integrity of oral theologians and to open the universal church to their enriching insights (Naudé 1996:23). This realises the fact that the retelling of biblical stories, together with African cultural folktales, as a form of cultural hermeneutics would "have to be informed by and grounded in critical theories that seek to avoid all forms of oppression" (Mouton 2005:14). Ultimately, this will induce everyone to participate actively in reinterpreting, blending and reconfiguring their experiences with the story of Jesus, in line with their cultural understanding, the outcome of which will be relevant to all.

What Ross and Bosch suggest can be compared to an earthquake disrupting the existing structure of an entire social system, displacing all the physical features of the place and making the soil molten. As the shaken physical features and social systems begin to settle down, this "settling down" involves everything that the earthquake has

disrupted. Many things will have changed their original shapes and places. The new settlement of each item in the affected area may be analogous to a process of reconfiguration where that which has been blended, recontextualizes the old context to attain a new relevant context.

Here, the earthquake may be analogous to the incarnation of the Gospel into a given cultural context, and the “settling down” of the area affected by the earthquake, to the blending of different indigenous elements (or whatever may disrupt the existing social systems), reinterpreting them as a community or group to make life together meaningful. In this sense, by virtue of placement attribution, or rewording of meaning to fit into a changing world, life continues to make sense. This will involve all sectors of life as everyone is affected in such a context - the old and the young, men and women, girls and boys, the rich and the poor, those in authority and those at grass-roots level. Every person will be cooperating for the social system to work. For this reason “ordinary” and “professional” readers – biblical scholars, systematic and practical theologians – all share the *moral obligation* to engage the creative tension between the dynamics of these texts and the multiple needs, suffering, fears, and hopes of present-day audiences (Mouton 2005:17).

In this case, inculturation not so much examines the impact of what has come into a culture or context. Rather, inculturation only allows indigenous elements integrated with the Gospel, without considering how meaningful that which has come into the culture is to the recipients. As opposed to this, reconfiguration reinterprets this new situation, which has come about as a result of disruption, for life to make sense within a particular social system in order to live Jesus’ Good News, in which knowledge is linked to action and passion. This becomes a focus for theological theoretical reflection and liberating praxis (Ackermann 1996:33), which extends to life in Jesus forever. It brings to light people’s experiences and examines the meanings attached to those new experiences in order to make living possible. This means that those who choose to inhabit their strange, alternative world, desperately need one another in the process of

understanding and making sense (Mouton 2005:17).

The birth of Third World theologies, as they struggled for different freedoms, made a real breakthrough in context-based theologizing. Theology had to be, and must be, done from the grassroots, so too liturgy. The people themselves should be involved in theologising as they know their problems and needs, the changes that are occurring in their society, and how these problems can be resolved practically (the criterion of Christian orthopraxis-theological expression that leads to action). Naudé (1996:28) says that, in Africa (not only in South Africa), we need to introduce other elements in theologizing, namely “voicing theology” and “hearing theology,” which complement “reading” and “doing theology.”

If the Christian church in Africa is to survive and be relevant (Gitari 1994:22) and effective in her mission to contemporary Africa, she must adapt to its cultural context and acknowledge that the positive cultural values and the present realities of social, economic, political and religious factors that influence and condition people’s life as culture, are not static but dynamic (1994:22). Theology that derives from such circumstances can empower people at grassroots, and is theology that cannot be done in isolation from faith traditions, in which all Christians believe. And, these faith traditions must be used as measures for theologizing and liturgizing contextually, taking into account experiences of their circumstances and reflecting on them, and recognizing the possibilities of how they can be implemented.

This will involve an ongoing dialogue between the text and context, which examines and analyses all the events in life so that, in so doing, good news can arise out of the situation. In the same way, when attending to liturgical inculturation, those responsible must ask: who are the subjects and authors of this inculturation? Not simply: what can be incorporated from cultures? If a people’s culture is ignored or demeaned in the early steps of evangelization, it is inevitable that harm will be done to these people and that it will be difficult for the Gospel to go to the roots of their culture and their lives (Power 1995:233).

Bosch (1991:425) rightly quotes Samuel Rayan who says: “In our methodology, practice and theory, action and reflection, discussion and prayer, movement and silence, social analysis and hermeneutics, involvement and contemplation; all these constitute a single process.” In this case, there is no one theology or liturgy, since every theology and liturgy is context-conditioned. In all the contexts, Jesus must be meaningful in the light of the Gospel taking a new meaning that is relevant to the recipients. This is exactly what reconfiguration tries to achieve: reinterpreting and blending to create a new context relevant to the people. This means that Jesus not only reveals God, but also the human being. By his being the revelation of man, He becomes the revelation of God (Amalorpavadass 1990:117). That is the most profound meaning of his incarnation. He suffered and died so that, by the power of the resurrection, suffering and death would not have the last word (Brown & Miller 2005:86). Jesus has a word of freedom and redemption for all.

Contextual theology, therefore, may be defined as a way of doing theology in which one takes into account the spirit and message of the Gospel; the tradition of the Christian people; the culture in which one is theologizing and social change in that culture, whether brought about by Western technological process or the grassroots struggle for equality, justice and liberation (Bevans 1992:1). In this case, contextualization should serve to highlight, not obscure, distinctive elements of the Christian faith (Brink & Witvliet 2003:346).

The following discussion examines the need for a culturally conditioned liturgy.

3.9.1 The need for a culturally conditioned liturgy

The Christian faith exists only as “translated” into a culture (Bosch 1991:447). As Brink and Witvliet rightly state, all liturgical action is culturally conditioned. Chupungco also concludes that the liturgy, as an action of a concrete ecclesial community, by necessity, is a cultural reality. Christian worship, both in its language and rites, is so inextricably linked to the people’s culture, that it is impossible to celebrate it outside a

cultural context or in a cultural vacuum (Best & Heller 1995:56). No circumspect attempt at liturgical reform, liturgical inculturation, or cultural critique can glibly assume that the cultural environment has not shaped its liturgy. All liturgical participants are products of a particular culture, with its patterns of communication and symbolization. Liturgical traditions themselves are products of earlier cultural contexts (Brink & Witvliet 2003:345). It has already been noted how Western Christians were unaware of the fact that their theology was culturally conditioned. They should have reinterpreted the Gospel that they had brought in the light of their new situations (cultures).

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the emergence of nationalism in the Third World contributed much to the struggle for cultural identity, as well as national identity. This was vital when doing contextual theologies. The founding of African Independent Churches is a good example of this struggle for their cultural and national identity. In the African Independent Churches, they would worship God in their own traditional way without being barred by anybody in the use of their cultural entities. The Zionist Churches in South Africa is a good example where music and leadership must be interpreted related to the traditional African philosophies of music and leadership. In his book: *African Independent Churches today*, Kitshoff (1996) states that there is a pattern that links Zionist Christian practice with traditional African thought. Right from birth, children receive music lessons coupled with basic philosophies of life, and insights into the nature of the world, which they will further piece together and enrich on their own as they grow up. They grow up among many other children who receive similar instructions. Soon, they understand that society demands of them to establish their individual identity. Through asserting their individual identity, they have to display their understanding of themselves, the people around them, the surrounding environment, God and the ancestors and, in making music, this and many other factors exist and are revealed at a concrete level.

Zulu music is ordered in such a way that, without the participation of others, no individual can make meaningful music. In the Zionist Churches, it is significant that

what is practised in their traditional way of life has been blended with the Christian teaching. Music exposes people; others can then assess them objectively to determine whether they meet the criteria for social and sometimes political leadership. Even today, it is evident among the Zulus that those who are accepted as socio-political leaders, are also great musicians. Inkosi Mangosuthu Buthelezi and the Zulu King bear testimony to this (Kitshoff 1996:176-178).

A pattern relating to the traditional African world as a basis for the Zionist interpretation of the Christian message can be traced in that African religious principles have been blended with the Christian ideals, resulting in a reconfigured state, which is unique in this respect, and relevant to the people who hold them. This imparts their unique identity to the Zionist Churches. They use their traditional tunes, instruments and dances when worshipping God. In longing for their identity, they took into account the possible danger of applying their cultural identity as a theological source. This would automatically lead to cultural romanticism, as there is no way that culture can return to where it was before colonization. What has happened, has happened, and culture is dynamic - it keeps on changing. In this case, contextual theologizing should start from a culture's present position, provided that all aspects of cultural identity, social change and popular religiosity are taken into account, along with the elements of Scripture and tradition. It must reflect common elements in the Christian tradition through the unique expressions of a particular cultural context. There must be a judicious balance of particularization and universality (Brink & Witvliet 2003:346). For this, the church is an interpretative community in ongoing engagement with the remembered patterns of God's praxis. The sedimentary rock of this engagement is evident in the patterns of the church's worship and practice (Hendriks 2004:29).

A careful analysis of contemporary African history and society proves that culture has been, and still is, the only efficient weapon for Africa's liberation struggle. It was African culture that saved the black American identity (Abraham 1990:36). Therefore, this dissertation proposes reconfiguration of the CCAP – Nkhoma Synod's liturgy by

blending the existing liturgy with new challenges, with the aim of creating a reconfigured liturgy and context that will be authentic and relevant to the Malawian church. I am aware that this may not be warmly welcomed by some people, but I am mindful of the fact that congregations that systematically avoid conflict, are also very likely to avoid changing while they possibly have a perfectly healthy, stable constituent environment (Ammerman 1997:322). This implies that, to accomplish this, a determined effort is required to find resources, establish new partnerships and develop new leaders, new programmes and new ideas (1997:322).

This will involve blending the existing context with the new challenges that the church faces, as the privilege and preference to express experiences of agony must lie with those who are in agony (Bergmann 2003:78). Such challenges may include: hunger, poverty and unemployment, the HIV/Aids pandemic, child labour, child abuse, child trafficking, crime and violence, political instability and corruption. With these social factors, how can a Malawian liturgy address not only that which is spiritual, but also that which is physical? What social impact can such a liturgy have on those using it? How holistic can the church be in such circumstances? Ultimately, one will create a liturgy that offers profound witness to, as well as experience of, *koinonia*. Such a liturgical action will reflect common elements in the Malawian church through unique expressions of Malawi's particular cultural context. This is an attempt to take into consideration the particularities of Malawian culture, which will eventually enhance the universal elements of Christian worship. Inculturation is not simply an expression of Christian elements by means of cultural symbols, but the totality of a religion interacting and integrating with the totality of a culture, which itself could be integrated with another religion (Amalorpavadass 1990:43).

In Africa, theology must be able to read the Christian faith tradition in the light of its present realities and then discern what God requires of it (Hendriks 2004:29). Not only those in authority can do this, but rather all Christians from the grassroots level, as the body of Christ, the family of God. Faith communities can do it, which, in the end, will

bring diversity of existence and unity in their communion with God. Therefore, discernment should take place with a realization of this unity and of being one family sharing a common vocation and destiny (Hendriks 2004:31), which is expressed in the liturgy, during worship. In the liturgy, people of God at large, are mostly and directly involved. In so doing, there is a kind of liberation where that which was denied to them is now their legitimate right. In the liturgy real contextual theology is inculturated and celebrated during worship. This means its new historical reference changes, shapes and nuances the liturgy. The liturgy has a way of making a historical memory theologically, cosmically, dramatically and grandly significant so that all the hopes and fears of a particular people, from generation to generation are mobilised, gathered, made present and available in this particular concrete liturgical event (Brueggemann 1989:39).

Contextualization (for Ross: enculturation) is, in fact, much more than a mere translation of liturgical texts into the local language, or a cosmetic adaptation of certain liturgical actions: dancing, drumming, etc. There should also be an incorporation of elements of the local culture, which makes people feel they are celebrating or meeting God on their home ground (Ross 1996:122). This is what I call reinterpretation, blending, being a process of reconfiguration. Unfortunately, the church often has spiritualistic contempt for the visible, sensible material world, which is allowed, and indeed required, to express itself and to cooperate in the glory that the church renders to God through the liturgy (Jungmann 1966:23).

In this case, some features of the Malawian traditional worship should be considered: the ritual performance, understanding of God and secret societies. Liturgy will become credible when it fulfils the condition of becoming integrated into human existence (Lukken 1994:61). The mission of “telling among the nations” (which is neither Western, nor imperialistic, nor committed to an economic ideology) depends on faithful liturgy. Missional testimony to the nations cannot take place until a new world of social possibility and theological governance is imagined, and that imagining is primarily

liturgical (Brueggemann 1989:158-159). When Christians take the new questions seriously, they will come to a true renewal of Christian liturgy which will bear the stamp of the faithful, who, in this changed and changing world, continually ask how they can act truthfully and faithfully to the Gospel (Lukken 1994:61). In this case, liturgical inculturation need not necessarily begin from liturgy or theology as such, or even from an academic and bureaucratic analysis of cultures from above and outside, but rather from anthropology, the trends and aspects of the evolving cultures of specific groups, the social analysis and various surveys of the socio-political-economic concerns (Amalorpavadass 1990:127). For this, spirituality will be an integrating factor, together with the theological and anthropological factors. This spiritual experience is also a valid theological reflection on inculturation, as it helps the participating community to share a common spiritual exercise.

Now, the discussion will centre on the reconfiguration of the liturgy in the light of new challenges.

3.10 RECONFIGURATION OF THE LITURGY IN THE LIGHT OF NEW CHALLENGES

Jungmann (1966:9-10) defines liturgy as the worship of God: where realization of God is alive in people's hearts, we find a proper understanding of what the church is – the community of those who belong to Christ and are called to the task of spreading his life and prayer throughout the world – there, the liturgy will never harden into mere formalism, but will create new and living forms for itself. This definition puts the reader in a fix. The last part of it says, "... will create new and living forms." This implies the dynamism of the liturgy. There is always reinterpretation where new events are blended with the old. The liturgy need not be static; it must move with the time and with the context in which it is used.

Such a conclusion is in conflict with the traditional conviction that liturgy was, by definition, a mystery from which people must keep their distance (Lukken 1994:49). One must take cognisance of shifts in the social cultural order that have taken place,

and are still taking place, and which have radical consequences for the Christian worldview. It should be noted that, with people's life experiences changing to include dynamic movement and more participation, a worship that does not also move in that direction will become increasingly tedious and out of step with the world in which people are living (Webber 1998:30-31). Such a change should take place because biblical worship is given to participation and mystery, as it is broad enough to include all aspects where God breaks in and becomes present to touch the worshippers' lives and create them anew. So, there is need for reconfiguration of the liturgy in order for it to be meaningful and relevant to new situations. Furthermore, to revise the role and practice of the church in a new contextual setting requires the discernment of God's will to receive his guidance (Hendriks 2004:27).

In the definition, another issue is the involvement of every believer. The phrase, "where the realization of God is alive in people's hearts," implies that the liturgy is a community involvement. No person in the liturgy is idle or a stranger. All members should experience God's presence in one way or another. There should be a practical expression of faith, hope and love. There should not be a survival of the fittest, where those in leadership, or the elderly, sideline "the weak" or the youth. The old and the young, men and women, the rich and the poor, married and unmarried, widows and orphans, the employed and unemployed, the upper and lower class – in Jesus Christ, all must belong to one family. Participatory worship engages the whole person and is joyous, and full of dynamic life, and in this God breaks into our daily lives with transforming power (Webber 1998:31-32). It is a worship that allows God to break through the walls that people build around them and where worshippers feel the real presence of God. This is a worship that makes God real and present in the worshippers' hearts. So, they must all participate and together receive God's gifts. In this way, the whole body of Christ will express solidarity and fellowship. Ultimately, this demonstrates the church's unity in Christ, and brings glory to God.

By participation in the liturgy, each person is able to absorb naturally the corporate experience of God's presence and power (Atkins 2004:71). This natural absorption can happen only when one participates from within one's context. It is in worship that the church encounters the Holy Creator of the universe, and people return to the waters of baptism, dying and rising anew with Christ, who calls everyone to faithful discipleship, which involves participation, using all that God has given to each believer – the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Worshipping churches that experience growth are those that are aware of the shift towards a dynamic worldview, a shift that seeks to encounter a worship shaped by the biblical and historical tradition (Webber 1998:28). Atkins (2004:111) rightly says:

One of the purposes of worship is to conform the will of the worshipper to the will of God. This requires the mind to carry out a continuing check of the established patterns of life and how they match with the changing circumstances, and how both conform to the revealed will of God. Worship also seeks to reinforce or challenge the patterns of beliefs held by the worshippers and to promote the required changes.

The question then is, how can this community live together? As the community involves relationships rather than material matters, how can this relationship continue without being broken? A point to note is that the quality of the unity of the group determines the context and this, in turn, strengthens or weakens the unity. When bad relationships develop, they will break the corporate existence of the community. This might result in people leaving the community, because of misunderstandings that occur because of differences in perception of issues that arise.

Such experiences are called "worship wars." These "wars" include the introduction of new things in the church, misunderstandings over which songs to be used in worship, how the youth should conduct themselves at their gatherings, the use of unique slogans in worship, how women should participate in worship and the issue of being

“born again.” All these issues among members reveal the church’s dynamism, the challenges the church must deal with and whether she is really the body of Christ. At the same time, the worship of one God reveals the unity of this community, whose members are continually linking themselves with the experience of God and of life. This definitely will create differences in the perception of how they experience the change that might occur. Where there is congruity between the two experiences, worship flows easily (Atkins 2004:111). Where there is change of perception, the worshipper is challenged to reconcile the previous patterns of worship with the changed perceptions (2004:111). This is what this thesis advocates: reinterpretation, blending as a process of reconfiguration. Every member, with love, must struggle for the sake of “the other.” This is what ought to take place in the liturgy during worship, if everyone is to participate.

What follows now concludes this chapter.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed how the Gospel of Jesus Christ was interpreted theologically in Malawi in the light of the liturgy. While discussing the Chewa culture and religious beliefs, it explained how the Western way of thinking was superimposed on non-Western Christians. Then an overview of the aftermath of traditional theology followed; how traditional theology left footmarks on the lives of the Malawian people. Then contextualization and inculturation were explained and how they should be implemented. Thereafter, possibilities of having a liturgy that is contextually tuned and relevant to the people were suggested.

In this chapter, the following five anthropological qualities emerged that are vital when doing user-sensitive theology:

- Human beings are individualized representatives of human nature and are immersed in particular cultures.

- Cultural stories of all people differ greatly and should be handled from that perspective.
- Different groups of people assign different meanings and values to whatever takes place.
- Members of a given group mutually share, appreciate, and display behavioral patterns of meaning and feeling different from those of other groups.
- When doing contextual theology, there is a need to reinterpret, blend and reconfigure symbols, matters and events of the receiving cultures.

Chapter 5 of this dissertation will take these qualities into account when doing a theological analysis of the traditional Malawian choral songs that the youth sing and will discuss the role of music in the church. This will involve theological–liturgical evaluation.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROLE OF MUSIC: A THEOLOGICAL–LITURGICAL EVALUATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 discussed in general the Chewa world, before the coming of Christianity and it was noted that the Chewa were already religious before Christianity arrived. Also, that the Chewa had their own problems of witchcraft and Ngoni invasions at the time the missionaries came to evangelise them. Then, Chewa *Gulewamkulu* was described. An examination of how the Gospel of Jesus Christ was interpreted theologically in the light of the liturgy followed. In the process, it was observed that most missionaries never blended the Christian teaching in order to reinterpret what they had brought for evangelization. This failure to reinterpret and blend has resulted in neglecting the receiving culture. A possible way of doing theology was then suggested.

Now, this chapter will examine traditional Malawian music prior to Christianity, the role music had for the people and the role of dancing in traditional music. A discussion of the way missionaries used English/Scottish music in the liturgy without blending it with the traditional music, follows. The consequence of this type of liturgizing will be shown.

This chapter also discusses the Malawian initiative in the development of both English/Scottish, as well as traditional Malawian music. Some Malawian musicians are cited to prove that both types of music are important in worship. Following this is a discussion of the place of traditional music in contextual liturgy, as well as a theological and liturgical evaluation of music and the problems that may be encountered if new songs are included in a liturgy. This chapter then closes with a conclusion.

4.2 TRADITIONAL MALAWIAN MUSIC BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY

Malawians generally view themselves as musical, regardless of formal training. They are born musicians. One does not need training to be a good singer. There is even a saying, “*ukayipa dziwa nyimbo*” (literally: if you are ugly, know how to sing). This implies that you may not have other talents, but you have one: you can sing. Everybody has a gift for singing. Furthermore, one does not need training in order to be a musician. Right from birth, Malawians are born musicians as well as dancers. To a Malawian, the cry at birth is the beginning of singing, while women, present at the birth in the maternity house, immediately join in with ululating and dancing. All born Malawians are expected to be composers, singers, as well as dancers who can perform to any given tune. They are born with music making, dancing techniques and the theory of music; as such, music has shaped the community with Malawian cultures. It is a corporate activity. For Malawians, every moment is an opportunity to sing. It is clear that much oral poetry is directly associated with rhythmic movements (Finnegan 1979:92). Songs for the workplace are a particularly clear example. Whether one is walking, pounding, cooking, fishing, in a group hunting, or working - all is done to music. Here, the culturally defined rhythm of the songs and music help to define and embellish the physical movements, rather than being structured by them (1979:92). This powerful tool has a great influence on Malawians.

Therefore, I shall now discuss the role of music in Malawian culture.

4.2.1 The role of singing in Malawian culture

In Malawian culture, music formed part of everyday activities. It was embedded in whatever the people did. As such, it expressed the people’s way of life and was orally transmitted during life’s events, such as birth rituals, initiations, marriage ceremonies, entertainment, the coronation of tribal monarchs, war, harvesting, hunting, worship and even at funerals. The songs contained moral teaching, where the songs explained behaviour, demonstrate origins or justify societal constraints (Agawo 1995:178). They

also expressed happiness, sorrow and requests. These moral messages were communicated to shape people's attitudes by reminding them of their ancestral virtues, responsibilities and commitments. Thus, some messages were religious by nature, an indication that Malawians believed in a God.

The worship, together with the songs, took place at special places, such as shrines. Here, special rituals were performed whilst songs were being sung. In times of famine, drought, or any calamity, special prayers were conducted fully accompanied by the singing of songs, which were sung to invoke spirits of the dead, asking the deities for blessings. Traditional songs were also sung in praise of the Supreme Being, the High God (for details see 3.2.2 & 3.2.3). Most of these songs were based on the cantor-chorus and call-response and had powers to invoke a different, deeper world for a group and permit them to participate in what they expressed. This music often accompanied dancing.

Now, a discussion of the role of dancing in Malawian culture follows.

4.2.2 THE ROLE OF DANCING IN MALAWIAN CULTURE

Often, Malawian songs do not allow the body to remain inactive when singing. The songs identify with, and relate to, a special dance. In this case, much Malawian musical behaviour stems from unconscious cultural motivations that may be very difficult to articulate verbally (Hawn 2003:171). Mary E. McGann (2002:19) rightly describes such cultural motivations as: "I think, therefore I am." A black African perception might be summarized, "I am, I dance the other, therefore I dance."

In black Africa, you dance because you feel. And to dance is a verb with precisely that object – complement; you never dance without dancing something or someone. Now, to dance is to uncover reality, to recreate, to fill one's being with vital force, to live a fuller life, to BE, which, after all, is the highest mode of knowing.

The musical tones were sometimes peculiar to a non-African ear and were punctuated by ululations, ecstatic groans, cries and fainting in the process, all of which would seem strange to a foreigner who would dismiss the traditional African music and dance as immoral (Lukwata 2003:156). This is noted in Du Plessis's (1905:69) comment in his book, *A thousand miles in the heart of Africa*; he could not understand what was happening when each teacher with his group of singers was intent on welcoming him with their own special song at Nkhoma. The songs were sung simultaneously, which, from a Malawian viewpoint, was fine. But, from the visitor's viewpoint, the teachers were, to a degree, inharmonious in their singing and dancing. Du Plessis could not deem this to be harmonious and beautiful. For him to appreciate what was happening, he should have adopted the Chewa culture.

For such songs, a variety of instruments were used. They were also used to accompany dancing and to communicate messages of events taking place in the village. Such instruments included drums, horns, *kalimba*, *badza* (Chewa flute), *chisekese*, *mkangala* (a single-stringed instrument shaped like a bow), and a *bangwe* (looks like a banjo). In all this, the Malawian values were prompted through oral communication passed on by music, sounds, gestures, motifs, costumes and instruments, which related to the diverse Malawi culture. Therefore, Malawian participation in song went beyond mere lyrics. The melody, rhythm and meaning of the lyrics all inspired Malawians to sing at top of their voices, with all their heart, strength, lips and being.

An overview of the coming of Christianity, and the way the missionaries failed to blend Chewa music with the music they brought, now follows.

4.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUSIC IN THE CHEWA LITURGY – FAILURE TO RECONFIGURE

For 16 centuries, from late Roman times until today, the Christian churches had a purely mono-cultural view of the world. For them, there was only one universal culture, that of Europe, from which mission proceeded. Hawn (2003:22) contends that the 19th

and early 20th centuries' aesthetic issues about music focused on defining its beauty and says, "There was no question that the search for objective beauty in music, an over-whelming Western endeavour, was defined particularly in Euro-North American terms. The Europeans' problem was that they approached their studies with a Western, rational, philosophical and theological mind (Gitari 1994:21). True interpretation of symbolic rituals would not suffice without the researcher's full participation and without acquiring the African people's philosophies. As it is true that Western rational and philosophical standards cannot rationalise and abstract some of the African symbolic rituals and religious beliefs (1994:21), it is no surprise, therefore, that the music of other cultures was rarely mentioned. The focus was on objective analysis, e.g. measuring the intervals of music scales and defining the categories of musical instruments – a Western approach (Hawn 2003:22). This correlates with the teaching of traditional theology and liturgy, where this culture was considered superior to other cultures. In the field of music, there was no real consideration of other cultures. The receiving culture's music was not considered when theologizing and liturgizing. For several generations, missionaries exported Eurocentric psalmody and hymnody around the world (Brink & Witvliet 2003:331), and then used it in their liturgy, ritual and congregational song.

During this time, European culture held absolute values in relation to any other culture. European fabrics of relation and its characteristics of internal coherence were imposed on any receiving culture that was evangelized. Its own special symbolic order - unique in itself - had its own repercussions for the receiving culture's whole system. This meant bringing drastic changes to social, political and economic life and also had repercussions in the way religious issues were managed. This resulted in breaking the coherence of the symbolic order of the receiving culture's elements to the point of being marginalised. Ultimately, Christianity was regarded as an instrument of domination, as most of the indigenous cultural phenomena and religious ritual, including liturgy, were denied. Liturgy then became an ideology and instrument of power that oppressed people (Lukken 2005:174).

By the mid 20th century, the way of thinking began to change. In music, the human factor attained paramount importance. Music aesthetics began to link the qualitative analysis of music to the nature of human emotion and the ways in which art induced and objectified emotion (Brink & Witvliet 2003:22). As liturgy involves expressions that induce the awareness of God to the worshipper, “good music” enhances that process. By “good music,” we mean music that empowers the congregation and provides the congregation with a means to express the thoughts and emotions of their worship (Long 2001:63), i.e. music that is not alien to those using it. Also, by “good music” we mean music that is adaptable: it can allow new-users’ reinterpretations. In addition, it is music that withstands, but also follows, the various situations (generations) and continues the dynamic process of interpretation in the Bible/New Testament. Here, it is the flexibility and adaptability of specific compositions that gives them their ageless, ever-new and self-renewing properties (Riedel 1966-69:164).

Erik Routley (1917-1982) was prominent among those who helped to place the study of hymns squarely into the theological and liturgical arenas (Hawn 2003:25). The outpouring of the English congregational songs since 1960, reflects a wide variety of liturgical, theological, social, evangelical and cultural concerns (2003:25). The focus of the studies was not only on the internal structure of the songs themselves, i.e. poetry, scriptural and apocryphal allusions, melodic forms, but also on the lives of the people who sang them, the spiritual values undergirding these people, the context in which they were sung, and the culture that shaped both the people and their songs (2003:25). Hymnological scholarship, in this manner, had begun to pursue contextual issues, which also took place in the field of theology. This diversity has led to the sharing of musical and textual resources among cultural traditions (Brink & Witvliet 2003:331).

Therefore, I shall now prove that, when contextual music is pursued in a liturgy, the role of music is observed and the diversity of congregational life is respected. Eventually, the whole church will participate in the singing.

4.4 THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN LITURGY

In his book, *Rituals in abundance: Critical reflections on the place, form and identity of Christian ritual in our culture*, Gerard Lukken (2005:458) rightly states that music is a very primary expression of culture and meaning. Music is directed to the ear, but at the same time, it involves all the senses, one's whole corporality. Its place is in the realm of preventative symbolism that has the power to call up another deeper world, to heal people's pain, sorrow, and loneliness and enables one to recreate a world of hope and trust. This means that music defines the shape of the liturgy. The whole worship may be labelled cold (when worshippers do not feel God's real presence), or hot (where worshippers are aware of God's presence) only through music. Music gives life to worship.

Music that adds life to worship is inclusive by nature. It aims to reach people of all ages and of all status and has the power to bring people together. Such music has a central and unifying element through which people can share a religious experience. Johannes Riedel (1966-1969:152) relates how religious people of the 19th century were involved in making music. He says that, in the 19th century, music did not consider people from other cultures and, as a result, it was intended only for a particular group of people. This alienation caused a lack of development and retarding of new and vital music in the churches of the 20th century.

It is important always to keep in mind the Christian motive for singing: the celebration of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and death. This He did for all peoples and, therefore, should be celebrated by all when gathered. Music should encourage dialogue and predispose the worshippers to participate actively. It should enliven the spirit as it instils hope (Lukwata 2003:153). Music must contribute meaningfully to the total experiencing of Jesus Christ and must support the actions of the assembly in Christian worship; in other words, it must be functional (Brink & Witvliet 2003:339).

Music also is one of the greatest contributors towards liturgical and theological cross-pollination. The words of a song that is used in a liturgy contain theology. Each song's general cultural context, the musical performance practised in the original or sending culture, and each song's potential liturgical use in the worship of the receiving culture (the cross-cultural component) must be known (Hawn 2003:19). This implies an integration of elements or integration of music. Once blended, such music will produce a reinterpreted state that is from neither culture, but has been reconfigured into a new situation to suit the new context. This means that music must develop a sense of musical toleration that welcomes the various idioms of contemporary society; at the same time, traditional dance, instruments, tunes and gestures present good theology.

In this way, music can bridge the gulf between the true state of being human and the predicament of particular people in a given society, and especially the alienation that springs from the class struggle and human exploitation (Hawn 2003:161-162).

In worship, music helps people to recognize God's presence among them. This can take place by means of songs that offer praise, confess sin, accept forgiveness, hear God's word, respond with offerings, and move into the world to lives that reflect the power of Christ's resurrection (Bradley 2003:358). Music can move people to act in ways that they might not choose if dealing with only rational thought (2003:361). Because of this power of music, it can be both the church's most trusted friend and the most scorned enemy, as there are times when music can be religious or non-religious. However, its sacred or non-sacred character is contextual (2003:362), since the meaning of music resides in the people who sing, not in the sounds they hear. Music must, therefore, be faithful to the text. In other words, the tunes must honestly support the text in the specific context in which the song will be sung (2003:362). The theology of the song must be relevant to the context in which it is sung.

Now, a discussion of developments that have taken place in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod liturgy, mainly in the area of music, follows.

4.4.1 Outcomes of the failure to reconfigure traditional music in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod

There is general agreement that most of the reasons why independent churches were founded in Malawi relate to the Europeans' failure to blend what they had brought (Christian teaching) with indigenous cultures. Unlike in the central and southern regions, missionaries in the northern region (Livingstonia Synod) of Malawi were conscious of the indigenous cultures. As a result, over half of the songs in the CCAP Livingstonia Synod hymnbook are indigenous, composed by indigenous people of the North. The missionaries blended the English/Scottish songs with the Ngoni, Tumbuka or Tonga songs that developed from traditional dances and compiled a reconfigured hymnbook that was sensitive to all involved cultures. This hymnal comprised a variety of tunes. During worship, ululation accompanies traditional dance and thus, worshippers remain in their culture in worshipping.

In the central region, where the CCAP Nkhoma Synod operates, failure to incorporate Chewa traditional music has resulted in the forming of independent churches, such as the African Abraham Church, the African Yakobo Church, the Last Church and the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. Although there are other reasons for their leaving the CCAP Church, such as failure to accept discipline, hunger for leadership, failure to utilize talents, money-related reasons – often, their reasons also are music-related. They say music in the CCAP Church is dull. To prove that their reasons are music-related, when they start a new denomination, they use the same CCAP Church hymnbook for their songs, but just to change the English/Scottish tunes to traditional tunes. Their traditional tunes accommodate traditional gestures and dance, ululation and foot-stamping. Here, active participation becomes vibrant. The worshippers are free to use their own cultural elements during worship without being stopped. They worship within their context with Malawian tunes, which are the same as those they would have sung at home. There is no difference in the melodies, be it at home or in church. Their culture of dancing, singing and gesturing continues, even in church.

I shall now discuss parallel developments within the CCAP Nkhoma Synod.

4.4.2 Parallel developments within the CCAP Nkhoma Synod Church

In 1927, in Edinburgh, Tweeddale Court London: 33 Paternoster published the CCAP Nkhoma Synod missionaries' oldest hymnbook. The Hymnal Committee of the Federated Missions of Nyasaland that met in 1910 compiled it. The title of this hymnbook was *Nyimbo za Mulungu, Zolembedwa M'chinyanja ndi M'chiyao*. In 1916, the first edition appeared but, in 1927, Yao translations were included. This hymnbook contained hymns from especially various missionary bodies' hymnbooks that were used in Malawi at that time. Some of the older hymns were revised, and many new ones added to make the collection as complete as possible. In this hymnbook, there were 310 songs translated into Chichewa and 90 translated into Yao, totalling 400 songs, of which none was indigenous - all were European by nature.

Nevertheless, It is important to note the missionaries' great work in translating these songs into the indigenous languages. The songs were in Tonic sol-fa, which indicates the missionaries' zeal to teach music reading. A second edition to this hymnbook appeared in 1954, then a third in 1975. Today, the changed title of the hymnbook is *Nyimbo za Mulungu*, but the Yao hymns, as well as the Tonic sol-fa notes, have since been omitted. These songs are well worked out, covering most of the Christian events and are biblically and theologically sound. Some of the areas these songs cover include; the holiness of God (Hymn 1), the trinity (Hymn 1), Praises to God (Hymn 12), Salvation by faith alone (Hymn 372), carrying one's own cross (Hymn 31), Easter songs (Hymn 42), foreigners in this world (Hymn 298), the birth of Jesus (Hymns 24, 26, 265, 269), entering the New Year (Hymns 254, 255), Pentecost (Hymn 66), Repentance (Hymn 109, 112), Confession (Hymn 347), Harvest offering (Hymn 170), Eschatology (Hymn 51, 81), Jesus as the Good Shephard (Hymn 311), Peace (Hymn 158). These are just but a few of the many themes the songs in the Official Hymnbook speaks about. These songs are well polished with good theology. Such a quality of songs seems to indicate that they had gone through a certain process of development,

and the songs seem to have been compiled following the events in the Christian Calendar as they cover almost everything of the Christian events and teaching.

Another publication for hymns was by CLAIM in 1972 by Nkhoma: Petro van Wyk Press. The title of this hymnbook was *Nyimbo za Ana, hymns and choruses for children in Chichewa and English*. The hymns and choruses in this hymnal for young people were first published in “*Nyimbo za ana*” (Blantyre Synod CCAP) and “*Chimwemwe*” (Nkhoma Synod). These two booklets were later combined into one edition that contained a total of 48 songs in two sections: the first comprised 33 hymns for children, and the second contained 15 other songs and choruses. Most of the songs in this book were the same as found in *Nyimbo za Mulungu*. One wonders why this booklet was published, as the songs were not new at all. Unfortunately, now, this publication is nowhere to be found. It did not receive support from the public and, therefore, has disappeared.

Now, I shall discuss the further developments in music that have taken place:

- 1) How songs with Tonic Sol-fa notations continued from the missionaries’ time, particularly by the family of Rev E.E. Katsulukuta, whom the missionaries taught, and whose fruits are still evident to this day.
- 2) How other musicians developed traditional music and also contributed so greatly to traditional tunes for worship by choirs. Then, how choir festivals are organized, follows.
- 3) Praise Teams that have flooded the church, especially in trading centres, towns and cities.

4.4.3 Singing with Tonic sol-fa and staff notation – Donovan Katsulukuta

In order to appreciate Katsulukuta’s work in music, one must have insight in this musician’s interests and skills. For this, one must examine his performances with the New Jerusalem Choir of Lilongwe CCAP. However, I shall start with Donovan Katsulukuta’s story. It must be noted that this information has been derived from the oral

tradition; apparently, there is no written evidence.

When the South African missionaries started mission work among the Chewa in the central region of Malawi, some of them were greatly impressed by the indigenous people's love of singing and chanting. They regarded this as fertile ground on which to teach English/Scottish hymns that they had brought with them. Of course, here it must be mentioned that there are two views regarding the missionaries' approach to music. Firstly, they took a great interest in studying local tunes and traditional instruments, and, secondly, they were never interested in local tunes and traditional instruments. But, from later developments, for example, the contents of the present hymnbook, one can conclude that not much emphasis was placed on developing traditional music. The present hymnbook has 384 hymns, of which only eight (Nos. 21, 55, 92, 195, 203, 261, 264 & 356) are traditional tunes.

There were two venues for music lessons: in schools and in the church. Some missionaries displayed great initiative in teaching the indigenous people to sing the songs that they had brought, which included the reading and composing of music. It is said that some missionaries encouraged teachers to teach traditional songs in lower classes. *Madona* (plural Chewa word for female missionaries) played an outstanding role in teaching English/Scottish music in schools. At Mvera, there was *Dona* (singular Chewa word for female missionary) Zondah, and, at Kongwe, there was *Dona* Albertyn, popularly known as Robertina. From these schools of music emerged the musicians of the time, who composed wonderful songs. One of these was Andreyka Mkutcha from Chibazi, who composed hymn No. 21 in *Nyimbo za Mulungu*. The background of this composition was the Chibazi Village Headman Mshamboza's 1914 dream, in which he saw a big river with water flowing fiercely. Suddenly, a man stood on the water with a long white cloth. As the Village Headman clung to the white cloth, he amazingly crossed the river. Mshamboza shared this dream with Andreyka, who composed this wonderful song. Robert Blake asked *Dona* Albertyn to help Andreyka with the Tonic sol-fa notation of the song.

At first, these songs were neither Christian nor non-Christian. They told a story, a folk tale that explained behaviour, demonstrated origins, or justified societal constraints. One such song was composed in commemoration of the Ngoni Chief, Msakambewa, who moved to Litchesi from the Kongwe Mountain area near Lingadzi River (his former place of residence). He had to move to the new place to provide land for the missionaries' work. This proves that, in some places, missionaries were in close rapport with the indigenous people.

Because of the missionaries' zeal for reading and composing music, a number of teachers began to follow suit. One of the composers was Wilson Shani, a teacher, who is remembered to this day at Kongwe. Unfortunately, most of these composed songs did not find room in church use or in publications. Instead, they were orally transmitted and finally forgotten.

However, in Zondah's school, a longstanding impact was made on the people of Mvera up to Khombedza in Salima district. From this school came the popular "Sanke" (singing songs from the 1200 piece hymnbook, popularly known as SS and S). Only notes were sung by heart at weddings. Boys from Zondah's school would organize themselves at weddings into four groups: soprano, alto, tenor and bass, and sing notes of popular songs to the extent that "Sanke" began to surpass some traditional dances at weddings. Today, there are few "Sanke" members; many have since died.

Students from Zondah's school at Mvera were proud of their music competence. One such student was the late Rev EE Katsulukuta from Mtalimanja Village, Traditional Authority Khombedza in Salima district. He composed a number of songs, but, as usual, they were not published. Other notable musicians from other mission stations included: the late Chadza from Mphunzi CCAP, who composed hymn No. 356 in *Nyimbo za Mulungu* and Mr Kawaye, who composed several songs, many of which were never published and have since been forgotten.

The late Rev EE Katsulukuta was instrumental in making the influence of Zondah's school at Mvera famous. As a Headmaster, he took music lessons seriously. Later, when he became a church minister, he continued to teach hymns by Tonic sol-fa in church and at catechumen classes. He made sure that, before class-confirmation or baptism, every group had learnt at least one song from *Nyimbo za Mulungu*, which was sung in church during the confirmation or baptism service. This encouraged people to learn a number of songs from *Nyimbo za Mulungu*.

Rev Katsulukuta appreciated good singing, also with notes, and he wanted to teach this to others. Whenever a choir did not do justice to a song during worship, he immediately silenced them. To him, this proved that the choir had not prepared to sing for God in the church. Some choirs disliked him for this, yet the music of others benefited in this way.

Rev Katsulukuta's real effective influence became evident in the work of his son, Donovan Katsulukuta, who became a recognized musician country-wide in Malawi. He inherited love for music from his father and, especially from his evening devotions that were dominated by singing hymns from *Nyimbo za Mulungu*. Hymns, such as Nos. 124, 132, 158, 211, 214, 311, 349 and 350 were frequently sung during devotions by using the Tonic sol-fa notation.

His uncle, Mr Richard Kayanula, noted Donovan's interest in music. When choir festivals were just starting in Lilongwe in the early 1970s, Mr Kayanula would pick Donovan up from Nkhoma to attend these festivals. By this time, Mr Kayanula was living in Area 15, while Rev Katsulukuta was at Nkhoma (50 km from Lilongwe) where he worked on a Bible translation project, from English into *Chichewa chamakono*. After the festival, Mr Kayanula would drive Donovan back to Nkhoma. Then, choir festivals were just beginning. The choirs would meet in churches and sing to the Lord. Through these festivals, many choirs improved their singing skills, and their spiritual life grew with the music that they sang. Here, choir members made friends, and got to know one another well showing the real unity of the body of Christ, the family of God. These were

moments of real worship through song, as people came closer to God. The words of the songs touched their hearts and they returned home, indeed blessed.

At that time, popular choirs included: The Msonkhamanja CCAP Choir, Kawale Madala Choir, New Lilongwe Choir, The Mwanja Family Choir, and The New Jerusalem Choir that had just started in 1974. Donovan loved The New Jerusalem Choir, for it was truthful to Tonic sol-fa notations, with which he already was accustomed.

When his parents moved from Nkhoma to Lilongwe, Donovan immediately joined The New Jerusalem Choir as a bass singer. He became a good friend of the choir director, Mr Gilbert Msuku, who was very confident of Donovan's ability to conduct and taught him some skills of composing and conducting. Very soon, Donovan won the heart of Mr Msuku, and became the deputy choir director. Whilst in that position, he formed a quartet, popularly known as The New Jerusalem Quartet. In the process, he also had the privilege of attending choral workshops at the Chancellor College in Zomba from 1985 to 1992, under the directorship of music professor, Alexander Smisky, from Tübingen University, Germany. Alexander too, was greatly impressed with Donovan's music skills. These workshops greatly increased his composing and conducting skills.

When Mr Gilbert Msuku abandoned the choir in 1983, taking with him more than half of the choir members, Donovan took up the challenge to rebuild the choir. Whilst Gilbert liked to teach compositions from various hymnbooks, Donovan taught many songs from his own compositions; some had already won national music competitions in Malawi. Many choirs throughout Malawi took up many of these songs. Through the choir's many travels, The New Jerusalem songs spread widely to places, such as Mzuzu in the north, Blantyre and Zomba in the south, and Kasungu, Dowa, Salima, Dedza, Mchinji in central Malawi. The choir also travelled to many revival meetings that the World Vision organized in many places. With the Malawian Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), they then made a recording. This increased the popularity of The New Jerusalem Choir's songs. The choir was invited to huge functions, such as the German Republic Day, functions of the Israel Embassy, and Christmas Carol singing

organized by the Police Headquarters in Area 30; Lilongwe. The choir even sang with accompaniment by the Malawi Army Band or the Malawi Police Band. The choir was even honoured by being invited to sing at the funeral of Gogo Jenala, the sister of Dr. Kamuzu Banda, the first President of the Republic of Malawi.

Donnovan's achievements are many; he continued what the missionaries had started, as well as what his father had passed on to him and left that music with notes (notations) for present-day musicians. Now, the question is: what will these musicians do with this wonderful music?

Today, many people have benefited from Donovan's work. Some have become Christians because they listened to his songs. More choirs were formed because of his influence in society. Today, the following five members of The New Jerusalem Choir are church ministers: Token Katsulukuta (Donnovan's younger brother), Archwells Katani, Chimwemwe Mhango, Feston Mzenga and Alick Msuku. In the history of Malawian choirs, it has never before happened that a total number of five choir members became church ministers. Music can really move the world forward!

4.4.4 Mganda tune and Nyau lyrics blended – “Dalimon Kafa Tune”

Dalimon Kafa is a musician who, in the recent 1990s, has contributed greatly to Malawian music. He is a teacher by profession, whose love for music goes back to The New Jerusalem Choir's peak times. This choir's singing moved him and developed his talents.

While teaching at Khola Primary School started by Mr Hofmeyr in the Lakeshore area, where no less than 320 children were registered by 1903 (Du Plessis 1905:45), Dalimon formed a choir, called Khola CCAP Choir, in the Ntcheu district. This was directly influenced by, and fruits of, The New Jerusalem Choir performances. Dalimon composed using his own unique melody, the first of its kind in Malawi. He had blended the Mganda tune with Nyau lyrics. The product of this combination was completely new and much loved by every listener. Its every element was pure Malawian traditional

music. The old dance music was reconfigured with the Christian message, resulting in a reinterpreted context.

A similar creativity was also observed in Blantyre during the CCAP General Assembly meeting of 21 January 2007. Here, I observed that Limbe CCAP Church Choir had blended a traditional dance of *Beni* with the Gospel. While singing, a young boy and girl did a *Beni* dance in a police or traditional chief messenger's uniform. As the two danced, the other group members sang the same *Beni* tune, together with movements and all kinds of gestures to the background accompaniment of two drums. The singing was truly traditional and the songs were truly part of themselves, derived from their own culture and traditions.

Dalimon had created something new that was much dearer to the listener. Within a few years, his music spread like wildfire throughout Malawi. In 1989, his Kholo CCAP Choir won a prize in a competition of the Centenary Bible, which the Synod had organized. Dalimon then moved to Chimbayo Primary School in the west of the Lilongwe district. There, he formed another choir called *Mitsinje ya Babulo* (Rivers of Babylon), which became very popular, also on the radio. Cassettes that sold like hot cakes were produced. Then, he was transferred to Tonde Primary School in Lilongwe, where he formed another choir, called Tonde Joint Choir, in the Bua congregation. It produced an album and was also popular. From Tonde, he went to the Gwengwere Primary School, Chongoni, in the Dedza district. There, he again formed a choir called *Nkhoma Synod Kufalitsa Choir*, popularly known as "Kufalitsa" (to evangelise) under the influence of Rev BS Chitheka, who then was the Evangelism Director for the Synod and who, currently, he is the Vice-Moderator (2005-2007) of the Nkhoma Synod.

With the Nkhoma Synod Kufalitsa Choir, Dalimon even travelled to Blantyre where CLAIM organized a big function, and where he has many admirers. The songs were then recorded for sale to raise funds for the choir. Later, he returned to Tonde to the Primary School, where he continued with his former choir, the Tonde Joint Choir. Unfortunately today, due to misunderstandings with some church leaders, Dalimon has

left the CCAP and joined the Baptist Church in Lilongwe, where he has formed another choir called The Bread of Life Choir. Already, its songs are becoming popular in Lilongwe and elsewhere.

Through recordings and Dalimon's many transfers, his music has spread countrywide. Many choirs have been formed with "Dalimon Kafa tune" songs, and many have accepted the Lord after hearing these songs. Today, in almost every congregation of the Nkhoma Synod, one or more choirs sing to the "Dalimon Kafa tune" - a wonderful tune that has attracted many people. Foot-stamping and dancing, with hands raised to chest level, always accompany the singing, which is genuine traditional music. Dalimon has shown that it is possible to reconfigure traditional music with the Christian message and create an even better melody. He reconfigured the Mganda tune with Nyau traditional lyrics and has composed a tune that, today, everyone in Malawi knows.

4.4.5 Story-telling songs: context-based

Storytelling is another way of music being composed among young people. Choirs narrate a story in song, then apply it to life's experiences. Such stories are context-based, where singers' contexts influence them. For example, choirs along the lakeshore or along rivers sing songs related to the lake, river, fish, tortoise, frog or anything relevant. On the highlands, they sing stories about farming, hunting, harvesting, cattle and anything related to those areas. Furthermore, some songs relate to the type of dance of each ethnic group. Among the Ngoni, for instance, Ngoni dances accompany the songs. In all this, songs bring to the fore what are in the singers' hearts; they sing folktales and apply them to real life situations. They use stories relevant to their daily life and blend them with Christian teaching. Usually, acting the story accompanies the singing, performing the song's message. The choirmaster, or some choir members, act in a play during the singing, to emphasize a point and clarify the message they want to convey. This is context-sensitive music, responding to real issues in people's lives.

Now, a discussion of the way choir festivals have developed in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod will follow.

4.4.6 The early stages of choir festivals in CCAP Nkhoma Synod

As far as oral narrators can remember, from the 1970s and early 1980s, choir festivals were intended to complement worship. They nourished the Christian spiritual life as their songs appealed to, and awakened meaning for, the listener. Choirs met for the festival and participating choirs had rehearsed in advance for the festival, practised much and, for the festival, wore colourful clothes (usually a costume). Every choir practised to be perfect and produce quality music. Dressing well was essential in order to be presentable - smartly dressed, shirts/blouses well tucked in, and hair neatly combed.

Choir festivals not only brought choirs together, they also contributed towards the discipline of choir members: for example, they were trained to be disciplined, punctual and neat. Presentation alone meant much to the audiences. Well-presented choirs were already deemed to have sung well, before actually singing, because of the way they presented themselves on the stage. Presentation appealed to the viewers, preparing their hearts for reception and being attentive to what the choir would sing. Such a presentation created an atmosphere of worship in the church. Thus, the choirs proclaimed the good news of Jesus Christ through their singing. Such festivals were usually held on Sunday afternoons from two o'clock and always in the church. All the participating choirs and the audience would be seated before the starting time. Choirs would take turns in singing, whilst waiting for the Master of Ceremonies to take the floor. Choir festivals were usually opened with a hymn from the official hymnbook, a prayer by a church minister, or by a church elder if the minister is not there. The Master of Ceremonies would welcome the audience, as well as all invited choirs. and would explain the rules to the choirs and the audience, so that the festival could contribute towards enriching the glory of God. Some of the rules were: no noise whilst a choir was singing; clapping of hands only after a choir had finished singing; and every choir was

to sing whilst facing the audience.

This was indeed a time of fellowship with God through music. Such an atmosphere created a spirit of seeking God, of thinking about Him. After the festival no one would leave with empty hearts and most people would go home touched. The lyrics of the songs flooded through their minds. It was a time of recreation in the Lord. Everyone would delight in the songs and meditate upon them as they returned to their various homes. The words of the songs had meaning and a very great impact on the people.

Furthermore, choir festivals were times of making friends. Participating choirs made friends among one another. Choir festivals created a spirit of unity and long-lasting friendships. Today, old members of choirs who had participated in these choir festivals still remain very good friends, and depend upon one another, physically or spiritually.

4.4.7 A shift in the approach of choir festivals; theology in the thicket

When theology is not checked, it moves “into the thicket” without anybody noticing. Among choirs in Malawi, theology has been caught in the thicket, as choirs have been banned from the church to a place outside the church, for their choir festivals. If performers and listeners are not faithful to the texts of the songs they sing and hear, the resulting songs are not sacred, not in accordance with the ethos of their lives.

From the late 1980s and 90s until today, choir festivals have changed tremendously. They have moved from being spiritual to being materialistic by becoming a way of raising funds for church developments, purchasing uniforms, transport hire, and any other church activity that might need money. The same songs with religious texts have acquired a completely different context and agenda. The value that the audience and singers assigned to the songs has completely changed. The songs do not bring people to Christ but, instead, seek material things, yet use words that appear to be religious.

The Master of Ceremonies’ approach to directing choir festivals has also changed to suit the purpose of the festivals. Now, the point of departure is money: how do I find

enough money for the project, for purchasing choir uniforms or anything for which a choir festival may be organized? Then, next in mind is: what techniques should I use?

The church's change of objectives regarding choir festivals has forced it to ban all choir festival activities from the church. Choir festivals are now held outside the church, as it is too "holy" for a choir festival. The following CCAP Churches in Lilongwe city have banned all choir festival activities because of their character: Lilongwe, Msonkhamanja, Masintha, Likuni, Kafita, and Lumbadzi. One could ask: what does this imply? Why this move? What reaction could be expected from the youth who sing the songs at choir festivals? What would be the best possible way to solve this problem?

Since choir festivals now take place outside the church, organizing these festivals is not easy. The Master of Ceremonies finds it difficult to control the audience, not only during the opening, but during the entire period of the festival. Even with the assistance of the church elders and deacons, to silence people and stop their movements is difficult. As the audience mostly stands throughout the festival, differences in people's heights make it difficult to see the singing choir. The place becomes a hive of activity, each doing his/her own thing. Whilst a choir is singing, some chat, move around, clap their hands and applaud the choir, and others come to the front to give a donation for an *en core* of a song.

Such choir festivals always start with prayer. Then the Master of Ceremonies asks all the choirmasters and -mistresses to and line up in front, or a representative from each choir will be called to come to the front. The aim is to select a choir to start the singing. Then, the Master of Ceremonies invites everybody to come forward to give a donation to the choir he/she wants to be the first to sing. The choir that receives the most money sings first. This is just one of the many ways in which the Master of Ceremonies collects much money. There is no guarantee that, when a choir gets the chance to sing, that it will end the song. Before the end, someone may come and boot it out by donating more money. It is very rare that a choir finishes a song before being sent from the stage. Neither the words of the song, nor the singing, is important, but how much

money was received; not the sacredness of the song's lyrics, but what techniques to employ to receive more money. This way of conducting choir festivals has resulted in some choirs not receiving a chance to sing. They had no money to pay for competing with other choirs, or such choirs have no supporters. Thus, a choir with more support or able members dominates the stage. This has created a status among choirs: "the able," and the "what-shall -we-do?" choirs. Divisions of this kind have developed, imparting an inferiority complex in the "what-shall-we-do?" choirs, as they do not sing. They become marginalized and alienated from the festival and return home disappointed by not having had a chance to sing - not even one song.

The Master of Ceremonies does not care what happens. His interest always is in the money, not in choirs that do not have donations. He uses all possible means to further his interest - even embarrassing ways may be implemented to receive money. People may even ask a person who has never before conducted a choir, to come forward and conduct. Others may be asked to conduct, not with the hands, but with only the head. Every expression is geared towards receiving money from the audience at the festival.

The focus of the whole festival differs completely from that of worship. The focus becomes that of fundraising in the name of God, rather than fellowship with Him. The focus shifts from the lyrics that choirs sing, to the rhythms that choirs produce. The focus becomes external, not internal. The sense of proclamation vanishes. In this case, the songs that mention God become non-religious and non-sacred. This is not reconfiguration, but regression.

The Master of Ceremonies' rhythms of songs and techniques become central to the festival, and the words and messages of songs are banished to the periphery. In this case, the meaning and inducement of an attitude of public proclamation die out, because *God* is banished to the periphery. The words and singing no longer aid teaching and spreading the Gospel. As a result, the importance of a song's words is lost.

Consequently, people's conversations, while returning home from the festivals, are never spiritual, but are questions: who sang first? How much did they get? Who sang the most? Which choir sang at the end? How many choirs were there and how many sang?

Choir festivals that were regarded as an important constituent of worship, have turned into competitions, money-making, pride and boasting. Times of spiritual nourishment have turned into times of material needs and desires. The spirit of worship, fellowship and quality music, with presentable attire, has turned into a spirit of division – “the able” choir syndrome, and the “what-shall-we-do?” choirs resulting in enmity among choirs, and among parents of choir members. Choir festivals have divided “the rich” from “the poor,” those “with support” from those “without support.”

The questions remain: where is the spirituality of the songs? How can the division between “the able” and the “what-shall-we-do?” choirs be eliminated? How can choir festivals continue to contribute towards the teaching of the Good News of Jesus Christ? How can they help to unite people from all walks of life in the church? How can the dancing, foot-stamping and hand-clapping remain an external way of expressing what God has done internally? How can it publicly proclaim the joyful news, thanksgiving and praise to the world for what God has done for all humanity in Jesus Christ?

This however, is not the only development in the church today. I shall now discuss the emerging of Praise and Worship groups in some of the congregations in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod.

4.4.8 “Praise and Worship” teams

In recent years, the CCAP Nkhoma Synod has experienced a number of influences from different circles. In the area of music, such influences came from the Charismatic, as well as the Pentecostal Churches. “Praise and Worship” has entered most congregations especially in cities, towns and some trading centres. This type of music has its roots in the Jesus People Movements of the 1960s and 1970s, the Gospel

choruses of revivalists, the celebration music of renewal movements, and in African-American Gospel music (Bradley 2003:353). It seems to be another form of colonisation in the Malawian Church. Emphases of “Praise and Worship” include viewing exuberant praise as the basic of act of worship, the use of several simple Scriptural songs or praise choruses, the use of a sequence of actions that leads the congregation from exuberant praise to contemplative worship, and the use of a team of lay worship leaders, often called a “worship team” (Brink & Witvliet 2003:332).

The “Praise and Worship” teams comprise girls and boys with great emphasis on the importance of “experiencing God” in worship, signalling a shift from a rational, toward an effective approach to worship (Brink & Witvliet 2003:332). In the city of Lilongwe, they have been clearly seen in almost all congregations. “Praise and Worship” teams are found in the following CCAP Nkhoma Synod congregations: Lilongwe, Masitha, Msonkhamanja, Bwaila, Kafita, Kapita, Chikuluti, Lingadzi, Lumbadzi, Likuni, Mvama, Dzenza, Kaning’a and Kawira. The “Praise and Worship” teams in these congregations sing mostly simple scriptural songs and praise choruses, both in Chichewa and in English. The English songs and choruses are derived mostly from the American Charismatic stream. This development is critically overshadowing the indigenous flavour and, therefore, killing the Malawian melody.

Ironically, most “Praise and Worship” members do not participate in congregational singing from the hymnbooks, and most do not even have official hymnbooks. This may imply that: they regard the hymnal songs as out of date; the songs do not represent their culture; they just do not want to sing these songs; they do not have the money to buy the hymnbooks; or they do not know the songs in the official hymnbook. On the other hand, these singers say that, every time they sing, their “Praise and Worship” teams bring life into the church. Now, worship services are lively because of these teams. In many churches, these foreign melodies have greatly transformed the singing. When they sing mostly foreign songs that are not culture-sensitive, guitars, a keyboard and, in some cases, drums accompany them. All these foreign melodies, which appar-

ently do not enrich the worshippers, in fact, disrupt the liturgy. But, when they sing traditional tunes with the same instruments, the liturgy and the worshippers are enriched.

4.4.9 Need for a diverse approach to liturgical music

In *Studia Liturgica* Vol 5-6, Johannes Riedel (1966-1969:154) relates how full-time church musicians divorced themselves from the symphony-oriented outside world in Germany in the 20th century. Instead, the art of music needed to offer fresh, new religious experiences to the congregation, as well as outside the congregation, i.e. to the people at grassroots level. In addition, the composer needed to confront himself with the religious quests of his own time, using his own medium, music.

From the point that Riedel cites, musicians need to be creative and diverse in their approach to congregational music. The examples of Donovan Katsulukuta, Dalimon Kafa, story-telling songs, and “Praise and Worship” teams should help traditional Malawian musicians to find new religious experiences in congregational music. Congregations do not include only one type or group of singers. Congregations comprise those who sing English/Scottish hymns, traditional songs, and “Praise and Worship” songs. They are diverse, with members of diverse lifestyles, ethical behaviour, and community order. All these must be considered when liturgizing, and when compiling songs for congregations. The Zionist Churches in South Africa are a very good example of this. At Umlazi, the Zion City Church divided Zionist singing into spiritual singing (*Ukucula Kukamoya*), and general congregational singing (*Ukucula nje Okujwayelekile*) (Kitshoff 1996:173). Spiritual singing is mostly for the more senior members of the congregation, whereas the young remain in the background. But the young and more physically active *abavangeli* (the evangelists) and *abashumayeli* (the preachers), as well as other distinguished members mostly lead the general congregational singing (1996:173). Ultimately, all the members are incorporated through song. However, all the different groups of singers should be one big choir, unlike this example of The Zion City Church, where music plays a role in keeping people apart in different “categories.” Music must incorporate all members and bring them together in one big choir and all their songs

must be implemented and blended for use in the liturgy.

Music organizers must consider the use of lay people in music development as noted in the case of Dalimon Kafa, who managed to introduce his songs country-wide. Workshops should be encouraged to teach people how to read and write (compose) music, as Donovan Katsulukuta successfully managed. This will improve the skills of traditional musicians and also improve traditional music. Recordings of new songs should be of great assistance for those who do not read music. For this to be accomplished, musicians must aim to introduce songs that will be “user-sensitive” or “user-friendly.” Then, musicians must know the people who sing their music and be sensitive to all influences that take place in the field of music. These influences should help musicians on their way forward by them continually blending new songs with existing ones, whilst keeping an eye on the music’s theological integrity, to avoid inconsistency with Scriptural teaching.

Therefore, I shall now explain how traditional music has a place in contextual liturgy.

4.5 THE PLACE OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC IN CONTEXTUAL LITURGY

The only part of the liturgy where all members participate fully, is in the music. Singing mostly and directly involves everybody. All liturgical music supports the assembly’s actions in Christian worship. In the liturgy, songs and sayings link members to one another and to the past, creating awareness that they are all God’s people (Hendriks 2004:71). The goal is to serve the purposes of the gathered church. If the main point of Christian worship is to engage in a series of personal, relational actions between the gathered community and its Creator (e.g. confessing sins, praising God, interceding for divine intervention), then good liturgical music enables these actions to be accomplished (Brink & Witvliet 2003:339).

Perhaps a good example is the Zionist Churches in South Africa. Of all the activities in the Zionist Christian worship, music is the most dominant (Kitshoff 1996:173). A Zionist congregation sings and, as such, members of these Churches are also very proud of

their musical abilities (1996:173). There is life in the Zionist Churches because the philosophical world that imparts meaning to the Zionists' musical patterns is the traditional African world, which establishes socio-religious leadership patterns along the lines that relate to musical ability (1996:175-176).

Liturgical music, at its best, embodies the purposes of liturgical action and is meant to carry out, perform, enact, realise the shared actions of the gathered ecclesial community (Brink & Witvliet 2003:339). Music is one means of expression, like speech or dance, through which people accomplish certain actions (2003:340). Furthermore, music reveals the identity of an individual or group to which he/she belongs. Through a song that people sing, you can tell where they come from. Just by the tune, you can tell whether they are from West Africa, East Africa, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia or Malawi. Music allocates individuals or groups to where they are from. Through music, our individual sense of identity, origin or belonging can be traced. In the same way, music must allocate individuals or groups to where they belong as Christians. Their individual sense of identity, as people of God, can be traced also through music.

Music contains the embedding of a person or group's experiences. Music is a human commentary that records and interprets the entire experience of life and it also expresses daily experiences of life. The experiences of war, enmity, hunger, HIV and AIDS, poverty, unemployment, oppression, political changes, love, happiness, family issues, immorality, suffering and death are all expressed in music. A person or group's innermost feelings (thoughts) are revealed through (in) music. This powerful agent of identity has, for a long time, mostly been neglected. That is why, in the next discussion, a theological–liturgical evaluation will be made.

4.6 THEOLOGICAL–LITURGICAL EVALUATION OF MUSIC

Just as contexts are dynamic, music, in general, possesses an untiring dynamism. Failure to take into account the changes that occur in contexts, creates tension and friction between people's dynamic life and the liturgy used. Music that does not allow

the dynamic process of interpretation, exists in the past and operates from the past to the present people, instead of from the present time. Such music is irrelevant and so oppressive to those who sing it. If church music wants to remain oriented towards traditional music, the most significant variety of church music appears to be the new old – that is, the music that has both the agelessness of longevity and yet submits itself to reinterpretation for the edification of 21st century worshippers (Riedel 1966-1969:164). In so doing, “old” songs will still be appreciated.

Good music must always be reconfigured in the light of its new context and must be relevant to local cultural contexts. The people at grassroots level must be involved intimately with the church’s musical product. C. Randall Bradley (2003:355) says that there is a need for awareness that worship precedes theological reflection, which he calls “active theology.” He says that active theology focuses on the actual experiences of common people who realise their Christian faith in their daily struggles in life. Through music, people must experience a personal encounter with God. In this way, music serves to enrich and advance theology, extending our wisdom regarding God, his relation with us, and with the world at large (Begbie 2002:3).

So, music must be considered very seriously, if contextual theology and reconfiguration of the liturgy are to progress. There is a need to give music a certain amount of “room” so that it can bring to the surface those aspects of Christian truth that it is especially qualified to handle, and this entails some musical analysis (Begbie 2002:3). This is why the research has combined New Testament and liturgical criteria to evaluate the empirical findings, to bring about a theologically sound outcome and a relevant reconfigured liturgy, and, in so doing, to create music that has theological integrity, that portrays God in ways consistent with scriptural teaching, and songs that lead congregations in actions that fit into each one’s culture, yet with theologically sound patterns for worship.

In the same way, by bringing traditional Malawian choral music into the liturgy, the church in Malawi can take a step forward by using indigenous talents in the church. In

the end, this will bring into the liturgy the indigenous African flavour, with which all members are already accustomed, and enable the creation of a corporate memory of God in their own culture. This vision calls for music that invites the weakest members to participate along with the strongest, the youngest along with the oldest, and for the musical repertoire of a given community to include songs from worshipping communities in other times and places (Brink & Witvliet 2003:343).

After having discussed the theological–liturgical evaluation of music, some problems that result from bringing together “the old” and “the new” songs, will now be cited.

4.7 THE PROBLEM WITH MUSIC

Music is a topic that, in the church, evokes different perceptions among members and this results in misunderstandings among them. When, for instance, new songs are incorporated in the liturgy, some people receive these changes with mixed feelings. They prefer “the old” songs to be used rather than “the new,” whereas most of the youth and the adaptable old people prefer the new songs to the old. In the process, there are “worship wars.”

Usually, the officially accepted songs have music that possesses untiring dynamism, as well as extraordinary flexibility. This is where the contents of a piece change, because performers change and adapt their interpretations, and such changes give the impression of agelessness or eternity (Riedel, *Studia Liturgia* Vol. 5-6, 1966-1969:159-165). Then, there are songs that do not change and do not allow modification. These are the ones that may be replaced with new songs, since they exist in the past, not in the present. This ecclesial vision calls for pastoral liturgical music that enables all persons to participate, and identifies the congregation as the primary choir with every member being involved in the worship (Brink & Witvliet 2003:342).

There is a need for a variety of approaches to balance the old and new in each one’s cultural perspective, in order to develop indigenous hymnody. In this respect, church hymnbooks continually need to be revised and reinterpreted. Such music with new

traditional compositions may help to incorporate the old and the new members of the church.

4.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed traditional Malawian music before the coming of Christianity; the role music played in people's lives, and the role traditional dance played in society. Then, an overview of the way Europeans liturgized when they first came to Malawi followed. The approach they took never considered blending English/Scottish hymns with traditional Malawian music. As a result, as has been noted, the European way of liturgizing was one of domination.

Then followed a possible way of liturgizing that considers the diversity of congregation members, with the aim of blending together songs that possibly are "user-sensitive." Upon examining such an approach, some local musicians were cited who have contributed much to the development of music in Malawi. They were cited also to show how diverse congregation members are in expressing God: some prefer English/Scottish hymns, others traditional songs, and still others "Praise and Worship" songs.

This chapter has also shown that traditional Malawian music has a place in contextual liturgy, and that there is a need for theologians and liturgists to work together in the development of liturgical music. Possible problems that might result from the use of new songs in a liturgy were also cited and possible solutions to them were made.

From this chapter, eight hymnological qualities have emerged that are vital when doing contextual theology. These qualities will be taken into account in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, when analysing theologically the Traditional Malawian Choral Songs sung by the youth:

- Traditional music embodies something that expresses the group's identity.
- Traditional music expresses the experience of contemporary situations or events.

- Traditional music tries to control the singers' environment in a more direct and active way.
- Music making should involve all who are gifted, including lay people.
- Church music defines the shape of the liturgy.
- Church music needs to be an inclusive activity, bringing the old and the new together.
- Music must be true to the text.
- Traditional music has a place in contextual liturgy.

The next chapter will present an empirical study of what the young people in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod, Malawi, are singing. This includes an analysis of the youths' songs, themes that are developing in these songs, theological consequences of the analysed themes, and the possibility of blending some of the songs with the existing hymnbook.

CHAPTER FIVE

MALAWIAN CHURCH MUSIC AND EMPIRICAL RESEARCH: A THEOLOGICAL–LITURGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SONGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 discussed the traditional Malawian music before the coming of Christianity, the impact music had on people's lives, and the role traditional dance played in society. An overview of the way Europeans liturgized, the time they first came to Malawi then followed. Thereafter, in an attempt to find a way that considers the diversity of congregation members, a possible way of liturgizing by aiming to blend together possible songs that are "user-sensitive" followed.

This Chapter works on an empirical study of what the young people in Malawi are singing in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod. In his book, *Preaching in a context of poverty*, Pieterse (2001:13) rightly says that due attention should be paid to the context of the people who are being studied in order to understand what is happening in their praxis. This will be done in the sample areas of Malingunde, Liziri, Mchizanjala, Mpatsa and Kaning'a congregations with an additional area of Chiwe in the Lilongwe district.

The study also examines the influences that compel young people to compose and sing these songs and how they are reinterpreting and blending daily experiences and the application thereof in religion. This involves analysis of the songs, the themes that are developing in the songs, and the reason for these themes. It also examines the possibilities of blending some of the songs with songs in the existing hymnbook.

5.2 IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

It is important to give brief information about the “recording situation” in the wider sense of the word, before we actually endeavour to interpret the transcriptions that follow (Naudé 1995:27). This research will follow a “thick description,” about which Cas Wepener (2006:4) speaks, quoting Geertz in his discussion. Wepener states that thick descriptions entail highly detailed accounts of what has been experienced in the field, so that one short interaction can cover a couple of pages of thick descriptions. The analysis of the interaction can be a very complex exercise. Here, he distinguishes between a “thin description” and a “thick description.” For example, where a thin description records only that a boy has twitched his eye, a thick description records that he is “practicing a burlesque of a friend faking a wink to deceive an innocent into thinking a conspiracy is in motion” (Wepener quoting Geertz 2006:4-5).

Throughout his book, *Oral tradition as history*, Jan Vansina (1985:36,55ff) emphasizes that the maximum information about the recording situation, the performers and the researchers should be furnished. He further says that interviews are social processes of mutual accommodation during which transfers of information occur. If no social relationship can be established – as with the administration of questionnaires – the information given will be minimal, often inaccurate, and usually perceived as extorted under duress – not a situation conducive to relations of trust and frank exchange (1985:63). As Pieterse (2001:13) also says, the context includes aspects such as the economy, politics, ecology and social and cultural life. If we do not include all of these, our understanding ends up in a vacuum - mere abstract theology without flesh and blood. Taking into account the context, makes our understanding and theorizing come alive and makes them relevant. This is why I made sure that the “recording situation,” in a wider sense, followed such a condition.

5.2.1 Explanation for the choice of Malingunde Youth Camp, Liziri CCAP, Mchizanjala CCAP, Mpatsa CCAP and Kaning'a CCAP

Five recording places were identified, as follows:

a) *Malingunde Youth Camp*

The reason for recordings at Malingunde Youth Camp, which is about 30 kilometers south-west of Lilongwe City, is that the Nkhoma Synod Youth Department had organized a choir festival competition there from 1 to 3 August 2003 for all the 14 Synod presbyteries, and I was elected as the chief judge of the panel of judges. This gave me a chance to record songs sung by choirs that participated in the competition, and from another angle, it gave me the opportunity to record choirs from almost all corners of the CCAP Nkhoma Synod. At a personal level, I was able to associate with the choir members with the hope of gaining some understanding of the songs they were to sing. Eleven choirs from eleven presbyteries of the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod participated in the competition. This means that three presbyteries were not represented. The membership of each choir was limited to 16 for accommodation purposes at the camp.

b) *Liziri CCAP*

The reason for recordings at Liziri CCAP (162 km. from Lilongwe & 48 km. north-east of Kasungu Boma) is that I was then at Mtunthama CCAP (40 km from Liziri) as a resident minister. The Chilanga presbytery had assigned me there, as the visiting minister of Liziri CCAP.

As a visiting minister, I could link the recordings to my observation of events in the area, and could participate in their daily endeavours, as I ministered to them. As Holy and Stuchlik (1983:5) rightly state in their book, *Action, norms and representations: Foundations of anthropological inquiry*, participant observation conveys the image of research carried out directly among the people one is

studying, usually for a considerable length of time, by carefully observing and documenting minutiae of their day-to-day life. “Having been there” and “having seen this and done that” is the ultimate guarantee of the veracity and accuracy of any information divulged about those people. Therefore, I took the time to observe what was happening in the area.

The CCAP-Nkhoma Synod is dominant in the Liziri area, where three-quarters of the people are CCAP. The congregation has a membership of over 1000 members. The area of Liziri was one of the areas most hit by the 2001/2002 famine in Malawi. The 2005/2006 drought in the Kasungu district has worsened the situation in the area. Doing a research among such people would bring to the fore many theological, as well as liturgical, issues relevant to my study.

c) *Mchizanjala CCAP*

The reason for recordings at Mchizanjala (about 14 km. southeast of the city of Lilongwe on the M1 road to Blantyre) is that I was serving the Lord at Kaning’a CCAP in the City of Lilongwe, close to the area in question. At this congregation, was a minister whom I had known for a long time and who had become a very close friend. Furthermore, at this congregation there is the very famous Mbewa Choir that is very popular because of its unique style of singing and how the conductor acts when conducting. Recording songs of such a choir would provide important information for the research.

d) *Mpatsa CCAP*

The reason for recordings at Mpatsa CCAP along the lakeshore in Salima (about 165 km. from Lilongwe City) is that I already had relationships with some choirs from this congregation. For instance, Senga Bay Singers had visited Kaning’a CCAP, a congregation that I was serving. From the recording studio where they had just recorded their songs, they worshipped with us at this congregation.

Because of this association, recording their songs at their congregation was no problem, and it strengthened my relationship with this choir.

e) *Kaning'a CCAP*

The reason for recordings at Kaning'a CCAP in the city of Lilongwe was that I was serving the Lord there. This allowed access to most choirs within the congregation. A choice for Kaning'a was also made because this congregation is situated in an affluent community that holds most of the city's economy and where there are large houses mostly surrounded by brick-fences. The construction of fencing walls for security started shortly after 1994 when armed robberies increased drastically. Doing a study on such a community would provide a picture different from the rural one.

For the research in these places, I received permission from the Synod in a letter written by the General Secretary of the CCAP Nkhoma Synod, Rev Dr. W.R. Kawale, with copies sent to all sample congregations of the Synod (see Appendix D for this letter of permission). To record all the songs the youth were singing in these areas, I used a very powerful tape recorder.

5.2.2 The physical situation and the order of proceeding

On 2 and 3 August 2003, at Malingunde Youth Camp, recordings were made in the hall built on the shores of the Kamuzu I Dam's northern side. This hall can accommodate over 300 people, but only one choir at a time was called for the recording. The choirs that were recorded were as follows:

Mzama I Choir from Kafinya in Dzenza Presbytery (8 boys + 8 girls),

Malembo Choir from Katayauta CCAP in Chileka Presbytery (8 boys + 8 girls),

Masintha Church Choir from Masintha CCAP in Malingunde Presbytery (13 boys + 15 girls, which exceeded the specified number),

New Kakhoma from Mthandiza CCAP in Nkhoma Presbytery (8 boys + 8 girls – this choir has since disbanded because the choir leader married two wives and members could no longer continue singing in the choir),

Mawiri Choir from Mawiri CCAP in Chinthembwe Presbytery (8 boys + 8 very younggirls), and

Mlanda Choir from Mlanda CCAP in Mlanda Presbytery (8 boys + 8 girls).

All these choirs were their presbyteries' best. By implication, this means the best choirs in various presbyteries were recorded, and they already represented assessed songs.

Recordings at Liziri CCAP were conducted on 19 and 20 September 2003. Thus, there were two recording sessions at Liziri. On 19 September, the first session was as follows: Chitowe Choir (3 married men, 14 boys + 18 girls) and Kapako Choir (10 boys + 8 girls). The second session was on 20 September 2003 with the following choirs: Liziri Station Choir (4 boys + 3 girls) and Chilikhanda Choir (9 boys + 7 girls). All the recordings were conducted from the church minister's manse. During this period, I was the visiting minister from Mtunthama CCAP at the congregation.

At Kaning'a CCAP, in the church building, built in the shape of a cross, there were the following three recording sessions: on 12 April 2004, Alinafe Choir (5 men, 8 boys + 16 girls) from Mtsiriza, the outskirts of the city of Lilongwe; on 13 April 2004, Muzu Station Choir (10 boys + 14 girls) from a village in the rural part of the congregation, and on 14 April 2004, Yerusalem Choir (17 boys + 21 very young girls) also from Muzu Village. The recordings were done in the Muzu Church building. Then, I was the minister in charge of Kaning'a CCAP, after being called from Mtunthama CCAP.

Recording at Mchizanjala was conducted on 13 May 2004 as follows: Mbewa Choir (11 boys + 14 very young girls). Here recordings were done in the church building, built in the shape of a cross. Then, Rev Kanise Shema, who was in attendance during the recordings, was the minister in charge. On 28 May 2004, I travelled to Salima to conduct recordings at Mpatsa CCAP. Here, choirs that were recorded included the

following: Senga Bay Singers (6 boys + 6 girls), Tiyamike Choir that had the youngest choir conductor, a 12 year old (12 boys + 14 very small girls), and Chikuluti Choir (9 boys + 12 girls). All the recordings were made in the church building, which was also built in the shape of a cross. The minister in charge was Rev D.I. Mthandi and he was in attendance at the time of the recordings.

5.2.3 Factors that made high quality recording difficult

Some factors that made high quality recording difficult were that they were made mostly in church buildings that were too big for the work, except at Liziri CCAP, where recordings were made in the church minister's manse. Here too, recordings could have been better. Thus, recordings were not conducted from a controlled studio where one could monitor the sound system. Another factor was that most of the songs that the youth sang were apparently associated with singing and dancing. Their singing was combined with dancing, hand gestures, foot movements and entire body movements, which made recording difficult. The spontaneity with which movements started in response to music, movements ranging from a modest hand gesture to an elaborate body turn, were factors that prevented the production of good recordings.

These tapes have been labelled with numbers and dates of recordings, names of the songs and of the choirs that sang them, and are kept together in a safe place, available for researchers who might be interested.

5.2.4 Shortfalls of the recorded songs

While analysing the recorded songs, a problem was noted right from the beginning of the process. Since music is a cultural subsystem that emerges only in musical performances, distinct from notions made available through speech acts in all kinds of social interaction, it raises problems that are stated or embedded, without being verbalized (Holy & Stuchlik 1981:38). In this way, as Jan Vansina (1985:83) rightly says, the scholar works with a text, not a performance. He/she, in fact, studies a mutilated message. Much of the message's redundancy was expressed in the tone of voice and

body language, and thus lost much of the impact it had on the audience.

Then, there is the problem of apparent and intended meaning, which is a problem of culture. Suppose that the historian (researcher) knows the language well and has no difficulty in understanding the apparent meaning. He still cannot assume that this was the message as intended. Circumlocutions and word taboos occur, resonances are not perceived, and parallels that leap to the mind of everyone reared in that culture are lost (Vansina 1985:83). We should bear in mind all these things as we examine the details of the songs that the youth are singing.

5.2.5 Basic information about fieldwork that includes recordings, transcriptions and translations

From the time of entering this field, I tried my best to allow the people being studied to take control of the purpose and procedure of the research (Babbie 2004:109). With such an approach, I hoped that people felt free to associate with me as I never appeared like a stranger, but like one of them. They trusted me because of my closeness to them. For example, when I was making recordings at Muzu Village on 13 April 2004, a member of Muzu Church Choir felt free to comment, "We have never before been closer to a minister and are therefore very happy." This comment reveals how freely the members associated with the researcher and how honoured the choirs felt that a minister was in their midst. They regarded this as a great and unforgettable privilege. For them, church ministers are seen only with church elders and deacons, or only on the pulpit preaching.

So, my presence and association with them contributed towards the observation of a concrete individual's specific action, whether physical or speech, bearing in mind that also this had to be qualified, because what can be observed directly are simply physical movements (Holy & Stuchlik 1983:17). A simple physical movement is not, by itself, an action: having a meaning constitutes it as an action (1983:17). This means that I had no need to attach meaning to what a choir member said - what did it mean?

What did it imply? Why was my visit so special? What was the impact of my visit?

This means that I tried all possible means to create a social space for participants, in which they could share their experiences and information, create common meanings and forge concerted actions together (Reason & Bradbury 2001:81).

A prolonged period of time was spent with the youth to observe their patterns of behaviour, customs and way of life. I tried my best to remove the idea that I was an intruder into their daily way of living, and my recording their music was an attempt to reveal the more submerged and difficult-to-articulate aspects of the issues involved (Reason & Bradbury 2001:81). Of course, this does not completely negate the fact that the researcher him-/herself always is, at least, a part of what is observed, and that interpretation takes place already before any analysis (Lukken 2005:209).

Whilst in the field, knowledgeable informants were identified. At Malingunde, I worked with the choirmasters and also the Youth Director, Rev Vasco Kachipapa. At Liziri CCAP I worked with the church clerk, Mr Pulikani, the Group Village Headman, Jonasi, and the sub-traditional authority, Chitanthamapiri. The choir leaders of Chitowe and Chilikhanda and the church watchman, who was also an assistant to the sub-traditional authority, were also of great assistance in the research.

I worked with the minister in charge, Rev Kanise Shema, and the choirmaster of Mbewa Choir at Mchizanjala and with the minister in charge, Rev D.I. Mthandi, and the choir leader of Senga Bay Singers at Mpatsa CCAP in Salima. Finally, at Kaning'a CCAP, where I was the minister-in-charge, I worked with the choir leaders of Alinafe Choir, Mr Pofera and of Muzu Church Choir, Mr Phiri.

At each place, transcription was done immediately after I had finished recording. All the translations were then submitted for comments and possible corrections to Rev Dr. Hennie van Deventer, my lecturer and the principle of NIFCOTT (Theological School) at Nkhoma. He is adept at music analysis and speaks extremely good Chichewa and was also the chairperson of the Literature Committee for the CCAP Nkhoma Synod.

So, comment on the translations fell within his field of knowledge.

Transcriptions and translations were completed by 10 February 2005. Subsequently, a theological–liturgical analysis of what was happening at grass-roots levels was attempted. That means criticism based on the empirical reality of present-day experience. Criticism based on theological tradition is applied reciprocally and hermeneutically with a view to finding new theological theories for praxis (Pieterse 2001:9). Perfection in transcriptions and translations is almost impossible and the hymns below are submitted as “drafts” for more able scholars’ commentary (Naudé 1995:31). The mere availability of these songs in this manner is considered as one of the most important contributions of this research and it demanded most of the time. So, before we examine some of the songs sung by the youth in the CCAP Nkhoma Synod, it is important that we make a few observations about the influence of the songs on the immediate effects of the performance of oral poetry – how it alleviates or rhythmically encourages and coordinates the work – rather than at the level of society at large (Finnegan 1979:219).

5.3 CREATIVE ORAL REINTERPRETATION OF DAILY EXPERIENCES THROUGH TRADITIONAL SONGS IN THE LIGHT OF HOPE IN JESUS

Historical books on early Christianity (for Malina, “Histories”) explain how events of the New Testament period influenced the situation in which the Jesus movement began, how the Christian movement was established and developed initially (Malina 1993:10). The New Testament’s symbolic world involved politics, economics and warfare as much as magic and mystery cults (Johnson 1999:22). It is probably true that greater effort went into making a living than into the interpretation of living (1999:22). Bart Ehrman (1997:16-17) provides a good explanation of the New Testament world. He says that only a few persons belonged to the upper class and almost everyone else was in the lower class. Few people had any hope of social mobility; slaves were perhaps a third of the total population in major urban areas, and many of the poor were worse off than the enslaved. There were no cures for most diseases. Many babies died

and adult woman had to bear, on average, five children simply to keep the population constant. Most people were uneducated and 90% were illiterate. Travel was slow and dangerous and long trips were rare; during their lives, most people never ventured far from home.

According to this description, people living in the ancient world would have understood the stories about Jesus in the light of these realities. This applies not only to how they reacted to these stories and integrated them in their own worldviews but even to how, at the very basic level, they understood what the stories meant (Ehrman 1997:17).

The first Christians were creative in transforming their traditions in order to address the particular contexts in which they were located. Through these processes, the early church affirmed that those writings – *particularly* in their being addressed to, and conditioned by specific historical contexts – possessed enduring authority and relevance for the church (Mouton 2005:6). For them, these texts had the power to liberate and heal, to bring the church into being, and to shape it in its many personal and public manifestations according to the “mind of Christ” (2005:6). To presuppose the existence of an isolated “salvation history” that could be demonstrated by historical means, a “sacred” literature, which has escaped the influence of its environment because it derives from the direct inspiration of God, distorts any genuine understanding of early Christianity and, with it, the origins of our faith (Hengel 1986:18-19). The early church represented an explosion of creative experiments in lifestyle, ethical behaviour, community order, and religious rituals in so many different cultural contexts throughout the Mediterranean world that explain the diversity we have in the New Testament (Rhoads 1996:147). Literary devices, such as *genre* (narrative, parable, poetry, apocalyptic symbols), liturgy, art, tradition, and even people, all function rhetorically as instruments for *redescribing* reality from new perspectives (Mouton 2005:7). The early Christians – by, for example, referring to God as redeemer in Jesus Christ; to Jesus as the Son of God, Lord (*kurios*) and Saviour; by witnessing to the spirit as the seal of their ownership by God; to themselves as the body of Christ, God’s household,

a holy temple – *reimagined* and *renamed* their understanding of God and their (ordinary) life experiences from the new perspective of the Christ event (2005:7-8).

In chapter 2 of this dissertation, the two passages cited from the New Testament, i.e. Mark 3:31-35 and Philippians 2:5-11, try to show the unique creativity of the writers who formulated a literary account somehow different from the literature available to them (Robbins 1992:2). Each writer forged the traditions into new configurations that addressed particular communities, “baptizing” familiar metaphors and experiences as a means to live the good news about Jesus (Rhoads 1996:147). The writers blended Jesus’ story with existing traditions that resulted in reconfigured narratives relevant to their current situations.

A person’s link with such a particular household provided identity, support, community, protection, status, wealth and honour (Trainor 2001:19). Jesus’ Galilean message was first preached to the peasant community, the owners of simple houses, the homeless and the socially expendable. Debt-ridden peasants expelled from ancestral land, overburdened by taxation and economic demands and victimized by the civil and religious elite minority from the major urban centres, heard Jesus’ message of a joyful and liberating God (2001:24). In a culture, in which religion was embedded with politics and economics, this message of God’s renewal reign (*basileia*) was more than abstract and theological. It was a conviction that God was involved in, and cared about, their lives (2001:24). In this way, metaphor can function as a powerful, reorienting lens toward a renewed self-understanding and ethos, toward making sense of the past, present and future (Mouton 2005:8).

Such a politically, economically and socially victimized world (society) is analogous to a world the youth experience in Malawi, which is reflected in the songs they sing. They are developing or composing songs that reveal a struggle to preserve their way of life in a troubled and changing world. Through their songs, one detects signs of oppression and suffering in their statements and responses. They reinterpret their daily experiences and apply them to the Jesus story. In Jesus, the youth see the combined

witness of the New Testament: that of a divine presence through a Saviour who identified with the afflicted One on the cross and who reaches out to embrace all our afflictions (Brown & Miller 2005:82). The symbolic world of the youth involves politics, economics, and warfare, as much as magic and mysterious cults. Greater effort to make life possible is being taken through the unique creativity of the songs.

Jan Vansina (1985:2-3) has clearly differentiated between oral historians and oral traditions. He says oral historians' sources include reminiscences, hearsay, or eyewitness accounts about contemporary events and situations that occurred during the informants' lifetime. Whereas oral traditions are no longer contemporary, they have passed from mouth to mouth, over a period beyond the informants' lifetimes. In this field, oral historians have made the recordings and I must ensure that I relate my own observations about the recorded songs. I must make a link between the recorded songs and my experiences in the areas of study, bearing in mind that the youths' singing is a medium through which they wish to pass their message on to all who hear their songs. In this way, the joint performance of oral poetry expresses and consolidates the cohesiveness of the group of performers (Finnegan 1979:217).

This research tries to prove the importance of reinterpreting, blending and reconfiguring events as noted in the youths' great effort of reinterpreting, blending and reconfiguring their experiences with the story of Jesus. It is important for the church to analyse these songs theologically, as well as liturgically, since they are representations of different contexts and experiences with the purpose of creating new configurations that address particular communities. As Pieterse (2001:9) puts it, these acts are intentionally aimed at intervening in a situation, with the view of transforming it. The transformation at issue happens in accordance with the values of God's kingdom in the lives of individuals, in the church and in society. This affirms the three vital theological qualities when doing contextual theology, as outlined in the conclusion of Chapter 2.

These qualities are:

- Consideration of contexts and cultures of people when theologizing.
- A continued process of reconfiguration when doing theology from grassroots.
- The importance of individual participation and individual empowerment when liturgizing.

In this sense, the imaginative and transformative nature of what the youth are doing, has the transformative (referential, authoritative, life-giving) power of a text that lies in its ability to suggest, to open up, to mediate, to make possible (glimpses of) a “proposed world,” which readers might adopt or inhabit, an alternative point of view with which they can identify (Ricoeur, as referred to by Mouton 2005:8). In this way a text may disclose new possibilities – new ways of viewing things, new ways of relating to people, new ways of thinking and behaving (2005:8). To make a contribution to the scholarship world, the richness of the songs, as oral traditions, demands excavation by researchers, theologians and liturgicians. Through the songs that the youth are singing, their experiences and contexts surface for the listeners to act upon. In this way, a text has a persuasive thrust toward renewal, inviting people to reimagine their life stories, and to inhabit its world as their real world (2005:8).

The following discussion will show the the youths’ daily experiences that compel them to compose and sing these songs.

5.4 DAILY EXPERIENCES OF THE YOUTH

5.4.1 Food crisis

Dr. Scott Drimie, a senior research specialist in the Integrated Rural and Regional Development (IRRD), a research programme of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), reports that, in 1992, Southern Africa experienced a food crisis, the result of widespread droughts. A decade later, a similar crisis brought many in the region to unparalleled levels of hardship. But, now, the hardship was not just about the

lack of food. The term for this new phenomenon is “entangling crises” or a series of related hardships that requires robust and creative thinking about relief, rehabilitation, livelihoods and development (*HSRC Review*, Vol 2, July 2004:3).

The key difference between 1992 and 2002 is that the later crisis can be attributed to a number of factors, among them structural imbalance, governance, economic and social decline, HIV/AIDS and, to a lesser extent, drought. This challenge required immediate relief, as well as long-term development, to reduce conditions of political, socio-economic and environmental vulnerability that left the region open to even relatively modest external threats, such as unexceptional drought (*HSRC Review* vol.2, July 2004:3).

The *Daily Times* (July 14, 2004:2), writing on the food crisis in Malawi, indicates that Malawi requires 2.2 million tonnes of maize annually. But a multi-agency assessment has estimated that 1.3 to 1.7 million people would be in need of food.

The daily experiences of the youth have forced them to look for a better alternative that is worth living. Music has the power to call up another, deeper world and in that way defines the shape of the liturgy (Lukken 2005:458). On the food crisis experiences, a few examples follow:

a) *Food crisis at Liziri CCAP*

Liziri CCAP resorts under Chilanga Presbytery and Village Headman Chapekuka in the Sub-traditional Authority Chitanthamapiri in Kasungu district. The people in this area depend solely on agriculture and live between the Dwangwa River to the north, the Liziri River to the east and the Chitete River to the west. Most of their gardens are situated along the banks of the Dwangwa River. As a result, most areas along the river are devoid of trees, which have been cut down to create space for cultivation.

In his book, *Preaching in a context of poverty*, Pieterse (2001:116) says that we must not merely accept the empirical profile of poverty but, within the framework

of the potency of the Christian church, we must go out and listen humbly and with open minds to the poor. The Christian mission must be concerned about the spiritual, physical, social and even cultural aspects of all people's lives. In the 2001/2002 growing season, people in the Liziri area suffered severely with heavy rains that swept away most of their crops. I visited the area and found the scene disastrous - everything completely swept away. According to the area's Village Headman Chakuyanga (interview 19.09.2003), they watched helplessly while the Dwangwa River's floodwaters swept their crops away. This resulted in the people having no food to eat. Consequently, people would travel long distances on foot (even over 20 km.) in search of food, but to no avail, returning with only one or two pumpkins. Many people lost their lives in the process of looking for food. On their way, some unidentified persons died in foreign lands, and the legs and faces of many others became so swollen that they could hardly walk, work, or do anything due to the lack of food and loss of strength. There were rumours that some people even sold their children for K100 (equivalent to ±R5) just to find transport to return to their homes (Lilongwe, Dowa or Dedza). These children, who were purportedly sold, would become servants of their buyers and their food would be in lieu of wages. In its report, the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) notes, "The poor often receive food directly as a payment for casual labour [*ganyu*] (MVAC Forecast: 2006-2007:2).

Some husbands left their wives and children for unknown places and never returned, so, whether, or not, they survived wherever they had gone, is still a mystery. Such instances compelled some women to remarry, perhaps causing them to become victims of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Still other women opted to return to their original homes, rather than die of hunger. These experiences did not spare the youth, as members of these families.

In the 2005/2006 growing season, the time for planting and applying fertilizer, another disaster happened when, according to Group Village Headman Jonasi

(interview: 08.04.2006), who cares for over 300 people in the Liziri CCAP area, it rained only twice in early December 2005. Subsequently, there was no rain again until 15 February 2006. Such a break in the rains resulted in crops and grass withering, and trees losing their leaves. A report of the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) confirms this information, i.e. that some parts of the country suffered dry spells and devastating floods that destroyed crops. As a result, some households harvested virtually nothing (MVAC Forecast: 2006-2007:1). This situation affected also the running of Liziri CCAP congregation, whose minister in charge, Rev L.L.C. Tofu Banda, wrote a letter dated 13 May 2006 to Kaning'a CCAP, a congregation that had visited his congregation with relief food on 9 April 2006. The letter gives details of how monthly pledges had decreased as a result of this drought. The income from October 2005 to April 2006 was as follows:

MONTH	TOTAL AMOUNT RECEIVED
	MK
October 2005	10 479.47
November 2005	4 130.20
December 2005	4 846.62
January 2006	2 184.90
February 2006	2 042.84
March 2006	2 100.60
April 2006	2 187.10

The above figures reflect a decrease in the congregation's income in April 2006 by MK8 292.37 from that of October 2005. Yet there were two staff members, excluding the minister, who had to be paid from the amount of MK2 187.10. These two were the Church clerk who was to receive MK3 000 and the church watchman, MK2 000 per month. By April 2006, the church minister had not been paid his stipend for ten months, because, according to the CCAP-Nkhoma

synodal system, individual congregations that they serve pay their ministers, but Liziri could not afford to do so.

Even the goats and cattle could find hardly any water to drink or grass to eat, consequently, they grew thinner and thinner and finally started to die.

This situation was countrywide. For instance, an article by the Public Relations Officer at Illovo Sugar (Malawi) Limited, writing in her personal capacity as part of the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Services that provides fresh views on everyday news, in the *Nation News* of 16 December 2005, Vol 12, No 248, narrates how women were suffering in the southern part of Malawi due to the scarcity of food. The report states that women in Malawi were spending up to four nights at the state-controlled grain marketing organization, the Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC), in order to buy a mere 25 kg. of maize. Due to its scarcity, the government was forced to ration 25 kg. of maize to each buyer, which forced women to spend most of their time in travelling to ADMARC markets to buy maize, as 25 kg. is hopelessly inadequate for most families.

Women at the ADMARC markets were at risk of being attacked, as they often left home at approximately 1:00 a.m. in the hope of reaching the queue in good time. Even having left at this hour did not guarantee them any maize, as they often found others who had joined the queue long before them. There were also many reports of women fainting in the queues, due to hunger.

When the women failed to find maize at ADMARC markets, or when they had no money to buy the maize, they resorted to finding alternatives, such as wild tubers, roots and leaves. In Nsanje, Phalombe, Chikwawa, Blantyre and Mulanje in the southern region, women were reported to dig up waterlily tubers, and boil them thoroughly before feeding them to their families. Other alternatives that women resorted to were collecting and boiling green mangoes, green paw paws,

bamboo seeds powdered to look like rice, and termites that they fried with a little salt. A traditional leader in the Salima district (central region), where people also ate bamboo seeds, was quoted in the local media to have said that, in his 26 years of leadership, he had never seen people eating bamboo seeds for survival.

Furthermore, the public relations officer at Illovo Sugar (Malawi) Limited says that desperate women were making desperate decisions. When things like wild tubers, roots and termites failed to sustain their families, they joined the sex trade for a little money to buy maize. Here, desperate women and girls as young as 15 were indulging in commercial sex (prostitution) for survival, thereby exposing themselves to HIV/AIDS infection. According to Youth Net and Counseling, an NGO working to rehabilitate sex workers, there were indications that sex work was increasing as a result of the food crisis. They argued that it was better to die five or ten years later from AIDS than to die then from hunger (*Nation News* Friday, 16 December 2005).

As more and more women and young girls resorted to sex work the competition for clients became serious, and they could negotiate the rate to as low as K100 (equivalent to ±R5). Although sex work is illegal in Malawi, some sex workers say that, before the food crisis, they used to charge K1000 (equivalent to ± R50) for unprotected sex and K200 (equivalent to ± R10) for sex with a condom, but because of the strong competition to find clients, the amount was reduced to K100 (equivalent to ± R5).

Due to the food crisis, perhaps the most disturbing development was that some parents were reported to force their daughters to marry in exchange for food. The Malawi Human Rights Commission told the local media about cases of parents selling their daughters to strangers in exchange for food. Girls were forced to leave school, thereby perpetuating the vicious cycle of illiteracy, poverty and HIV/AIDS among women (*Nation News*, Friday 16 December 2005).

The above report on the food crisis gives an overview of conditions in Malawi in those years. According to Seti Pulikani (interview: 10.12.2006) of Jonasi Village, the aftermath of this crisis was that people spent most of their time in the 2006/2007 growing season in the “Food for work” programme organized by an organization called MALEZA, instead of working in their fields. This eventually resulted in their gardens being left uncultivated - a situation that could lead to continued hunger in the coming year.

b) *Food crisis at Chiwe CCAP*

A report by one of the CCAP Nkhoma Synod ministers at Chiwe CCAP, Rev Vasco Kachipapa,⁷ a congregation of 2756 members excluding children, shows how badly the area was struck by hunger. This congregation is approximately 60 kilometres west of Lilongwe City. Rev Kachipapa states that the 2001/2002 famine claimed many lives in the area while he served there. Many men and especially children lost their lives. The report states that about 65% of the people who died during this period were children, 33% were men and 2% women. It is surprising to note that, according to reports from all parts of Malawi, few women died of hunger during this period. It is unknown why the women withstood the famine. Questions still are: why were women resistant to the famine? Why did more men and children die? Why did more women than men and children survive hardships? These questions still remain unanswered. Every day, in one village, an average of two to three people died and were buried in one grave. Rev Kachipapa further reported that, for the first time, he saw women digging graves, carrying the dead bodies of their loved ones for burial. They wrapped the corpses in a mat and sometimes in old sacks, due to a lack of money to buy material for a wooden coffin.

^{7.} On 17 September 2004 at Msonkhamanja Hostel in Lilongwe, I had a long interview with Rev Vasco Kachipapa, the minister in charge of Chiwe CCAP between the years 2001/2002. While he narrated the story of the famine to me, it seemed as though I was reminding him of the pathetic situations that people had experienced.

Because of this famine, some people resorted to stealing cassava, green maize, sugarcane and pumpkins from other owners' gardens. If caught, the garden owners killed them and sometimes chased them from their own villages.

In fact, most prayer houses were temporarily closed because people could not go to church. Even those people who managed to arrive for worship were too weak to perform some rituals of the liturgy. They could not stand and sing a song loudly. Rev Kachipapa recalls that, one Sunday, some church elders who attended the worship service said, "*Abusa! Chonde tsitsani nyimboyo Sitingathe Kuyimba popeza yakwera*" (literally, Reverend, please lower the key of the song because we cannot sing it; it is too high). He says that, in fact, the key was not too high, but the people had no strength to sing, because of their hunger. According to CCAP Nkhoma Synod liturgy, everyone must stand when singing, but this was stopped during this period, because people could not, even for a few minutes, stand on their feet while singing.

Funeral ceremonies in Malawi are big occasions where hundreds or thousands of people attend the burial of a person. Peter J. Paris came to the conclusion that, since funerals are such major community events among African people, the material assistance of others was necessary (Brown & Miller 2005:114). But, during this time, the number of attendants dropped drastically. Rev Kachipapa observed that the average number of people attending funeral ceremonies was reduced to about 15 or less in the Chiwe CCAP area. As a minister of the Word at such occasions, he resorted to short, very brief sermons in a low, soft voice to avoid provoking hysteria among the people. Then, he used to preach a message of love and hope. As a result of this famine, some church programmes have since even been suspended.

During this period, many people flocked to church ministers' homes where help and food relief was provided and a daily average of not less than 15 people arrived there for assistance, regardless of their denomination. The contents of

one of the songs clearly depicts this picture of hunger, saying “*njala ya 2002 inali chilangashasha*,” meaning, “Famine for 2002 never spared a person; not even someone who thought he was clever enough.” (This song frequently featured on Zodiak Broadcasting Station, for example, on 2 January, 2007.) This famine spared no house, whether a grass-thatched house or a corrugated-iron roofed house - they were all affected.

5.4.2 Political change

In 1994, the change in the system of government, from a one-party to a multiparty system, brought tremendous changes. Ammerman (1997:34) comes to the same conclusion about the American context. There were population shifts and the composition of each community’s cultural base was transformed. What was once assumed to be true about what language was spoken, what kinds of families were present, what resources were available, how land was used – all were rendered obsolete. Schools came and went, and the patterns of neighbourhoods were scrambled, as old friends moved away and strangers arrived.

This change in the political system of government resulted in both positive and negative developments. On the positive side: the country now enjoyed freedom of expression, freedom of dress and freedom in reporting. Thus, many radio stations were opened, some of which are: Alinafe Radio Station, Zodiak Broadcasting Station, 101 FM, Radio Maliya, Capital FM, Islamic Radio, to mention only a few. Cell phones and television (TV) were also introduced. Free education in primary schools was introduced that resulted in two problems: 1) because schooling now was free, many more children went to school and could not be accommodated as the structures of the schools was lacking. 2) The increase in enrolment required additional teachers and this compelled government to employ thousands of people who had never attended a teachers’ training college. Consequently, the education standards deteriorated.

Furthermore, a growing number of foreigners, sometimes without residential permits, flooded the country. This caused insecurity on the part of the landowners and armed robberies of many trading centres increased. Affluent businessmen and owners of grocery stores were shot and their stocks stolen. I recall instances, such as Chiungo Trading Centre, a grocery shop, where the owner was shot dead; at Nsaru Trading Centre, the wife of an ADMARC supervisor was shot dead in her home; and in the City of Lilongwe, the manageress of a very big company (People's Trading Centre – PTC), Mrs. L. Mphepo, was shot dead in her home in Area 15. The lucky ones' lives were spared, but all their wares were stolen. From 2003 to 2006, there were more than 20 armed robberies at CCAP-Nkhoma Synod ministers' houses, and most of their property stolen. Furthermore, what is called "mob justice" developed where innocent people were killed on the spot. Sometimes a person would be killed by means of mob justice for merely stealing a maize cob or a cassava root.

These events created instability in the business community and, for security, many resorted to closing their groceries shops.

The government policy on agriculture also changed. People were encouraged to engage in small businesses rather than farming. Ultimately, this caused a reduction of the country's food production.

A syndrome of handouts that demeaned the people's integrity, also developed. The executive director of the Consumers Association of Malawi (Cama), John Kapito, is quoted in a new paper, *The Nation* of 14 July 2004 (p. 17), as saying, "It was regrettable that Muluzi (the former President of the country) sowed a syndrome of handouts which has only managed to demean the integrity of Malawians. Muluzi was actually saying, you are poor, come here and dance for me and I will give you money, which is not right." This, right from the top, reflected the current problems.

5.4.3 Economic problems

According to the finance minister, Goodwell Gondwe, in the *Weekend Nation* of 1 June 2004 (p. 2), Malawi had a savings ratio of about 12% in the early 1960s and mid-1970s. But now, the proportion was in negatives. In response to the finance minister, the chief executive of Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Chancellor Kaferapanjira, said that the drop in individual income was not surprising considering that the production output had fallen over the years. He continued by saying that low public sector investment over the years also worsened the situation, as no new jobs were created.

After 1994, Malawi suffered under difficult hardships. The country experienced the worst corruption ever, especially in government and para-statal. Between 1999 and 2004, in the Ministry of Education, there was a long overdue corruption scandal, where senior officials misappropriated 187 million Malawi Kwacha intended for building school blocks. In this scandal, contractors were paid for work that they had not done. It was professed deliberately that these contractors had built the school blocks, yet no structures existed on the grounds.

A report by the Commission of Inquiry on the Strategic Grain Reserves (SGR) reveals an example of malpractices in the para-statal. The findings of the Commission of Inquiry on the Strategic Grain Reserves (SGR) and the alleged mismanagement of the Strategic Grain Reserves by ADMARC, submitted to His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Malawi, on 24 August 2004, reveal that the sale of maize, if not poorly marketed, was poorly managed. In the entire system, a deliberate distortion of information took place to seal off any malpractices, producer prices or attempt to stabilise consumer prices (*The Nation*, 3 September 2003:7).⁸

The report reveals that maize which the National Food Reserve Authority (NFRA) and European Union had purchased, and which was meant to be distributed to vulnerable

8. The entire report on Strategic Grain Reserves appeared in *The Nation* of Friday, 3 September 2004, Vol. 11, No. 169 for all to read how corrupt the officials were in the affairs of running the government. It was an eight-page report revealing all that had happened.

households whose nutritional condition was threatened, was sold to Kenya and Mozambique by some corrupt government officials, as follows:

DATE	BUYER	COUNTRY EXPORTED	TONNAGE MT	AMOUNT MK
10/07/00	Farmers World Ltd	Kenya	5 053 000	20 212 000
06/11/00	Farmers World Ltd	Kenya	12 500 000	91 250 000
19/01/01	Farmers Finance	Kenya	3 938 000	17 286 352
13/09/00	World Food Programme	Mozambique	3 100 000	20 029 835.20
16/02/01	Industrial Comm. Holdings (Pty) Ltd	Mozambique	<u>2 119 570</u>	<u>32 031 867.20</u>
TOTAL			<u>26 710 570</u>	<u>180 800 054.40</u>

This is just one example of the many malpractices that occurred at this time that led to a few people in high positions becoming billionaires overnight. Also, it led to many people, at grassroots level, dying of hunger. The money in payment of the maize did not go into government or para-statal accounts, yet the maize indeed went to Kenya and Mozambique.

The consequences of the above malpractice were felt only in subsequent years, starting with the 2001/2002 growing season and, from 2002, Malawi experienced the worst famine. Mismanagement of the maize in the above years affected the welfare of the whole nation, yet nothing was done to deal with those who ventured into this malpractice. According to the report, the government (in this case, the cabinet) was fully aware of this malpractice. The companies that sold the maize are questionable. All are connected to important people then in government.

In addition to this scandal, since 1994, sales of the country's major forex earner, tobacco, attained very low prices when auctioned. Farmers complained, but to no avail. Prices often ranged around US\$0.80 per kilogram. The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) (MVAC Forecast: 2006-2007:1) notes that Malawi's economy faces high transport and business operating costs and low producer prices for tobacco

and cotton. Ultimately, this paints a gloomy picture for Malawi's economic status.

From another angle, the tobacco industry created a very bad situation for the youth. In child labour, children from the age of six worked on tobacco farms or estates. In the Kasungu area, where this research was conducted, I saw young boys and girls who stopped attending school in February to work as casual labourers on tobacco farms. Casual labour (*ganyu*) is very common among poor households. The poor often receive only food as wages for *ganyu*. Households may also receive donations or support in cash or in kind, usually from relatives or close family friends in the village (MVAC Forecast: 2006-2007:2). The little money they received tempted the children to leave school and continue with such labour. They did not look further than their daily earnings, and gave no thought to future consequences. Sometimes, these young people never received their wages after having worked for a whole year. I encountered such an incident in the Liziri area where two boys did not receive their wages because the farm owner said he had no money to pay them.

On 31 August 2006, on the M1 road, I observed some people who had resorted to selling firewood, cassava and bananas to earn a living. On the Lilongwe-Blantyre road, especially in the early morning, queues and queues of cyclists carrying firewood, cassava or bananas were seen on the roadsides. They cycled over 40 kilometres just to sell firewood worth 600 kwacha (equivalent to ±R30). To enable them to return home, these sellers sometimes were forced to reduce the price of the firewood by half when they failed to find a buyer, thus not improving their financial positions at all. From another angle, this sale of firewood encourages deforestation. Yet, they have no alternative but to cut down trees to earn a living. And, their commuting often makes them prone to accidents, as vehicles run some down along the way.

Furthermore, the so-called privatization of para-statal and companies has also created many questions. This is a move that has resulted in many Malawians being dismissed from their jobs, which has increased the unemployment rate of the country. As the profits of these companies are not dealt with in a transparent manner, this creates

speculation as to how the money was used. The closing down of companies and banning them from the country resulted in much unemployment. Ammerman (1997:22) reaches an analogous conclusion with the American context, “This mobility most immediately affects the individuals – across the class structure – which loses their jobs.”

5.4.4 The problems of witchcraft and children being taught witchcraft

Witchcraft is a very big issue in Malawi. In his book, McCracken (2000:42) observes that most people in Malawian regions share three basic religious beliefs, one of which is the existence of witches. Schoffeleers (1997:68) notes that the Chewa society is at its most democratic and united when it deals with matters relating to its natural environment. Threats to it, in whatever form, have the notable potential of mobilizing public opinion against whoever constitutes the threat. Witchcraft tensions are such threats in society and resulted in the use of the *mwavi* ordeal as a remedy in the 1830s. But, while it is important to recognize that the Chewa frequently used this ordeal in the 1830s (Mc Cracken 2000:45), in the 21st century, mob justice has become a solution.

From the year 2000, stories of the teaching of witchcraft, also to children to become witches, have often been told especially in cities, towns and trading centres. For instance, in Lilongwe City, children have often revealed that some men or women take them out at night to train them as witches without the knowledge of their parents. In Chinsapo Township, a woman was badly beaten for allegedly teaching children to become witches. In Area 36, a family was chased from their house because of their alleged teaching of witchcraft to children. The house was then completely destroyed. In Kawale 1 Township, during the night of 30 October 2006, a certain Mr Mphundi, alleged to be a church elder of a certain church, was beaten to death for throwing a 13 year-old boy from a witchcraft aeroplane, whilst it was flying, because the boy did not obey instructions to kill his mother. The boy was pronounced dead at Kamuzu Central Hospital, due to the injuries he had incurred. His death fuelled the people’s anger to the extent of killing Mr Mphundi, as, before his death, the boy had revealed that Mr Mphundi had taken him and other children out somewhere for witchcraft training. In

addition, all his property was burnt and his wife ran away in fear of also being killed.

5.4.5 Villages turned into suburban dwellings

A new development that has taken place in the past years is that of villages being turned into townships.

Statistics show that, in 1966, only 5% of the Malawian population ($\pm 260\,000$ people) lived in the country's urban centres. But, by 2004, 25%, ($\pm 3\,000\,000$ people) were urban residents. In the villages surrounding Lilongwe City the villagers sold their gardens to city dwellers resulting in a loss of personal heritage. This move aggravated the people's poverty levels. Once this money had been spent, they were poorer than before, and resorted to insecure work, which, in turn, resulted in unstable family lives. Their chances in life are very slim, beset by crime and poor health. High levels of social distress are common among those who have sold their gardens. As a result, they become servants and watchmen in their own land, with no property to cultivate or leave to their children. This has raised the rates of poverty, and the unemployment has increased the sense of hopelessness and bred greater social disorder.

Consequently, those who have lived there all their lives have seen a village transformed into a suburb or township. Newcomers develop their own land with a great deal of power over those from whom they bought the land. This has affected villages around Lilongwe City, such as Mtsiriza, Mwenela, Maula thope, Chilota, Njewa, Mwaza, Chitipi, and Tsabango, just to mention a few, which have experienced enormous structural changes as a result of these developments.

After 1994, mobile markets that move from place to place during the whole week have also developed. A specific marketplace is assigned to each day of the week. The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee field teams have found that market arrangements are quite complex, comprising: vendors who buy and sell in the village, small local traders in the larger villages, and bigger traders and wholesalers in the towns (MVAC Forecast, 2006-2007:3). These markets usually start very late in the

afternoon and are called *Kadaubwandire*, a name which seems to have a twofold meaning. Firstly, *Kadaubwandire* implying: as it is already dark, buy quickly what you want and go. Secondly: since it is dark, you can now find anybody and go with him or her wherever you want to go, which has a negative connotation because it implies immorality, encouraging people to wait until evening, then take whoever they want as a sex partner for that night.

The sellers of such markets are seldom at home; they are always en route to the next market destination. When they set off on Mondays, they don't return until their stocks have all been sold. Sometimes, they do not even then have the time to visit their families. The wife/husband and children just hear from those who saw him/her in town buying more goods that he/she was doing this. The wife/husband and children wish that they could stay together as a family for just a few minutes, but they are always away, busy with trading.

According to a workshop that the Nkhoma Synod Department of Church and Society conducted on 13 April 2005, such mobile markets motivate men to have affairs with other women and vice versa. Since they spend most of their nights in rest houses other than in homes, they are tempted to sleep with other men or women. In a way, this promotes the spread of HIV/AIDS and, therefore, should never be encouraged.

5.4.6 How things are analogous and different to what people experience

The songs that the youth sing arise from quite different contexts. Through their songs, the youth address particular issues in particular contexts. The ways of finding solutions to those experiences are diverse. In each context, all members are empowered to cooperate in the process of creating a new context conducive to their living. In this diversity, God works in particular concrete situations to address people in their situations and to bring the Kingdom into their midst (Rhoads 1996:147). In all the various contexts, the youth creatively reinterpret their contexts in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for their future life. In so doing, the nature and authority of the New

Testament writings and their reception in new times and places – as a life-giving and sense-making activity – have to be (re)focused and (re)structured within the dynamic site of continuous interaction between God’s Spirit, their multiple textual dimensions, as well as the interests, dreams and fears of contemporary faith communities (Mouton 2005:9). This they express in their songs.

Each of these different contexts has its own story. For instance, the Liziri context has a story of crops withering due to a dry spell and the flooding of the Dwangwa River. The Lilongwe context’s story is one of villages being turned into townships, and local members becoming watchmen, casual labourers and homeless. Mchizanjala’s story tells of cattle being taken to dipping tanks, donkeys not dipping, and the presence of *Gule wamkulu*. Chiwe’s context is that of people dying of famine. Mpatsa has a story of trusting God while on the lake, fishing and sailing. The Mlanda context includes the *Ingoma* dance after a war, and at a wedding after drinking beer. All these contexts are described in their own setting in the songs being composed and sung. This affirms the five vital anthropological qualities when doing theology from the “user-sensitive” grass-roots level, as outlined in the conclusion of chapter 3. The qualities are as follows:

- Human beings are individualized representatives of human nature immersed in particular cultures.
- The cultural stories of all people are very diverse, and should be handled from that perspective.
- Different groups of people assign different meanings and values to whatever takes place.
- The members of a given group mutually share, appreciate, and live behaviour patterns of meaning and feeling, different from those assigned to other groups.
- There is a need to reinterpret, blend and reconfigure symbols, things and events of receiving cultures when doing contextual theology.

In this case, only those outsiders, who knew the what comprised the story of each context, would be able to grasp the meaning of what happens in the people’s lives. From an American context, Malina (1993:9) says that culture is an organized system of

symbols by which persons, things, and events are endowed with rather specific and socially shared meaning and values. Kamlongera (1992:1-2) rightly notes that it seems that most researchers very often fail to observe how movements, music, visual arts and the theatrical format work together, under one set of common aesthetic ideals, to create a total dance performance in an African setting. By analysing the music as an integrated expression within a cultural context, and by studying; the angularity of the melody, the distinct movements of the dancer to this melody, the sharp cuts the carver puts into the mask worn by the dancer, and the statements made in the text of the melody, the researcher could determine valuable cultural observations and thus derive a better understanding of the purpose of the song, that is, the communicative function of the expression within its culture.

This means: to understand another's story adequately, one needs to know not only the why, what, when, where and how of his/her physical and psychological human nature and unique personhood, but also the whys and wherefores of his/her commonly shared cultural story that fill the who, what, when, where and how with mutually appreciable meaning and value (Malina 1993:10). This confirms what Mbonigaba (1994:25) says, namely that African heritage is embedded in the people's rituals and symbolic language with much meaning; and that one cannot understand an African unless one comes to terms with his/her symbolic language. This means that what the songs that the youth in Malawi are singing and doing, is: they take what is available in the physical and human environment and interpret it socially, fill it with socially shared meaning and feeling (Malina 1993:13). The youth assign different meanings and values to their different contexts with different experiences, as they embrace them, to create a reconfigured context.

The following discussion tries to describe the process of reconfiguration that brings about a reconfigured context.

5.5 THE PROCESS OF RECONFIGURATION

The following discussion suggests that reinterpretation is the first step in the process of reconfiguration. Such a step starts from an existing context, i.e. where things are, and what was brought into this context. What has disrupted this social system? As one tries to reinterpret, rethink, revisit one's context, one reaches a point at which one either accommodates, or rejects, some disrupting elements. In the process of reconfiguration, this is the stage of "blending." The outcome of "blending" is what produces a reconfigured context that brings with it a new form of context, quite different from the first. In the end, this process is what I call "a process of reconfiguration." Then, the appearance of the new context is completely new compared to the context before reinterpretation and blending took place.

Two diagrams that explain this process of reconfiguration appear below. Diagram A gives an overview of the three contexts: that of the Chewa culture, that of the Gospel the context of suffering, and Western influences. Diagram B illustrates the processes that are followed to attain a reconfigured context - a process of reconfiguration.

DIAGRAM A: SHOWING DIFFERENT CONTEXTS COMING TOGETHER

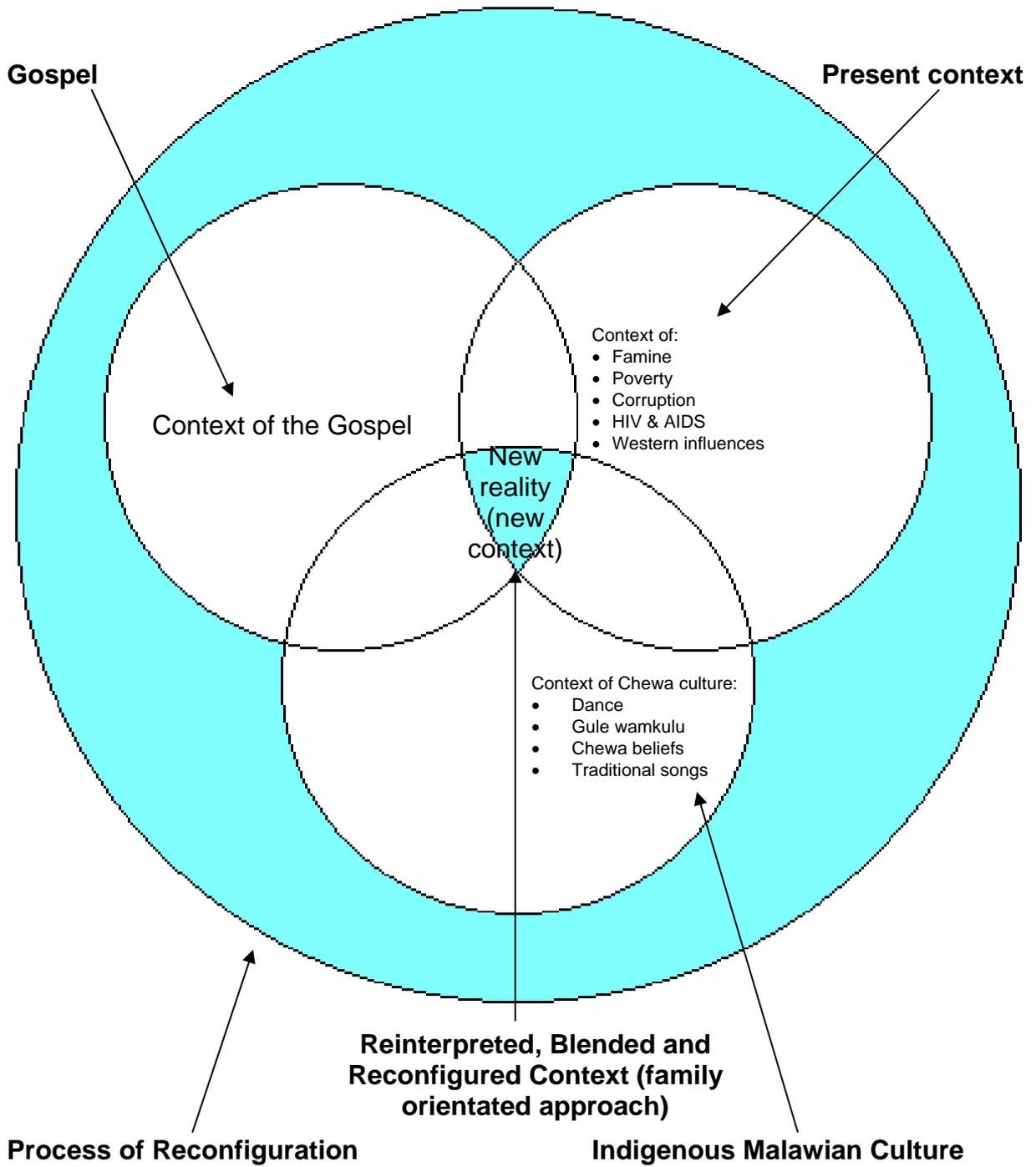


DIAGRAM B: REFLECTING THE PROCESS OF RECONFIGURATION

PROCESS OF RECONFIGURATION

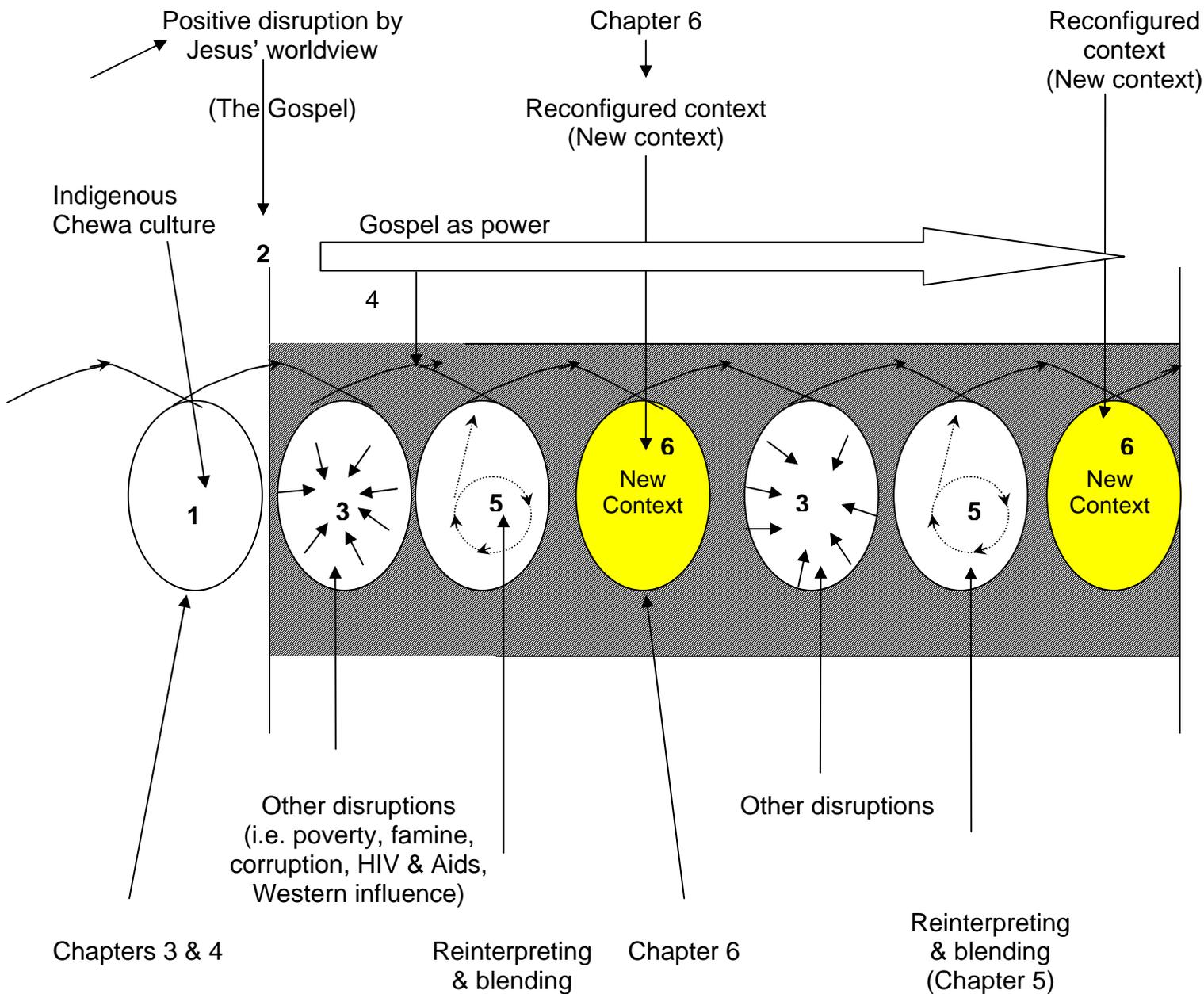


Diagram B above reflects the Chewa worldview that foreign contexts of Western influences have disrupted; Jesus' worldview of the Gospel and a context of suffering and death. As Wayne A. Meeks (1983:6) justifiably states, society is viewed as a process in which personal identity and social forms mutually and continuously create interactions that occur by means of symbols. Such disruptions force the receiving

society members to look for alternatives to make life meaningful.

These disruptions that have entered the Chewa worldview are both positive as well as negative and all require reinterpretation. Here, reinterpretation occurs to find a preferential option that will heal the disruptions caused. By means of reinterpreting situations, one tries to accommodate the positives and sift out the negatives in order for life to make sense.

The disruptions bring theological as well as contextual realities that, together with the tensions they have spawned (Ackermann 1996:35) demand exegetical as well as hermeneutical reinterpretation. When this reinterpretation tries to accommodate, adopt or integrate the positive disruptions, blending them with existing elements will be needed. In this diagram, there are circular arrows (inside circle No. 5), representing the process of reinterpreting and blending to come up with a new reality of context. In the diagram, circle number 6 represents this new reality of context as a new context. Here, reinterpretation involves blending the foreign elements with existing ones, resulting in a complete new reality with a complete new reconfigured context. The line that connects one circle to the other represents movement from one life-experience to the other. This process is repeated, indicating an ongoing process of interaction between experience and interpretation.

This whole process, from the Chewa worldview, disruptions of the Chewa worldview, *reinterpretation* and *blending*, is what I call “a process of *reconfiguration*” in this dissertation.

The discussion of this process of reconfiguration is now presented below.

5.5.1 Reinterpretation as the first step in reconfiguration

The discussion above has shown the contexts from which the youth in Malawi are singing. In chapter 3 of this dissertation, it was also noted that the Western way of thinking had been superimposed on the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod liturgy, as it reflects

strongly in the music sung during worship services. The worship comprises mostly English/Scottish songs that are foreign to the Malawian culture. Such a context fails to accommodate Malawian traditional elements, which should have been blended with the official hymnbook.

In contrast to this symbolic worldview of the Western way of thinking by means of imported hymns from Western countries, the youth in Malawi have arrived at a point when such a symbolic worldview is no longer acceptable in Malawi. They then discovered a goal in life towards which they can strive and work. They have a vision of developing their own indigenous hymnology in the form of traditional Malawian songs that are sung in choirs. This transformation affects even their thinking, as they are now psychologically liberated from the trap of foreign songs in which the people (the church) are caught. This move has emphasized the importance of “experiencing God” in worship (Brink & Witvliet 2003:332) in one’s own culture and context. From an anthropological point of view, this means that we may regard liturgical inculturation as a dialogue between Christian worship and culture (Best & Heller 1995:57). This is how the culture that it embraces enriches Christian worship (1995:57).

The youth have also seen the symbolic worldview in which they are as one of oppression, hunger, mismanagement of resources, corruption, HIV/AIDS, jealousy, envy, enmity, sinful life and war, which can no longer hold. Through the songs that they sing, they recognize an alternative worldview in which their whole existence now depends on Jesus who brings a new world of peace and love. Such reactions cause communicative acts in the service of the Gospel to be coloured by the Christian hope and expectation of the coming of God’s Kingdom, to which end we want to change the worlds of church members and society (Pieterse 2001:12). They now no longer adhere to the existing social structure, but rather to the new one that has been reinterpreted.

As an alternative symbolic worldview that the youth are blending with existing contexts, the crucified and risen Jesus, the Lord and Prince of Peace, is the first. Then, with existing contexts, they are also blending their own culture that is a gift from God, in the

form of African art, including traditional songs, dance, gestures, body and foot movements, drums, ululation, and many traditional instruments. The youth have also introduced rhythmic folktale performances, so that the characters and themes of these folktales can help to educate the listeners and bring them closer to God. Such folktales are employed with the aim of teaching contemporary people of existing contexts and the possibilities of solving moral issues. Thus, “moral” may explain behaviour, demonstrate origins, or justify societal constraints (Agawo 1995:178).

Some cultural elements that have been blended with existing contexts include: traditional instruments, which were mostly used for jive performance, a dance originally for entertainment and joyous occasions such as weddings, after a successful hunting venture or just for fun. The *Mganda* dance is usually performed at weddings and harvest times as thanksgiving to God who gives rain and good harvests. The *ingoma* dance is usually performed after a war victory and sometimes at weddings and mere celebrations. The drums used in the *mganda* dance (men’s dance), *chimtali* (women’s dance), *chituzu* (boys’ and girls’ dance) and the *gule wamkulu* (an all-embracing dance, membership of which demands that one be initiated). Sometimes instruments, such as drums and horns were also important in communicating messages of events taking place in the village, such as an actual or impending war, hunting, the birth of a child or twins, initiation, and death (Lukwata 2003:159). This affirms the following eight hymnological qualities that are vital when doing theology from the grass-roots level, as outlined in the conclusion of chapter 4:

- Traditional music embodies something that expresses the group’s identity.
- Traditional music expresses the experience of contemporary situations or events.
- Traditional music tries to control the singers’ environment in a more direct and active way.
- Music making should involve all who are gifted, which includes lay people.
- Church music defines the shape of the liturgy.
- Church music needs to be an inclusive activity, bringing the old and the new together.

- Music must be true to the text.
- Traditional music has a place in contextual liturgy.

Such a creative and preferred worldview imparts determination to the youth to make an effort of bringing these traditional elements and music together with the existing Western way of thinking and official hymns from Western countries, as a means of spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ, who invites everyone to his own worldview. They blend the two worlds together to create a reconfigured context. With this newly created context, the formed context, in which they were previously, has been reinterpreted to create a better, reconfigured context. Their whole being has moved from the existing context and has entered into the reconfigured context, which is better than the existing one.

In an analogous way, the imaginative, transforming and authoritative power of New Testament texts comes to the fore within the creative, yet complex, interaction between spirit, text and context (Mouton 2005:9). The continual risky process, by which they had to learn to match their new identity to a lifestyle and language worthy of their calling, occurred in the creative, “liminal” tension between their understanding of the Torah and their memories of Jesus (2005:9). From within this space, their hope for the future and their courage to live faithfully in the present day would be shaped (2005:9-10).

Such a process continues as long as new events develop. Also, different contexts will blend differently according to each one’s existing context and daily experiences of life.

5.5.2 Blending the English/Scottish songs with Malawian traditional songs

In the above discussion, the youth brought to the Malawian liturgy their story-telling songs, Malawian traditional instruments, Malawian (African) gestures, movements, dance, Nyau lyrics in songs, ululation, traditional songs, and many other elements, blended into the Western hymns, in the existing context of the Western way of thinking, without being allowed to do so, as this is not an official part of the official liturgy. This move is a part of the youths’ struggle for survival in the church in Malawi. And, it offers

an alternative perspective, which has serious implications for how people in Malawi should work with the youth and how to interpret the Bible today. The songs reveal how the Malawian youth speak about God, and how they respond to socio-economic challenges in Malawi.

The youth have blended new elements with existing ones in the contexts in which they are living. They have blended the worship service rituals with elements external to the official proceedings in the official liturgy of the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod and have disrupted the existing flow of Western flavour in the liturgy by a Malawian traditional flavour. In the process, a “break in continuity,” characterised by invented traditions, is evident. This confrontation results in the borrowing and integration of elements into the existing structure of the Malawian liturgy. Where the Western way of worship is blended with the Malawian traditional way, the outcome is reconfigured and therefore new.

An example to this takes place during the Sunday Service worship, where a choir receives an opportunity to sing. They either sing a Malawian traditional song applying whatever Malawian traditional elements, or sing a English/Scottish song from the official hymnbook, but with a reconfigured melody – having exchanged the English/Scottish melody for a Malawian melody. Such a new tune matches the traditional instruments, hand clapping, body movements, gestures, dance and many other elements that may be added. The result is that such a song’s melody changes the whole atmosphere of the church service and is more inviting than if it were sung in its English/Scottish original tune. Such a change in melody or tune, transforms the whole worship service, as everybody is fully involved in the choir. It is a reconfiguration that affects also those gathered, as the melody is one with which they grew up. Such a modification to the song brings liveliness into the service, and the worshippers’ experience of unity and the indigenous element is remarkable.

These traditional elements that are integrated into the English/Scottish songs result in an effective outcome for the delivery of Jesus Christ’s Good News, and also for the participants’ true fellowship. The youth of Malawi are offering this new context to

church leaders to recognize and do something about it, as opposed to the existing social structure.

This type of singing encourages participation and is also a form of proclaiming the salvific message (Lukwata 2003:152), and adds a popular and richly creative element to the performance, glorifying God who is being worshipped. There is also vitality and rhythm, with which the youth identify, as they often find Christian liturgy boring (Lukken 2005:462). Thus, the youths' religious intentions are met. Consequently, a sense of musical toleration that welcomes the various idioms of contemporary society, develop (Riedel vol. 5-6 1966-1969:155). Because of the tolerance among the members of such a church, they begin to consider their contexts and social experiences together as one body, one family. Therefore, the reinterpretation of historical events to fit into new situations is brought about while considering the other members of God's family.

5.5.3 The outcome of reconfiguration

In the above discussion, a process of reconfiguration was described where elements from the Gospel message, Western influences, the existing contexts of suffering and the poverty of Chewa culture were brought together to create a new context, quite different from that of suffering and poverty.

Reconfiguration examines the new form of context of any blended event or thing that has developed in the reconfigured context. The new product requires a new description; where, previously, there were no traditional songs, traditional gestures, movements and dance, no traditional story-telling songs or where there was no blend of English/Scottish and traditional songs, now, they will all be included; and, furthermore, where there was no music tolerance before, it will be there now. In the process, most members' need for this new context is addressed and no person or group is neglected or oppressed. The members experience a kind of empowering as they feel that they are part of this reconfigured context.

This is the Malawian youths' vision as they sing the traditional Malawian songs. They recount the new context so that it makes it new compared to the previous context. This new context replaces the previous context, making the previous context a foreshadowing of the more recent context. There is a reworking of specific events and traditions due to new experiences that have come about to adapt to an existing social system in a search for a new meaning of existence. It is precisely in this context of instability and change that a need arises for continuity of tradition that links the present with the past and, in so doing, affords a foothold for identity and direction (Post, Rouwhorts & Van Tongeren 2001:649).

Ultimately, the youths' type of worship depends on the Spirit of God and is facilitated by two dynamics: a dramatic structure and artistic performance (McGann 2002:5). In traditional African religion, "The heritage of our foreparents . . . the main thrust of religious practices is to achieve harmony with the spirits [the Chewa concept of the High God, see chapter 3] and empowerment by the spirits" (the *Gule wamkulu* secret society, see chapter 3) (2002:6). This cultural orientation prepared the Chewa communities to recognize, in the Bible, a God who brings life, energy and power through his Spirit. This Spirit of God, who moves in creation and breathes life and soul into human persons, manifests in worship that is intensely expressive and moving, in which spiritual power is released and newness is created (2002:6).

This type of music opens up a new world to which they aspire - a new world that is better than the existing one, a new world of a family of believers, and where the needs of one another are heard and addressed cooperatively. By so doing, they invite their audiences to build a world in continuation of New Testament perspectives that would honour diversity and justice (Mouton 2005:15). Through re-telling and re-imagining biblical stories from their socio-cultural perspectives (2005:15), the youth in Malawi not only find models of power abuse that relate to their own circumstances, but also role models of youth who creatively use their power to empower others. In the process, the oppressed boldly and ironically become agents of their own empowerment (2005:15).

Such a vision is analogous to “a family orientated approach” discussed in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

In general, the above discussion agrees with Piet Naudé (1995:53) that one of the main assumptions of such a study (for Naudé, this study), is that primal confessions are “carried” in hymns, especially in communities that, for their continuation, depend on some form of oral tradition. My specific interest in the interpretation below is to distil from the songs a primal creedal formulation implicitly present in the transcribed and translated songs (1995:53). Interpretation will move from analytical social dimensions to theological–liturgical dimensions. The interpretation moves as far as possible within the contextual and structural framework presented by the texts themselves so that the distillation process produces results that are, at least, internally consistent with the various songs (1995:53).

The structure of analysing these songs begins with a table of the analysed songs, where different themes and their descriptions are shown. A summary of the analysed themes and their occurrences follows. Then, a discussion of some songs with titles of Jesus, Messianic expectations/eschatology and judgement follows. Thereafter, a theological–liturgical analysis of the traditional Malawian songs from grassroot levels are discussed. In the process of doing this analysis, the reconfiguration of “family” in Mark 3:31-35 and Jesus’ followers, as positive disrupters in Philippians 2:5-11, are discussed.

We may now begin the long journey of analysing these songs to see what emerges for suggestions towards hymnological development in Malawi.

THEMES	DESCRIPTIONS
Death, as a living creature, is physically hard-hearted (14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trusting the self - Personal experience with death - Busy with sinful life - People going to the grave (2) - Death vs. judgment of disobedience - Death as a result of sinful life - Even the rich die – Jesus conquered death

THEMES	DESCRIPTIONS
God is mighty (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crucifying Christ - Jesus to be adored - Jesus a friend - Amazing love - Greatness of Jesus - Saviour from troubles - Acknowledging the greatness of Jesus - Only Jesus can make us free and give peace - Appreciating Jesus' greatness - Jesus as redeemer - The greatness of God (2) - Can't hide from God
Reinforcement of God's commandments (2)	Commitment of Christ
Oppressive behaviour (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oppress the Word of God - Oppressing leadership
Hope in the Lord/Jesus (18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Everlasting life - Hope in Jehovah/Jesus (4) - Desire to see Jesus - Interacting with Jesus - Power of prayer - Lord as Shepherd (2) - Help from God (3) - Jesus is merciful - Jesus is hope - Jesus a true friend - Hope in heaven - Heaven is good
Confession (15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulties associated with confession - Surrendering to God - Repentance (12)
Salvation (14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accepting God - Need to repent - Jesus saves - Jesus the saviour (5) - Knowing the Lord is a choice - Jesus the conqueror - Jesus the way - Willingness of Jesus to save the world

THEMES	DESCRIPTIONS
Troublesome (46)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sour – interpersonal relationships (2) - Conflict - Mourning (2) - Unfair world - Funerals - Fighting/opposing - This world is not our home - Helplessness - Hypocrisy (2) - False prophets - Fruits of disobedience (2) - Righteousness - Remembering Jesus when in problems - Rebellion - No peace (2) - Violence (22)
End of times (12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Judgment day (3) - End of times (2) - Taking the righteous to glory - Sinners will remain on earth - Reward - Better life - After this troubled life - Heavenly life desired - Warning: sinful life will lead to Gehennah
Appreciating that wealth is not all, but Jesus is (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advice and not relying on worldly comfort - Riches are not a passport to enter heaven - Worshipping idols - Focusing on our social life
God's promise of the Holy Spirit as a care taker (1)	
Discipleship (5)	Discipleship (5)
Devil/Satan (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stubborn - Ignoring the message - Acknowledging the existence and control of Satan - Satan, the destroyer - Resisting Jesus - Talking evil of God's message - Defeats man - No friendship with Satan
Orphans (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No guardian/parent to take care - Advocating for the disabled and orphans

THEMES	DESCRIPTIONS
Sinful world (27)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sinful life (15) - Painful world - Lack of trust (2) - Helplessness (4) - No helping hand - Pretence - Immorality - Confusion
Blessings (1)	- One's blessings are not by choice
The vanity of work and riches	A concept from the book of Ecclesiastes and the emphasis on having wealth without concern for others
Leadership	Honesty (1)

The above table reflects the varying degrees of themes that arise; some themes occur more than others. The numbers of each theme indicate the number of occurrences of each song and the summary of these themes is as follows: Troublesome world – 46, Sinful life – 27, Hope in the Lord or Jesus – 18, Confession – 15, Salvation – 14, Death as a living creature – 14, God is mighty – 13, End of times – 12, Devil/Satan – 7, Discipleship – 5, Orphans – 3, Reinforcement of God's commitment – 2, Oppressive behaviour – 2, God's promise – 1, Blessings – 1, Goodness of Jesus – 1, and Vanity of work and riches – 1.

A brief analysis of some themes follows:

Troublesome world

Songs that speak of this world as troublesome, are in the majority, with 46 songs. Their descriptions express extrinsic factors that affect the youth; factors that seem to be stronger, implying an evil world full of conflict, mourning, rebellion and violence. Some themes that may be deemed extrinsic factors include appreciating that wealth is not all, but Jesus alone, and the end of times. Such factors manifest in visible experiences that are portrayed in the youths' behaviour. In specific contexts, these factors are warnings to all to be careful in what they do, because they have a great influence and

impact on others. These extrinsic factors may force others either to come to God, or to move away from Him.

Sinful world

This theme occurs the second most, in 27 songs. They would have been added to the theme, “troublesome world,” but, according to the description of its factors, they had to be treated separately. A descriptions such as sinful life, is intrinsic to the singer; it is an inner feeling, one of doing evil. A painful world is subjective by nature and is also intrinsic. The world is portrayed as sinful and problematic, where there is no love, nor concern for one another. The society is engulfed in sinful practices and behaviour.

Here, the singers think negatively and, as such, one does not improve the existing situation and cannot make an effort to change it. And, because the negatives are high, the present is evil and, therefore, the future is blurred, as they see hope only in Jesus. The additional danger to such thinking is that these young people will be the future elders of the church. The question may be asked: what type of leaders will they be and what type of theology will develop from such leaders?

The church needs ways to counter-act to such thinking. There is a need to increase hope in the youth by transforming their extrinsic as well as intrinsic factors in order for life to be meaningful in this troubled world. Only one song mentions God’s promise of the Holy Spirit. Most songs do not mention the Holy Spirit; this possibly implies that He is included in the acts of Jesus, who is mentioned several times.

Other themes that are not frequently used include Gods promise (1), Blessings (1), and Goodness of Jesus (1), that is merely futuristic. Possibly these themes are rarely used, because the youths’ focus is more on the future, on the day when Jesus will come, as this world is evil and therefore, not worth living. Jesus’ authority will be felt only after Satan’s rule has been defeated. The first coming of Jesus was only to show his authority on earth and, with this his authority, He ascended to heaven. When He comes for the second time, on the “last day,” this evil world’s entire authority will be

conquered; then, Jesus will rule. Perhaps this is why the songs do not address God's current faithfulness in protecting and blessing, meaning that the Gospel does not seem to have implications for the present life; everything is about the future.

These songs somehow confirm the Chewa eschatological expectation that looked forward to a single day – the day of the Lord – when God would come in glory to save his people and, in judgement, condemn the ungodly for eternity (see chapter 3 on Chewa eschatology). In this sense, “sinful world,” and “troublesome world” are all connected to “end of times,” as they all await the day of the Lord. Such an understanding of eschatology is analogous to the Jewish understanding of eschatology that looks forward to a single day – the day of the Lord.

End of times

This theme includes both positive as well as negative results. Positive: in that “the end of times” allows sinners to repent and be righteous in order to go to heaven. Negative: in respect of *gehennah*: when “the end times” come, sinners will be separated from the righteous, who will go to heaven, and the sinners will go to *gehennah*. This means that “the end times” will bring rewards to all people.

In short, these songs portray problems in societies in which the youth live. The problems include: pretence, boasting, immorality, backbiting, unfaithfulness, fornication, wars, jealousy (mostly about leadership), separation, lying, violence, theft, fighting for leadership, hypocrisy, injustice, false prophets, polygamists, drunkenness, sins among Christians/elders, famine, HIV/AIDS, corruption and some cultural practices that promote evil.

I will now examine some selected songs with titles of Jesus, about moral issues and Christian life, and about parenthood.

5.5.4 Some selected songs with titles containing the name of Jesus

I am overwhelmed by the centrality of the titles of songs on Jesus that the youth of Malawi sing. The songs have so many Christological references that one may conclude that Jesus is everything in the life of the Malawian youth.

As Uzukwu (1997:44) rightly states: Africans, who like to ritualize activities in the everyday life, aim to effectively lift this life beyond the mundane; they place everyday life on the altar of the transcendent. McGann (2002:4) says, "It has been found that human beings are made for the transcendence." The songs that the Malawian youth sing bring to worship a distinct theological perspective on biblical narratives - one in which God's liberation is central (2002:9). The Malawian youth find the ritual context and ritual time more intensely in touch with their spiritual Originator. When this world's leaders fail to bring peace and tranquillity to this world, the youth look to Jesus for their answer. Of the 120 songs selected, approximately 35 say that they depend directly on Jesus for their present, as well as future life, and almost all the songs that are eschatological by nature also say indirectly that Jesus is the answer to what they are experiencing.

For the youth in Malawi, Jesus is their Army Commander, their King, their Saviour, their Lord, their Judge, their Warrior, their Righteousness, their Father, their Christ, their Creator, the Son of God, their Shepherd, their Lamb, their Protector, their Deliverer, their Giver of life, and their Hope.

If one takes into account the history that the Malawian youth have experienced since 1994, the following important factors arise: Messianism as an answer to the power of witchcraft and the search for general material and especially physical wellbeing; an attempt to synchronise the message of Christianity with traditional beliefs; the search for a transcendent leader (Naudé 1995:55) with whom they can journey through their harsh social realities. The youth are singing a prophetic critique on the whole reality of society, chiefly concerning its socio-economic and political aspects and a critique of Christianity, as a religion, by the social-cultural reality (Amalorpavadas 1990:128). The

goal of this effort is the promotion of social justice, liberation of the oppressed, and the ushering in of a just, human, egalitarian and participating society (1990:128).

Jesus is the only Army Commander who conquers, the only Lord and King who rules, Saviour who saves, Judge who judges justly, Giver of hope for survival, the Righteous who rules with righteousness, Creator who recreates this wicked world, the Son of God who deserves honour for his authority, majesty, power to heal, deliverance from such a world, and for giving abundant life. The youth acknowledge that believing, by the power of the Spirit, that as God is present in the person of Jesus when He cries out, they are confident that their own cries join Jesus' cry and they are thus redeemed (Brown & Miller 2005:90). Precisely because God did *not* abandon Jesus in his time of trial, the youth believe that God draws near in grace to all who are poor, weak, defeated, or lost (2005:90).

As one reads the lyrics of the songs, "God" as "Father" is used interchangeably with "Jesus." So too, are the titles: Shepherd, Protector and Deliverer. This seems to imply that God and Jesus is one God. It also makes sense to conclude that the Holy Spirit operates together with God and the Son, because all Jesus' attributes are also those of the Holy Spirit; thus, the Trinity is reflected in the songs that the youth sing. The Holy Spirit is fully active as the youth compose their songs. He gives the youth gifts of composition and singing, even as they challenge the elders through their songs. He empowers the youth to have the courage and hope as they endure suffering to meet Jesus, their final hope, who will come to fetch them. And, the Holy Spirit leads them to this Jesus, whom God the Father sent to save the world from evil.

The following songs (numbered for easy identification) testify to Jesus' authority in the youth community, as noted in the titles below.

Army Commander 1; King 2, 12; Saviour 2, 4, 5, 33, 38, 46, 48; Lord 4, 15, 32, 35, 43, 52; Judge 9, 17, 23; Protector 19, 58, 59; Warrior 23; Our Hope 24; Righteousness 27; Father 35; Christ 38, 47; Creator 38; Son of God 40; Shepherd 41, 43; Lamb 44;

Deliverer 62; Giver of life 70; Fighter 86; and Healer 104.

A selection of a few of these songs is now presented below.

1. TITLES OF JESUS

a) Jesus as Lord

NTHAWI ZONSE TIDZAYIMBA ZA DZINA LA YESU⁹ (Rumba tune)

1. *Nthawi zonse tidzayimba za dzina la Yesu*
We will sing of the name of Jesus always
Pamabvuto, pamtendere, nthawi zonse tidzayimba dzina lakelo
In trouble, in happiness, we will always sing his name
Alipo ena amapondereza mau Ambuye kuti akamvere
There are some who refuse the Word of the Lord that it should not be heard
Ndikudziwa ine tsiku lomaliza ukatha moyo wawo
I know on the last day, when their life is over
Ndipo apita kuti woyera mtima, tikunyadira poona ambuye tsiku lomaliza
And where do the pure in heart go, we are proud in seeing the Lord on the last day
Pakuti ali yemweyo Ambuye Yesu
Because the Lord Jesus is the same.

Chorus

Ali yemweyo ambuye Yesu nthawi zonse ndidzayimba za dzina la Yesu
The Lord Jesus is the same all the time. I will sing of the name of Jesus
Pamabvuto, pa mtendere, nthawi zonse ndidzayimba za dzina lakelo
In trouble, in happiness, I will always sing of his name.

9. This song is unique in that the singers have used a rumba tune from West Africa for their song, not a Malawian melody, but from far distant from Malawi. A tune, originally heard in bars, has been reconfigured by being blended with the Gospel. This confirms that the meaning of music resides in people, not in sounds (Bradley 2003:365). Music has meaning because of its context (Hawn 2003:5). From another angle, this proves the universality of music.

The singers make fresh vows to sing for the Lord Jesus, always, in whatever circumstances – be it in trouble, in happiness, they will sing to his name. The singers even warn those who turn down Jesus' Word. Such people will not see the Lord on the last day, when their life will be over. This implies that those who refuse Jesus' Word will go to hell.

In verse 3, the mention of King Nebuchadnezzar, the oppressor, reveals a deeper meaning of the song; it's not merely spiritual. In a country where those in power oppress people, Jesus will overcome them on the singers' behalf on the last day. In other words, the song is politically subversive. Just as God saved the Israelites from the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, he will also save them from the kings of this world. Here, Jesus is synonymous with God.

2. *Alipo ena inu amapondereza mau Ambuye kuti akamvere*
There are some, I tell you, who refuse the Word of the Lord that it should not be heard
Amayiwala kuti Yesu nanena siridzatayika lemba liri lonse
They forget that Jesus said not even one word will be lost.
Mkana mutani inu, mkana mupondereze, siridzatayika lemba liri lonse
Whatever you may do, whether you refuse, not even one word will be lost
Oyera mtima inu, adzayimba nyimbo Kutama Ambuye tsiku lomaliza
You, pure in heart, will sing a song thanking the Lord on the last day
Pakuti ali yemweyo, Ambuye yesu nthawi zonse tidzayimba za dzinal a Yesu
Because the Lord Jesus is the same all the time, we will sing of the name of Jesus.
3. *Nebukadinezara, mfumuyo ya nkhanza inazuza anthu, ana a Mulungu*
Nebuchadnezzar the oppressing King, oppressed people; children of God
Koma Mulungu inu, anapulumutsa, amithenga ake ku ngánjo ya moto
But oh! God, saved them, his messengers from the furnace of fire
Ndichifukwa chake tisamade nkhwawa, mfumu ya mdziko ndi mafano ake
This is why we should not be troubled by the King of the world and his idols
Ena analipo Koma anapita. Nawonso apita akapanda Kulapa
There were some, but are gone. They will also go, if they do not repent
Ali yemweyo Ambuye Yesu nthawi zonse tidzayimba za dzina lakero
The Lord Jesus is the same all the time, we will sing of this name.

b) Jesus as King

LIDZE MSANGA TSIKULO¹⁰

1. *Lidze msanga tsikulo lolonjezedwa ndi Ambuye*
Let the day come quickly promised by the Lord
- (Solo) *Aaa!*
Aaa!
- (All) *Nalinena polawira (2x)*
That was said when saying bye.

10. This song is in the official hymnbook, but the tune has been reconfigured by blending the traditional tune with the Gospel. The message of the song is that, if this world wants joy, it comes with Jesus, the King of heaven and earth. The singers look more at the lack of joy in this world and, because the earthly kings have failed to bring joy, only Jesus can achieve this, and they wait for the day, when they will rule, to come quickly.

The song also gives advice that, when in this world, people should never depend on what they can do, because Satan has set traps and they may not know that they are already in those traps.

Chorus

(All) *Muli chimwemwe dziko lonse lam'mwamba*

There is joy in the whole heavenly world

(Solo) *Muli chimwemwe dziko lonse lam'mwamba tidzakondwera*

There is joy in the whole heavenly world

Dziko lonse lam'mwamba (2x)

The whole heavenly world

2. **Dziko lino chimwemwecho chikudza ndi Yesuyo**
On this world, joy comes with Jesus
Mfumu yathu yakumwamba ndi dziko lonse lapansi (2x)
Our King of heaven and the whole earth.

3. *Tikamakhala padziko lapansi tisadalire zomwe tikuchita*
When we are on this earth, we should not depend on what we are doing
Poti msampha wa munthuyo wakula, Satanayo walimbika mkhondo (2x)
Because the trap of a person is great, Satan has enforced war.

This song is also Messianic, with Messianic expectations/eschatology and judgement, waiting for the day promised by the Lord, "to come quickly."

c) Jesus as a Warrior

TAONANI MTENDERE¹¹

1. *Taonani mtendere, dziko liri kunena*
Look at peace the world is talking about
Ena akukondwera pomwe ena akulira
Some are glad while others are mourning
Ndi ufulu wanji womakomoka ndi mantha?
What type of peace when you become unconscious because of fear?
Ena akuseka pomwe ena akulira (2x)
Some are laughing while others are mourning.

11. This is a song warning people that they are in the last days. The world speaks about peace, but there is no real peace because, when some people are at peace, others are not. The alternative world provides universal peace not only for Jewish people; and, by not accepting Jesus, one is in conflict with Him. This world is bad; be wise by knowing Jesus whilst you are alive.

The song states that knowing Jesus is wisdom, an understanding from Proverbs 9:10. The singer can see fire in Gehenna prepared for those who do not accept Jesus. It is important to come to Jesus who is the judge.

Chorus

(Alto) *Ano ndi masiku wotsirizawo, wotsirizawo, wotsirizawo,*
These are the last days, last days, last days,
Wotsirizawo, wotsirizawo, oh!, Ano ndimasiku.
Last days, last days, oh! These are the days.

(All) *Wotsirizawo (3x)*
Last days

(Sop.) *Ano ndimasiku wotsirizawo*
These are the last days
Anthu ali pa nkhondo Kulimbana ndi Yesu
People are at war battling with Jesus
Za awo, za awo, wotsiriza
Of those, of those, last days.

2. *Dziko lino laipa mbale wanga*
This world is bad, my brother
Chenjera dziwa yesu wako pomwe ukali ndi moyo
Be wise, know your Jesus while you are alive
Moto ndauona Kusonyeza Gehenna
I have seen the fire, showing Gehenna
Yesu akadza adzatiweruza bwanji?
When Jesus comes, how will he judge us?

d) Jesus our Hope

MASIKU ADZANA¹²

1. *Masiku adzana kunalibe infa yatsiku ndi tsiku monga lero*
In the days past, there were no daily funerals like today
Wonani lero anthu alikufa, nzeru zatha chilengedwe cha dziko (2x)
Look, today people are dying, no wisdom can stop it amongst the creatures of the world.

Chorus

Mtundu wanga watha, watha
My race is finished, finished
Mtundu wanga watha, watha, wathaa
My race is finished, finished, finished.

12. These days, the high rate of deaths can never make one creature say I am wise enough to stop this. If he tried, the whole race would be finished. Blessed is he/she who knows Jesus whilst on earth, because only He gives hope in such difficult times.

(Sop. & Alto) *Zoona mtundu wanga wathaa*
truly, my race is finished

2. *Dziko lapansi zinthu zasautsa (2x)*
The world, things have become difficult
Zothetsa nzeru ziripo zambiri
Things which are puzzling are many
Wamwayi wodziwa Yesu akadali moyo
Blessed is he who knows Jesus, whilst living
Wonani lero anthu alikutha, nzeru zatha chilengedwe chadziko (2x)
Look, today people are dying, no wisdom can stop it amongst the creatures of the world.

e) **Jesus as Messiah**

MESSIAH¹³

Messiah, Messiah, Messiah, Messiah ndimuomboli wadziko lonseli
Messiah, Messiah, Messiah, Messiah is the Redeemer of the whole world
Osana kwa Yesu, Mfumuyo yathu
Hosanna to Jesus our King.

Chorus

Mpulumutsi wadzikoli watifera pamtandapo Alleluah
The Saviour of this world has died for us on the cross, Alleluah
Muli moyo lero lino, dziko lonse ndikumwamba
Today, there is life in all the world and heaven
Kondwerani, Satanayo alibenso mphamvu
Rejoice, Satan has no more powers
Iero mphamvu zonse zapatsidwa kwa lye Messiah
Today all powers have been given to Him, Messiah
Osana m'mwamba, osana Messiah (just repeating these words)
Hosanna in heaven, Hosanna Messiah.

13. Here, the Messiah is the Redeemer of the whole world. He is the Messiah and Saviour because he died for them on the cross. So, they must sing Hallelujah. Today, there is life on earth and in heaven because of His death. Let them celebrate, Satan has no more powers, today all powers have been given to Jesus.

The meaning of this song is spiritual and politically subversive by nature. When an oppressive king or ruler dies or is removed from the position, Jesus assumes authority and becomes the people's Redeemer. When Jesus comes, he will redeem His people. This is spiritual.

f) **Jesus is my strength, knowledge, path, door, wall of protection**

NDI MPHABVU YANGA¹⁴

1. *Ndi mphabvu yanga, ndi zeru zanga, ndi njira yanga,*
He is my strength, my knowledge, and my path (way),
Ndi khomo langa, a Yesu ndi linga langa
Is my door, Oh Jesus is my wall of protection.

2. *Ngakhale Satana andizinge, koma ine ndingothawira*
Even when Satan surrounds me, but I will run
Kwa Yesu, ndiringa langa
To Jesus, my wall.

3. *Dziko lapansi ndirozuza koma ine ndingothawira*
The world will persecute me, but I will run
Kwa Yesu, Ndiringa langa
To Jesus, my wall of protection.

g) **Jesus as a Fighter**

KUNALI CHINKHONDO KUMANDA¹⁵

1. (Solo) *Kunali chinkhondo kumanda pakati pa Yesu ndi infa*
There was great war in the grave between Jesus and death
- (All) *Kunali chinkhondo kumanda*
There was great war in the grave.

14. This song describes total dependence on Jesus. Jesus is his/her strength, knowledge and path. He is his/her door and wall of protection. Even if Satan surrounds him/her, he/she will still run to Jesus. In contexts where there is hunger, HIV/AIDS, envy and unemployment, the singer looks to Jesus as his wall of protection.

15. Here is another creative style of explaining what Jesus did in the grave, when He was buried. Death is being personified, fighting against Jesus and, finally, Jesus won the battle when Satan surrendered.

There is a discussion about death and Jesus in the grave. Death asked Jesus, "You Jesus, what do you want to do? Do you want to rise? That will not happen." Jesus replied, "You death, on the cross, I left you deliberately, I knew your powers are here in the grave." So, Jesus seized the neck of death, death tried to jump, but Jesus broke all his jaws and saliva flowed uncontrollably from his mouth. Death then said, "I have stopped! I have stopped! I will never do it again." Jesus responded, "You death, a person who abides in me and I in him, for sure, you will never conquer" (an interpretation of Jn. 15:4).

Here is the power of creativity, imagining a vivid battle in the grave with a vivid picture of what happens in a daily life situation, when people fight. The message is to show that Jesus won the battle and is risen. Therefore, He has opened the way for all who believe in Him.

Chorus

(Solo) *Yesu anawina*

Jesus won

(All) *Infa kumanda inapereka salenda*

Death in the grave did surrender

(Solo) *Infa inaluzwa*

Death lost

(All) *Infa kumanda inapereka salenda*

Death in the grave did surrender.

2. (Solo) *Infa inafusa,*

Death asked,

(All) *“Iwe Yesu uti utani, uti udzuke, koma sizitheka” – Kunali chinkhondo*

You Jesus, what do you want to do? Do you want to rise? But it will not happen. There was great war.

3. (Solo) *Yesu ananena,*

Jesus said,

(All) *Yesu ananema, “iwe infa, pamtanda paja ndidakuleka,*

Jesus said, “you death, on the cross I left you,

Ndinkadziwa kuti infa iri kuno kumanda”

I knew that death is here in the grave.”

4. (Solo) *Yesu anagwira pakhosi pake pa infa*

Jesus got hold of the neck of death

(All) *Yesu anagwira pakhosi pake pa infa*

Jesus got hold of the neck of death

Nitere, kuti ijowe, nayigulula – gulula zibwano

Death tried to jump, Jesus broke all his jaws

Chidobvu pa! pa!, infa mkumati, “ndaleka, ndaleka, Yesu sindidzachitanso”

Saliva came out uncontrollably! Death then begun saying, I have stopped, I have stopped, Jesus, I will never do it again!

(Solo) *Ee!*

Ee!

(All) *Kunali chinkhondo kumanda*

There was Great War in the grave.

5. (Solo) *Yesu ananena,*

Jesus said,

(All) *Yesu ananema, “iwe infa munthu wokhala mwa ine inenso ndikhala mwa iye,*

Jesus said, you death, a person who abides in me and I in him, for sure,

Ndithudi, sudzamuthanso”

You will never conquer him

(Solo) *E! e!*

E! e!

(All) *Kunali chinkhondo kumanda*

There was Great War in the grave.

5.5.5 Songs about Messianic expectations / eschatology and judgement

In the lyrics of the songs, the youth identify themselves as Christians, different from any other suffering community, because of their relationship with God in Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Clearly the songs have been created by, and for, worshipping communities of Christians whose collective pain and suffering are addressed by the biblical themes of faith, justice and hope that comprise a large portion of their subject matter (Brown & Miller 2005:115). They acknowledge God and Jesus as their Lord and Master who will come soon. This association with Jesus elevates them from the control of worldly leadership and powers. In the light of the Gospel, there is a reinterpretation of their experiences, with the emphasis on salvation and judgement. The importance of following Jesus and fully depending on Him is a link between eschatology and their daily experiences. For them, the songs open up a new future world to which they aspire – a world of peace and love, where there is no hunger, war, witchcraft, envy, unemployment or poverty. They are waiting for a city without HIV/AIDS, where there is no mourning or death. McGann (2002:4) rightly says, “Human beings are made for the transcendence, as an effective worship.” The youth in Malawi sing songs that fuel this need for transcendence. The songs address the youths’ concrete needs and concerns, their welfare and especially their desire to avoid suffering.

This emphasis on human welfare has a religious connection in the New Testament and is one of the central themes of Christian spirituality (*Journal for the Study of the New Testament* vol 26, Sept. 2003:4). For theology, this means that changes in social, political or economic life have repercussions for religion, thus also for liturgy (Lukken 2005:173-174). If that does not happen, it means that the coherence of the symbolic

order has been severed, and this condemns religion to marginalisation (2005:174). This is exactly what the youth in Malawi are struggling with: to thrust aside Western theology's drama of the past centuries. The songs reveal a better world than the one in which they are living. Out of the 120 songs selected for this research, about 13 are about judgement, whereas 48 are eschatological. They are interrelated and this means there is more emphasis on eschatology than on this world. Below are some of them:

KUNO KUDZIKO TIDZACHOKA ULENDO¹⁶

Kuno kudziko tidzachoka ulendo wakwathu uko kumwamba
From this world we will depart, going on a journey to our heavenly home
Wofuna kudzakondwelera ndi ulendowu alape mtima
The one who wants to enjoy the journey, should repent in his heart.

Chorus

- (Sop.) *Padziko pano mpaweni, padziko pano mpaweni,*
This world is for others, this world is for others,
Padziko pano mpaweni, mpaweni, mpaweni (2x)
This world is for others, is for others, for others,
- (All) *Padziko pano mpaweni, padziko pano mpaweni, mpaweni, mpaweni*
This world is for others, this world is for others, for others, for others
- (Sop.) *Paweni, paweni, paweni, paweni, paweni*
For others, for others, for others, for others, for others
Padziko pano mabvuto Satana waliwononga
On this world, troubles, Satan has destroyed
Nanga ndichite bwanji ndi zowawazi (2x)
And what should I do with these sufferings?
Anthu ena sadziwa dziko lino tidzachoka,
Some people do not know that we will leave this world,
Ulendo wakwathu uko Kumwamba
Journey to our home there in heaven
Anthu ena Sadziwa tsiku lina tidzachoka ulendo wakwathu
Some people do not know that one day we will leave, going to our home

16. The singers in this song feel they have a home other than this world. Their home is in heaven and one who wants to enjoy the journey should repent of his sins. This implies that those who are going to heaven are travelling together with those who are not. But, a time will come when there will be a separation of the two groups. On this world, Satan has destroyed with sufferings and troubles, implying that those who oppress others in this world, are blind to the danger that will come.

The singer ends with a quotation from Ecclesiastes 1:2: not to be cheated with things of this world which are vanity of vanities. Such things have no profit or gain. But Jesus is the true peace of the world. Then the singer invites people to repent.

Kuno Mkwaweni (2x)
Here, is for others
Paweni, paweni, paweni!!!
For others, for others, for others
Padziko pano mpaweni (3x)
This world is for others
Mpaweni, mpaweni
For others, for others.

2. *Tisanyengedwe ndi zadziko ndi zachabe chabe*
Do not be cheated by things of this world they are all vanity
Ziribe phindu, koma kwa Yesu mtendere ulipo
They have no gain, but with Jesus, there is peace
Mkofunika tirape mtima (2x)
It is important, we should repent our hearts.

MASIKU ANGA PADZIKO¹⁷

1. *Masiku anga padziko angotsala pang'ono*
My days on this earth are remaining few
Zedi Ndikhumbira mudzi uwo, mudzi wokongola zedi
Truly, I desire that village, the village so beautiful.

Chorus

- Mbuye bwerani msangatu, onani dziko landida*
Lord come soon, look the world has hated me
Bwerani msangatu mudzandivuwule m'nyanjayo yodzadza ndi ululutu –
Come soon you should lift me out of the sea full of pain –
Machimo a m'dzikoli, tabwerani mudzandiranditse
Sins of this world, come and rescue me.
2. *Ambuye wanga mundimvere chisoni ine*
My Lord, have pity on me
Ndatopa zedi idzanitu msanga Mbuye
I am so tired, come soon, Lord

17. This song is based on Revelation 21:2 – “a new city.” The singer recontextualizes the word “city” into a village to suit his context, where there is no city but a village, and sees that his/her days are numbered on earth and desires that village, the village so beautiful. He wishes Jesus to come soon because this world hates Him. He sees a preferred world in this village. It is understandable when one takes into account the context from which these songs are sung; contexts of hunger, disease, HIV/AIDS, poverty, enmity, envy, jealousy, unemployment, corruption and disease. The singer wants Jesus to come quickly, because he/she is tired of these problems. Jesus should come quickly before this world swallows Him.

Lisanandimeze dziko

Before I am swallowed by the world.

TAMVA MAU AKE¹⁸

1. *Tamva mau ake kuyitanane, dziko lamabvuto lindizunzane*
We have heard his voice calling me, the world of problems, is troubling me
Tsono ndabwereranetu, osalungamane, Mbuye ndifuna kukakhala mu Ufumu Kumwamba
So I now return, unrighteous I am, Lord I want to live in the Kingdom of heaven.

Chorus

Mbuye wanga ndidalira inu
My Lord I depend on you.

2. *Tsiku lomaliza moyo wa padziko*
On the last day, the life of the world
Dzuwa lidzazima, mwenzi udzafa, mitambo idzapeteka,
The sun will not shine, the moon not seen, clouds will be moved
Nthawi idzathanso
There will be no more time
Ndichiritсени, nditonthozeni, ndimasuleni, ndichire
Heal me, comfort me, free me, I should be healed.

MTAYE SATANA¹⁹

- (Sop. & Alto) *Mtaye (3x), Satana (3x), Alibe gawo Satana*
Throw him Satan, Satan has no part, Satan
Kwake ndi kupha, kuba, Satana mtaye
His is, to kill, steal, throw him Satan
- (All) *Mtaye*
Throw him

-
18. This song speaks of wishing to stay with the Lord in heaven, and to achieve that, he/she repents of his/her sins to live with the Lord in heaven. Then it confirms his/her dependence on the Lord. He/she sees the judgement day when the sun will not shine, the moon will not be seen, clouds will be removed. There will be no time. Here, the "healing" and "comforting" in the song does not imply physical illness, but he/she will be relieved of the pains of this world and go into the Kingdom of glory in heaven, where the sun will not shine, the moon will not be seen and there will be no clouds. This is a picture of Revelations 22:5: in that city there will be no need for lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light and they will reign for ever and ever. Such a picture is in denial of this evil world, where there is neither peace nor love.
 19. This song is from John 10:10, saying that the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. So, never have any relationship with him. But instead, throw him down and trample him. The singer trusts God fully and asks Him to eradicate witchcraft, prostitution, confusions and war. Being an orphan, Lord come, I cry for you. This really provides a picture of the experiences that the youth endure and they want the Lord to come and deliver them from such situations. That means that when there is a good leader who cares for the people, God has delivered them through his servant, just as He did with Moses and the people of Israel in Egypt.

- (Sop. & Alto) *Mponde (x3), Satana (3x), Ambuye ndiririra inu*
Trample him, Satan, Lord I cry for you
Inu Ambuye bwerani, ndiririra Inu
You Lord come, I cry for you
- (Sop.) *Mudzachotse ufiti, Ambuye bwerani ndiririra Inu*
You should come and eradicate witchcraft, Lord come, I cry for you
Mudzachotse uhule, mudzachotse ziwawa, nkhondonso yabvuta,
You should eradicate prostitution, eradicate confusions, even war has troubled,
Umasiye wachuluka
Being without mother and father has grown
- (All) *Ambuye bwerani ndiririra inu*
Lord come, I cry for you.

5.5.6 Songs about moral issues and Christian life

The songs also tackled moral issues. The analysis has revealed moral teachings of the people, how people should behave and how they should live. There is the area of codes or moral norms, the different systems of rules and values that the youth ascribe to daily way of life. Some examples of such songs are given below:

a) Songs about HIV & AIDS

ABALE ANGA MSANDISOWETSE MTENDERE²⁰

1. *Abale anga msandisowetse mtedere*
My relatives do not trouble me
Padziko lapansi ndalakwanji mukundibvuta nthawi zonse
What wrong have I done on this world, you are troubling me all the time
Munena, "iwe Choka funa kolowera" (2x)
You say, "You, get away, know where you can go"

20. This is a real experience of an orphan being pushed from the deceased parents' home by their relatives. The orphan is being denied food, shelter, clothing and peace. This is a cry of an orphan, not to the relatives of the deceased parents, but to God who is the only one who can care for him/her in this world. He/she has neither mother nor father. They left him while he was young.

The orphan then warns those who think that they will stay in this world forever, because one day they will die and kingship, honour and all that will not go with them to the grave.

Although, there is no mention of God in the song, the orphan cries to somebody who can hear him/her - Someone who is above this world. This is implied in the statement, "Do not be cheated with this kingship." The orphan speaks to Him who has power over the grave, and this One must be God.

Chorus

Mwana wamasiye kudandaula
An orphan complaining
Amayi ndiribe, bambo ndiribe
I have no mother, father I do not have
Ndasauka kulira, kulirira amayi anga
I am troubled crying, crying, my mother
Andisiya ndiri wa mngono, mwana wamasiye kudandaula
She has left me, whilst young, an orphan complaining
Amayi ndiribe bambo ndiribe
I have no mother, I have no father

2. *Tisanyengedwe ndi ufumu, ulemu omwe tiri nawo*
Do not be cheated with Kingship, honour that we have
Mdziko lino zonsezi zidzatsala padziko
In this world, all this will remain on this world
Pomwe mudzalowa inu mmanda (2x)
When you will enter in the grave

NANGA MCHIYANI BAMBO?²¹

1. (Solo) *Nanga mchiyani bambo?*
What is it father?

(All) *Chomwe mwayamba, pomwe banja muli nalo, mudzakumana ndi Edzi, womwewo wakumanda*
That you have started, while you have a family, you will bump into AIDS, that will take you to the grave.

Chorus

Yesani kudzisunga amayi, abambo, mnyamata, mtsikana
Try to abstain mother, father, boy, girl
Moyowu mngokoma
This life is good.

2. (Solo) *Paulo ali kunena*
Paul is saying

(All) *Kunena kwa Akorinto, kuli bwino atakhala ngati ine wosakwatira*
Saying to the Corinthians, it is better to be like me; being unmarried

21. This is a song warning an unfaithful, married husband or wife who goes along with other women or men, instead of being faithful to the wife or husband. The warning is extended to boys and girls, stating that such acts result in an HIV/AIDS victim. It is best to abstain because life is good and one need not die so quickly. Then, the song cites an example of Paul who said, "It is better to remain unmarried than to engage in such things."

b) **Song about backbiting**

KUKHALIRA MANONG'O-NONG'O²²

Kukhalira manong'onong'o, kukamba zanu simudziwa
Fond of backbiting, talking of your own you don't know
Khalidwe lanu ndi lachabe, lokhalira, kodi mwamva?
Your way of life is bad, fond of, "have you heard"?
Amayi mukamva zinthu pakhomo panu simukhalapo
Women, when you hear a thing, you don't want to stay at your home
Mumatandala mmakomo, kufalitsa zomwe mwamvazo
You stay away in other people's homes, spreading what you have heard
Abambo mkamva zinthu simufuna kuzisunga
Men, when you hear a thing, you don't want to keep them
Koma ndipita kwa aujeni, nkhaniyi ndiwadziwitse
But I will go to so and so, I should let them know this news
Kodi mwamva achemwa, ndiuzeko inu nokha
Have you heard my sister? Let me tell you only
Inuyo msauze munthu nkhaniyi ndi yachisisi
You should not tell any person, this news is a secret
Kodi mwamva achimwene zachitika mmudzi muno
Have you heard my brother, what has happened in this village?
Mtakuuzani, msati ndine inuyo sungani pakamwa
When I tell you, do not say it's me, keep your mouth shut
Amayi inu sinthani, amvano samatero mijedu sipindula
You woman change, a member of women's guilds, does not do that, backbiting is useless
Zisiyeni mzakutha
Stop them, they are useless
Abambo khalidwe iri paradizo simukalowa
Man, this way of life will stop you from entering paradise
Yehova adzakubwezani, mijedu sayifuna
God will return you, He doesn't want backbiting.

22. This song warns against backbiting among people. Such a way of life must be changed, because it is fruitless and useless. Continuation of such a way of life results into failure to enter into paradise.

This also is a kind of warning against laziness because, being found in other people's homes just to say, "have you heard," is a sign of being unproductive, of being lazy, of not working.

c) **Song about parenthood**

CHIKONDI CHA DAMA²³

Chikondi cha dama chodula miyoyo

The love for fornication, reduces life

Chadula anthu, asamukira ku manda

Has lessened people, have been transferred to the graveyard

Samalira moyo wako (4x)

Take care of your life

(Tenor) *Kulibe sitolo yogulitsadi moyo (2x)*

There is no shop that sells life

Ena makolo anu, mwadza mkatundu osakufunsani

Some of your parents, when you bring things, they don't ask you

Ongulandirira osakufunsani

Just receive without asking you

(All) *Samalira moyo wako, samalira moyo wako*

Take care of your life; take care of your life.

d) **Songs about following Jesus**

SEZANI MTANDA²⁴

(Solo) *Sezani mtanda*

Carry the cross

(All) *Wayiye Yesu, atero Mbuye fulumirani (2x)*

Of Jesus, the Lord says hurry.

Chorus

(Solo) *Ufulu omwe*

The freedom that

(All) *Uli padziko watichepera tifuna Kumwamba*

That is in the world is little, we want heaven

(Solo) *Zofuna moyo*

What life wants

(All) *Tikuzipeza koma chinthu chimodzi moyo watibvuta (2x)*

We are getting them, but one thing, life is difficult.

23. This song teaches how some parents tolerate their children in bringing things, the origin of which they do not know. This reflects on the report discussed above that some parents encourage their daughters to do for sexwork for food. This song warns against this.

24. This is a song of following Jesus. Cross-bearing is very important, because people need not be cheated from the freedom of this world. The world can give what people want, but not life and true freedom. Therefore, it is important to carry the cross – here, carrying the cross means following Jesus.

NJIRA YATSOPANO YA CHOONADI²⁵

1. *Njira yatsopano ya choonadi yopita ku mwambako*
The new way of truth going to heaven
Ndikuyenda, ndikulankhula ndi Mbuye
Is walking, I talk with the Lord
Poomba namondwe mpulumutsi wandigwira dzanja langa
When the storm blows, the Saviour holds me by my hand
Ndikuyenda, ndikulankhula ndi Yesu
Whilst walking, I talk with Jesus
- (Solo) *Nd . . .*
And . . .
- (All) *Ndiyenda (2x), ndikulankhulana naye, pa ulendowo*
I walk and speak with him, on the journey
- (Bass) *Pa . . .*
- (All) *Paulendowo wonkha kokongolako pobzolera ukachita bwinowe*
On the journey going to the beautiful places, provided that you do well
Ndiyenda, ndiyenda ndi kulankhula ndi Yesu
I walk, walk and talk with Jesus.
2. *Alleluah yamikani Mbuye mfumu ya mafumu onse*
Alleluah thank the Lord, King of all Kings
Ndikuyenda ndikulankhula ndi Mbuye
I walk and speak with the Lord
Poomba namondwe mpulumutsi wandigwira dzanja langa
When the storm blows the Saviour holds my hand
Ndikuyenda ndikulankhula ndi Yesu
I walk and speak with Jesus.

SINJIRA YAPAFUPI²⁶

1. (Solo) *Sinjira yapafupi*
It is not an easy road
- (All) *Yotsata Mbuye Yesuyo*
Of following the Lord Jesus
Tiyenera kulimba poyenda njira yathuyi
We need to be strong when walking on this road of ours.

25. This is an encouraging song that Christian living should always be a walk with the Lord who shows the new way of truth, on the way to heaven. Such people can never be shaken, even when storms blow (traumas come), because the Saviour holds them by their hands.

26. The way of the cross is that of following Jesus. It demands that people leave aside whatever they thought was good for their lives, for the sake of Christ. This is an encouraging song to those who have followed Christ. One must deny oneself when following Christ.

2. (Solo) *Kulibe kucheuka*
There is no turning
- (All) *Poyenda njira ya Yesu*
When walking the road of Jesus
- (Solo) *Usayang'ane wina*
Do not look at anyone
- (All) *Angasokeretse iwe*
Lest he makes you go astray.

Chorus

- (Solo) *Senza mtandawo*
Carry the cross
- (All) *Senza mtandawo (2x), senza pomutsataye*
Carry the cross, carry when following Him.

5.6 A THEOLOGICAL–LITURGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TRADITIONAL MALAWIAN SONGS ANALYSED AT GRASS-ROOT LEVELS

Many questions concerning developments in traditional Malawian choral music, sung by choirs of young people, arise in the church. For a long time, these traditional songs have existed parallel to the existing official hymnbook translated from the English. The developments in these traditional songs are mostly unknown and therefore secret.

Below, I shall try to summarise the developments at grassroots, using the 120 traditional Malawian choral songs, which the youth in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod sing, and discuss the three words: context, ecclesiology and spirituality.

5.6.1 Context

The analysis of the 120 songs that the young people in Malawi sing has established that the young people are singing mainly what they see, experience, feel, hear and smell in the specific contexts in which they live. The youth have learnt the art of “compromise,” in an attempt to “give” and “take” for the sake of living. The songs are based on daily struggles and the desire that the Lord God in Jesus Christ will intervene. This experience of trusting in God and in Jesus (whom they fully equate with God) inspires

them to celebrate God as the eternal friend of oppressed peoples, and as their ally in both their suffering and deliverance (Brown & Miller 2005:115). The songs aim to blend the biblical message with their daily experiences, which proves that the youth feel a need for adaptation to a new situation.

It seems clear that most songs react to the official written and translated hymns, which lack own contexts and do not necessarily explain or are not based upon the specific contexts in which the young people are living. However, their context is well depicted in the young people's songs. It is a Malawian context full of problems and suffering, where there is hunger, disease, unemployment, gender-based violence, child labour, corruption, dishonesty, sexual immorality, deaths of parents leaving children helpless without anyone to depend upon (orphans), robbery and murder. These themes run throughout the songs that the youth sing. The cry of the singers is that God should come, rescue, and take them home. The context indeed is full of suffering. Songs, such as numbers 10, 66 and 24 are typical examples of experiences of suffering. These specific contexts are not reflected in most of the official hymns that the people normally sing during worship services.

Below, the two stages of disruption taking place and the outcome thereof are described. Two texts are cited from the New Testament, one from the narrative genre, the Gospel according to Mark, and an epistle genre, a Christological hymn in Philippians 2:5-11.

Mark's narrative genre presents Jesus as a positive disrupter of the existing worldview, whereas, the epistle genre of Philippians presents also Jesus' followers as positive disrupters, causing disruption from Jerusalem to all parts of the world.

5.6.2 The reconfiguration of "family" in Mark 3:31-35

Mark presents Jesus who came to disrupt (with a positive outcome) the symbolic worldview of first-century Judaism, within the Hellenistic culture with his symbolic worldview. Jesus' teaching was not in line with the ordinary patterns of life in the

immediate environment within which the Christian movement was born (Meeks 1983:2). He distinguishes his use of the word “family” from the usual way the word was understood. He uses the word “family,” already known in existing contexts, and gives it a new meaning, where its frame of contents becomes new, to change the mind of the receivers in various contexts. Those who “do the will of God” become members of Jesus’ family, creating a community that is not bound by biological relations of parents. It becomes a family that has a new relationship and responsibilities among its members and recognizes the new meaning of this Christian family’s “family” ties by “doing the will of God.”

In this new social belonging, whether one experiences human suffering or death, oppression or dehumanization, “following Jesus” helps one to embrace these evils, helps one to live in hope, in the Kingdom of God, even when afflicted in this world (Mk. 1:15), where the meaning of repentance and believing, in the narrative of calling the disciples “to follow Him,” is “doing the will of God” (Mk. 3:35).

Those who follow Jesus become his mother, sister and brother. The old context has been reconfigured to create the new context of those who “do the will of God.” Whether such a family’s members experience suffering and death in this world, their hope is in Christ, who has brought them “the Kingdom of God” (Mk. 1:15) and has conquered death (Mk. 16:6-19). This means that present sufferings will yield to future “glory” (2Co. 4:17; Rm. 8:18).

The two statements in Mark 1:15: “the time is fulfilled” and “the Kingdom of God is at hand” both have a theological context of “now” (“the time is fulfilled”) for those who “do the will of God,” have entered “the Kingdom of God” and the eschatological context of “the future” (“the Kingdom of God is at hand”), where the Kingdom of God will fully be realized in future for those who “do the will of God” (Mk. 3:35), for those who have become members of this “family” by sitting around Jesus (Mk. 3:34).

Here, “family” is defined, not by kinship, but by the relationship built when one hears the preaching of the Gospel (Mk. 1:14), then repents and believes in the Gospel (Mk. 1:15). This has nothing to do with biological parents, nor with a consanguine relationship, nor with race, sex, age, status, achievements in life, nor with life experiences. In fact, “doing the will of God” is central (Mk. 3:35).

With this understanding, the youth in Malawi who have heard the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus (Mk. 1:14), repented and believed in the Gospel (Mk. 1:15) automatically become members of this Jesus “family” of “doing the will of God.” They now identify themselves with those who followed Jesus (Mk. 1:17-18) by “doing the will of God” (Mk. 3:35).

Where Jesus became a positive disruptive figure in the symbolic worldview of first-century Judaism, here, He becomes a positive disrupter by presenting the Chewa symbolic worldview with his symbolic worldview of being executed by suffering a shameful death on the cross for claiming to be the King, of rising from the dead and ascending into heaven. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit started a new age to be realized when He comes on “the last day.” Therefore, He commissions those, who have “entered the Kingdom of God” (Mk. 1:15), to proclaim these wonderful events to the whole world, by preaching the Gospel (Mk. 16:15) that one who believes and is baptized will be saved (Mk. 16:16).

By proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world through the songs they sing, the youth in Malawi identify themselves with this “family” of Jesus that “does the will of God” (Mk. 3:35). And, because of this identification, the youth in Malawi become members of a disruptive group, positive to the existing social systems of the Chewa culture.

Here, with his symbolic worldview, Jesus becomes disruptive in the symbolic worldview of first-century Judaisms, within the Hellenistic culture. At the same time, those who are disrupted, who reinterpret and blend this worldview of Jesus with their own (“who do the will of God”), themselves become disrupters, from Jerusalem, in all Judea and

Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Ac. 1:8). Upon hearing the Gospel of Jesus from missionaries and indigenous preachers, the youth in Malawi also become disrupters through singing their traditional songs.

In the process, the music the young people are singing also helps to create a liturgy, which speaks into the African mission context (Sternert 2007:73). Through the songs the young people are singing, they are able to witness to others and in so doing carrying out mission work. In the end, with the help of music and other liturgical acts, the Gospel-centred event of worship shares the message with the faithful gathered at church and seeks to communicate the message to the non-faithful not yet, or not any more touched by it (2007:123).

The following discussion concerns the second phase or stage of the disruption caused by those whom Jesus disrupted, and who then became disrupters themselves in Macedonia in the city of Philippi - Paul being one of these disrupters. In this city, through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Paul composed a disruptive hymnology to the social system.

5.6.3 Jesus' followers as disrupters in Philippi; a Christological hymn; Jesus takes the image of a servant leader (Php. 2:5-11)

Jesus' final words commissioned his followers to proclaim the good news from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (Mk. 16:15; Mt. 28:19; Lk. 24:47-48) with the full assurance that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to Him (Mt. 28:18) and that He will be with them to the close of the age (Mt. 28:20).

In being faithful to this great commission assigned by Jesus, the followers proclaimed the wonderful news of Jesus from Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Ac. 1:8).

As this proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ continued, Paul and Silas, guided by the Holy Spirit, proceeded into Macedonia because God had called them to preach

the Gospel there (Ac. 16:9-10).

Acts provides a tiny glimpse of a way in which Paul and Silas (Silvanus) found an audience, whether it comes from a source close to the event, or is the author's skilfully constructed vignette, makes little difference (Meeks 1983:29). On the Sabbath in Philippi, a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony (Ac. 16:12), Paul and Silas went "outside the gate" to the riverside, where there was a place of prayer (Ac. 16:13). Meeks (1983:29) says that when a stranger arrived in a city then it is taken for granted that he knew, or could easily learn, where to find immigrants and temporary residents from his own country or *ethnos* and practitioners of his own trade. Acts 16:13 reflects this in the statement: "where we supposed there was a place of prayer," and this seems to confirm what Meeks says.

Acts states that, as Paul and Silas were going to the place of prayer, a slave girl met them. She had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much profit by soothsaying (Ac. 16:16). Upon seeing this girl, Paul charged the spirit in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her and, at that very hour, it left her (Ac. 16:18). Already this act of Paul compelled the owners to seize Paul and Silas and drag them into the market place before the rulers, where they were charged of disturbing the city and were thrown into prison (Ac. 16:19-24).

Although, as observed above, Paul, Silas and Timothy experienced hostility in Philippi (*cf* 1Th. 2:2), the congregation they founded had a very special role of "partnership" (*koinonia*) in the Pauline circle's further mission, including financial help for the mission to Thessalonica and Achaia, and for Paul during his later imprisonment (2Co. 11:8-9; Php. 4:15-18).

Wayne A. Meeks (1983:81) notes that there is a model from antiquity, with which early Christian groups, and particularly the Pauline group, have been compared: the comparison was made already in the second century, when Justin Martyr presented Christianity as the "true philosophy," and later by other apologists of the second and

third centuries. Meeks (1983:81) quotes Robert Wilken who argues that this analogy was put forward quite deliberately and shrewdly to deflect the suspicion that had fallen on the movement as a newfangled cultic association of the sort that the aristocracy and the imperial officers, watching for groups who might turn subversive, already regarded with distaste.

Such a description reveals that Christianity was being watched from the beginning and in some instances, was regarded as subversive, evident in the arrest of Paul and Silas (Ac. 16:13-34). It is true that the philosophy schools offered not only ideas and patterns of language that may be compared fruitfully with Christian modes of discourse, but also a social model. Even in the classical period of Greek philosophy, the school was sometimes organized as a “religious fellowship,” (*thiasos*) dedicated to the goddesses of culture (Meeks 1983:83).

In such a society, where Christianity was being watched, Paul, as a disrupter of this society, creates a disruptive hymnology by creatively blending the literature that was available to him with the life of Jesus Christ to give new meaning that would inspire the receivers to change their minds. In this wonderful hymn, he presents Jesus’ career as having two major movements. The first being that of humiliation (Php. 2:6-8) and the second that of exaltation (vv. 9-11). However, Meeks (1983:183) quotes Jacob Jervell who points out: Paul says that, although only weakness is visible in his own career, that very weakness is power in God’s eyes; the paradox is that he is both weak and charismatic. Paul and others, who are “weak” in terms of the dominant value system, nevertheless do powerful things (1983:183). This seems to confirm Jesus’ two movements, despite his paradoxical nature.

In the first part of the hymn (Php. 2:6-8), Jesus discards both his status and his right by emptying Himself, taking the form of a servant (vv. 6-7). This movement of coming down from heaven compels Him to meet the earthly contexts and their different experiences. He has to endure pain, suffering and death and has to meet opposition from rulers of this world. In all these contexts, Jesus incarnates Himself humbly, the

very example of self-denial. He never pursues His own self-interests as might have been done in philosophical circles. Rather, with love, He suffered for the sake of “the other.” He never did anything out of selfishness or conceit but, with humility, counted others better than Himself (Php. 2:3).

The youth in Malawi, who sing lamenting songs, heard of this Jesus and never hesitated, but identified themselves with Him. They feel He is one of them, in having endured suffering and death, and He can live amongst them, counting them better than Himself.

Jesus’ way of life, as expressed in Philippians 2:6-8, corresponds well with the real life situations of suffering that the youth experience in Malawi. This agrees with Chupungco (1982:50) who, in his book, *Cultural adaptation of the liturgy*, says that a rite should correspond to a real life situation and not to a mere historical ambit from which the new rite, unfortunately, has not disentangled itself. A rite, which is divorced from reality, is an empty sign, a liturgy without efficaciousness. Mouton (2005:3) also rightly concludes that an “ethics of New Testament interpretation” would be challenged to account for the dynamic yet complex nature, authority and intensions of these texts, on the one hand, and their appropriation in terms of the faith experiences and needs of present-day audiences, on the other.

Through the songs they are singing, the youth in Malawi recognize in Philippians 2:6-8, a text that is appropriate to their everyday needs and challenges, suffering, fears and hopes. Their lamenting songs reach the ears of Jesus who Himself has suffered, died and was buried, who feels the pain with them. It is precisely because God was united with Jesus in his agony and refused to abandon Him, that we can be assured of God’s refusal to abandon us (Brown & Miller 2005:80). In short, the youth see God at work in Jesus’ suffering, and He hears them, saves them, and empowers them, so that, in response to this God who refuses to let them go, they too can resolve not to abandon one another by the Spirit’s power (2005:80-81).

In this text, the Philippians's attitude was to be similar to that of Jesus Christ. Unlike the philosophical models, they were to have the life of Jesus, the foundation of their practical thinking. Paul then shows them that such an invitation to Jesus' way of life is possible since He, as well as others, followed it. The phrases, "may share his sufferings, becoming like Him in his death" (Php. 3:10), (Epaphroditus who) "nearly died for the work of Christ, risking His life" (2:30) and (Timothy's) "not seeking his own interests but by the interests of others" (2:20-21), reflect this possibility. Such examples encourage both the receivers then, and the readers of today. Thus, Jesus becomes a "Master example of a servant leader" and becomes identified with all peoples of all generations. Such a teaching was alien to the Greco-Roman culture's ethical system and disrupted the social systems of the time.

In the second part of Jesus' career, that of exaltation (Php. 2:9-11), Paul shows the outcome of Jesus' obedience to the Father. Jesus' humility led to God exalting Him and bestowing on Him the name, which is above every name (2:9). By being humble, lowly, mean, insignificant, weak and trivial, and then being killed and resurrected, Jesus received a name above all names, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father (vv. 9-11).

Such a culmination of Jesus' life brings great hope, joy and peace of mind for those who suffer and mourn. It gives hope to those who are oppressed, as there is a reward if they persevere - they will be with the Lord forever, where there will be no mourning, death, suffering or lamenting.

By singing songs that describe the life of Jesus, the youth in Malawi identify themselves with his exaltation. Often the pattern is dialectical or sequential: the Christ was first weak, then powerful; so too, the Christians are weak and afflicted today, but will be vindicated and be glorious (Meeks 1983:182). When Jesus cried out to God for deliverance (Mk. 15:34), He did so in agony, but not in despair. He died forsaken by all around Him, but not by God. He suffered and died so that, by the power of the resur-

rection, suffering and death would not have the last word (Brown & Miller 2005:86).

Although there is suffering, hunger, disease, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, violence, jealousy, dishonesty, sexual immorality, robbery and murder, God will raise them up just as He did to Jesus. This imparts great courage and hope to the youth in Malawi and inspires them to proclaim this good news to the ends of the earth, although they suffer and are oppressed. Jesus, whom the youth proclaim, will come to free them by judging this evil world, and will welcome them into God's glory where there will be no more suffering or death. As Brown and Miller (2005:87) justifiably state: in Jesus' cry of abject misery, we learn that something is at stake, not only for Jesus and for us, but also for God. God enters into Jesus' suffering, so that something momentous takes place for God in Jesus' dying moments on Golgotha. Something grievous is being transacted in Jesus' cry, something painful is being communicated here: between God – and God! Paul explains, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us" (2Co. 5:19).

Through the singing of these songs, the youth continue to present disruptive hymnology not from the official hymnbook, to the existing church in Malawi. Eventually, the youth become disruptive to the existing liturgy, as they sing the traditional songs in church that are not from the official printed songs.

Now follows the great contrast between the official hymnbook and the traditional songs that the youth sing in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod.

5.6.4 The contrast between the existing official hymnbook and the songs the youth sing in Malawi

In contrast to the existing official hymnbook, the kind of songs the young people sing is predominantly traditional. The tunes and rhythms are taken from traditional dances of various tribes and language groups in Malawi. This allows the singers and listeners to involve their bodies while they sing, dance, clap their hands, ululate and perform all

kinds of gestures that are cultural and indigenous, but also disruptive to the existing liturgy.

All the songs indicate clearly that they are indigenous, as one can easily trace the tunes of traditional dances and songs. Music plays a vital role in the Malawian society, whether in worship or village life. These compositions are full of several repeated lines, which serve as a tool for the singer's memory, as well as the rhythm to attract the listeners' interest and impact on them. The songs are also filled with advice and wisdom about good ethical values, as always is the case in the role that traditional music plays in oral society. The songs use simple words, instead of complicated abstract words, to explain the Gospel. Oral devices are also used in order to involve the listeners in the performance. The songs tell stories to invoke the people's imagination and to portray the picture as vividly as possible. This, I think, is clear evidence that the songs are indigenous.

The external influences are very clear; they are a reaction to official hymns, which are static and abstract. The rhythms and tunes in the official hymns are foreign - so much so that the people are not inspired at an emotional level. Normally, when the people sing the official hymnal words, they are not involved in what they sing. In contrast and in response to this, the youth sing in an attempt to bridge the gap between the West-oriented hymns and the African indigenous songs. Of course, some of their songs are adaptations of the translated hymns, but with new indigenous tunes and flavours added. The English/Scottish hymns have been blended with indigenous elements to make the songs relevant to the youths' cultures and traditions.

The role that social systems and social structures play is that this world is evil and, therefore, not a good place in which to live. The singers express the desire to go to heaven. Most people in this context are not very optimistic about the future and life on this earth. This is apparent because the Gospel's political and social implications for this life are not often addressed; the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod mostly neglects them. Indeed as a society, it is unaware of its traditional assumptions until they are seriously

challenged, or communication no longer seems adequate.

According to the analysis, the young people's songs try to challenge the traditional assumptions and the wider worldview. Some words and behaviours, which people find problematic or feel uncomfortable to speak about are easily expressed in the songs. For instance, the young people easily use parables in the songs to give advice to adults, such as parents or grandparents, let alone chiefs, which could not have taken place normally. Through music, the youth have the freedom to express the otherwise abominations of normal social structures. An examination of some of the young people's songs reveals that they advise fathers not to have sexual relations with young girls, as they do have wives at home. Other songs deal with drunkenness, church leaders who pretend to be Christians yet live differently at home. This great opportunity for the young people to sing what they observe in society also makes their voices heard outside their groups.

An analysis of the songs reveals that the unfamiliar themes that are developing are about problems and suffering, the solution of which is to invite Jesus to come soon. Eschatology is a dominant theme. Other themes include: repentance and evangelism, dependence on Christ for help, and stories about creation and order.

The analysis of the songs also reveals that there are many distortions in respect of theology and biblical teaching. Most of the songs are very legalistic in form, and moralistic by nature. As Christoff Martin Pauw (1980:330) observes, this seems to develop from the *Katekisma* (catechism book) that the CCAP Nkhoma Synod uses. He says that another weakness in the *Katekisma* is that there is an over-emphasis on law and sin leading to the greater danger of developing a legalistic attitude, which takes place in the context of teaching what sin is, and how a person obtains knowledge of his/her sin. The doctrine of grace is rarely found. While it is true that the songs appeal to the traditional way of communication, there is also a need to speak about the Word and the world, as well as the contexts and texts that develop from these experiences. These two must always be in dialogue with each other, whether in preaching or

singing. The fact that there can never be peace in this world is extremely fatalistic and impairs people's ability to plan and enjoy. The church must address such distortions of the Gospel while encouraging the young people to sing in a way that is intelligible for them as well as their audience. The youth need to be enlightened of the current work of the Holy Spirit, who continues the work that Jesus began, and will continue it until to the end of the world when Jesus comes.

In terms of familiar topics and dominant theologies, eschatology is the most dominant, although it is a one-sided eschatology that concerns the future. This is in contrast to the biblical understanding of eschatology, which has meaning for this life and will be fully realized when Jesus comes. Biblical eschatology is a "realized eschatology." The songs depict contexts of suffering of the youths' lives. They then cry to God to come quickly and take them to heaven, where there is no funeral, no mourning, no suffering, no immorality, no corruption, and no poverty. The second topic is that of salvation. The youth ask Jesus to save them from suffering and oppression and to be merciful with them. Salvation, as such, is not truly depicted as by grace alone, but by works. People must repent, comply with the Law of Moses and do well; then, they will be saved. Especially, living a moral life is emphasized. In all this, God is depicted as the Judge, and that those who do not observe his law will be judged. He is also portrayed as the people's Protector and Refuge, who takes care of orphans and suffering people. He is the Father.

5.6.5 Ecclesiology

That there is a church within the church = *ecclesiola in ecclesia* (little church in the church) seems to be reflected ecclesiology in the songs. The young people sing about church members who are hypocrites, who are Christians only on Sundays and, during the rest of the week, do evil things, which is contrary to the Word of God. They sing about deceitful leadership, who come to the Lord's table despite being immoral. Their consistent reference to the church as "other people," seems to imply another church within the church. The young people take note of an unfaithful leadership that

has double standards in its way of leading people. They are church members who appear to be true Christians on Sundays, then act in a completely contrary way during the week. Such people, without works, represent people of faith.

The youth sing what they know best; their songs are not written in the church books. They sing tunes that are familiar and compositions that are context-specific. The neglect of these songs has led to the church's inability to accept officially what the young people are singing, resulting in failure to help them sing polished, biblically and theologically sound songs.

Had the contemporary songs been incorporated in the official hymnbook after being polished and more content added to the tunes, it would have enhanced and enriched the worship. It would also have allowed people to be free in expressing themselves to God and leading to an encounter with Him. This is where, in this Malawian culture, oral communication normally employs heavy rhythmic, balanced patterns and repetitions in the people's mindset, which encourages a process of encoding and decoding the lyrics. The extended alliteration and assonance, formulaic expressions, series of standard thematic settings, proverbs and parallelisms, all make the young people's songs very unique and help the audience to understand and reflect on the message of the songs, which is based on their contexts. This is lacking in the official hymnbook, which contains correct theology, but emanated from a completely different context and for a totally different audience.

If these Malawian choral songs were blended with the English/Scottish hymns in the official hymnbook, there would be revival in the church, because this would allow the singers and worshippers to express their desires, needs, fears, anxieties and hopes for their lives. In traditional songs and tunes, these are easily expressed by means of the clapping of hands, the accompaniment of traditional instruments when singing, dancing and all kinds of gestures during performances. Songs numbers 1 and 6 are good examples of such songs with traditional dance tunes from which they emanate. Here, there is an *Ingoma* traditional tune, which involves dancing and ululation.

Within the mainline churches, the danger is that if the young people are not given the chance to sing freely and to express themselves, they will choose to leave the mainline churches and join Pentecostal churches, where traditional praise and worship is deliberately encouraged. Though, of great encouragement is the fact that the youth in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod are in the forefront of participation in church activities. For the church in Malawi, this is a great and already existing potential to empower the youth to be full participants in the church, and to train them for the church's future.

5.6.6 Spirituality

In their spiritual journey, the youth are experiencing a life of suffering, oppression, poverty, famine, unemployment, disease, envy, insecurity and immorality - all forces of death. In these circumstances, the youth have searched for God, and desire to meet God Himself to present their suffering to Him. And, eventually, the youth found God in Jesus Christ who, Himself, suffered and died, but, on the third day, conquered death by rising from the grave, and then He received all powers in heaven and on earth. In this spiritual journey, the youth meet the Messiah, who promises them a better world, where there will be no more suffering.

The risen Christ will cry out again on that day when our redemption is to become complete (Brown & Miller 2005:89). Jesus' cry at birth and the cry he uttered in death were uttered in solidarity with the cries of many others who accompanied Him on his earthly journey – the cry of Rachel weeping for the slaughtered innocents (Mt. 2:16-18), the cry of John the Baptist preparing the way in the wilderness (Mk. 1:2-6; Mt. 3:1-6; Lk. 3:1-6; Jn 1:19-23), and the cries of the Jerusalem crowds who hailed Him as King (Mk. 11:9-10; Mt. 21:9; Lk. 19:38; Jn. 12:13). Even the cries of the demon-possessed (Mk. 10:46-52; Mt. 9:27-31; Lk. 18:35-43), and the angry cries, "Crucify Him!" (Mk. 15:13-14; Mt. 27:22-23; Lk. 23:21-23; cf Jn. 18:40) contribute towards his story. All these cries – and the cries of each of us – are gathered up, judged, and blessed in his cry on the cross (Brown & Miller 2005:89). Unlike all these cries, the final cry will indeed be, "For the Lord [Jesus] Himself, with a cry of command, with the

archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first" (1Th. 4:16).

In their spirituality, there was a leap of faith that required a search, an attempt at something new. The youths' experience leads them to confession of their faith. Their experiences drive them, until they find their answer in Jesus. Their faith emanated from Jesus, who provides a better world that makes life meaningful. As the youth blend their experiences with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they venture into the unknown to meet God with their experiences. Building on the rhythm and idiom of their Malawian songs, they create new songs that address their suffering. These songs become their basic means for preserving hope in what seems to be a hopeless situation (Brown & Miller 2005:114). As persons and as a community, their survival depends greatly on the creative impulse that produces the *spirituals* (2005:114). In this new world, they find warmth, hospitality, peace and joy, all being aspects of life that cannot be found in their contexts of suffering.

Ultimately, the young people are able to express their deepest feelings and desires through their songs. Moral advice, a legalistic way of life, repentance and the desire for the end of the world to draw near, are all expressed in these songs. For example, calling for faithfulness in marriage reflects the youths' spirituality. They always oppose immorality, corruption and any evil that people may do. They believe that spirituality is attained by mostly following the law and doing good works.

In this way, the traditional Malawian choral songs become the vehicle through which the present reality and emotions are freely expressed. Such tunes are deep rooted in the Malawian culture. The singers can dance, shake their bodies, clap their hands in their encounter with God, and experience his loving care. Here, a compromise is reached, which the spirit of charity and ecclesial communion inspires between the Gospel message and traditional Malawian choral music (Chupungco 1982:8).

The contrast between the official hymns and traditional music is very clear. The official hymns were written many years ago, and their language and expressions were relevant to Western audiences. The cultural context, the experiences and the circumstances that led to the writing of the hymns are far detached from the Malawian context, history and culture. The rhythms and the tunes are so foreign that the people are not inspired at an emotional level. Here, the people normally sing the words of the official hymns but are not fully involved in what they sing; they mostly “parrot” rather than enjoy the music.

In contrast, traditional hymns provide the present reality; deep feelings are freely expressed in a tune and rhythm that has deep roots in the culture. The songs, which have been analysed, reveal that they come from different traditional dances. Therefore, the singers are able to dance, shake their bodies, clap their hands and, in this way, show how they encounter God and experience his loving care.

5.6.7 The general impression of the songs

The general impression of the songs sung by the youth in Malawi implies that a major and important sector of the church has been neglected. This sector is the arm of the youth, who are also in the majority in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod. The songs are mostly indigenous, portraying the society’s culture and practices.

An examination of the songs clearly reveals how the youth express the experiences that they endure. Themes that develop express suffering, hopelessness, emptiness, lack of confidence in the church leadership/groupings, disease and death. A general impression of the songs reveals many oppressive practices portrayed in behaviours such as hypocrisy and concealing conflicts, thereby nurturing a dead church, which will be judged at the “end times.”

Songs are implemented as the only communication tool to address many evils of the church, as perceived by the youth. Messages to the fellow-youth seem to suggest that there is social decay, which unfortunately may be difficult to address, as elders and

parents are also guilty of indulging therein. In this respect, there are no role models for the youth. Messages calling people to repentance, of warning and judgment occur throughout the songs. An analysis of the songs reveals that the youth are reconfiguring their contexts with the Gospel to suit their new contexts. It is encouraging that the conclusions in most of the songs are that Jesus Christ provides the hope, love, care and protection that the people need.

From these songs that the youth sing, one notices that it was not a question of abandoning *Chewa* customs when evangelizing the people, but of blending them with the Gospel that the missionaries had brought. It was a question of adapting the *Chewa* customs to the Christian church's traditions. Thus, there would be a continuing dialogue between the Gospel and culture, reinterpreting and blending them together. The result would not be the rejection of all Malawian practices, but that they take on a Christological orientation (Chupungco 1982:13).

In most songs, the dominant theme is "the end times." The singers' desire is that Jesus comes and takes the believers home. There are not many songs in praise. Some of the songs retell biblical stories. There is inner texture, as well as intertexture, in the songs, such as in the story of Job, Solomon, the Israelites in Egypt, the story of Jonah and others. The best of these is the dramatized retelling of the conflict between Jesus and death, which is personified. This is a good example of the Malawian youths' creativity, and also of Malawian wisdom literature. Some songs use Malawian proverbs and story-telling to illustrate a point. And, in some cases, issues that are considered to be taboo by European standards, are openly addressed through songs using Malawian forms of communication and, thus, the message is passed on to the audience.

5.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I worked on an empirical study of what the youth in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod in Malawi are singing. This was based on the findings in the sample areas of Malingunde, Liziri, Mchizanjala, Mpatsa, Chiwe and Kaning'a.

This research included an examination of influences that compel the youth to compose and sing such songs and also included an examination of the way the youth reinterpret and blend their daily experiences and apply these to religion. To achieve this, an analysis of the young people's songs has been made – looking at the themes and titles about God that are developing.

In this process, the youths' creative oral reinterpretation of daily experiences in the light of hope in Jesus was determined through the recorded songs. A process of reconfiguration, with a clear diagram drawn to explain this work, followed. After this, some songs were selected that have various titles pertaining to Jesus. Finally, a theological and liturgical analysis of the traditional Malawian choral music, analysed from the grassroots levels, were discussed.

The following chapter presents suggestions for hymnological development in Malawi. These suggestions will derive from the findings in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

For these suggestions on hymnological development in Malawi, I shall examine a theological–liturgical critical analysis of music in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod, based on the findings of the empirical study. An action research follows that includes collective efforts to address and solve the problems found in the empirical study of what the youth in the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod in Malawi are singing.

CHAPTER SIX

SINGING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 discussed important aspects of the research design, which included an explanation for the choice of places being researched, the physical situation and order of proceeding in those areas of study, factors that made high quality recording difficult, the basic information about fieldwork that included recordings, transcriptions and translations. Thereafter, creative oral reinterpretation of daily experiences through traditional songs in the light of hope in Jesus followed. Then, daily experiences the youth are experiencing and how similar or different these experiences are from one context to another are explained. This led to discussion of the process of reconfiguration. Finally, there is an analysis of the songs the youth are singing.

This chapter will attempt to find suggestions for hymnological development in Malawi, and these suggestions will be based on the findings in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

6.2 A THEOLOGICAL–LITURGICAL CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MUSIC IN NKHOMA SYNOD

From the discussion, it has now become clear that music, in general, possesses an untiring dynamism, as well as extraordinary flexibility; these qualities account for widely different yet inter-related varieties of music – the old and the new (Riedel 1966-1969:163). Such an approach of blending the old songs with the new, demands a gradual process that requires skills and ability to bring about change without undue dissatisfaction and hostility. Music has an interchange between production and supply on the one hand, and consumption and reception, on the other (Hoondert 2001:650). Not only do people perform actions that have meaning for them and others, they also

perform them in concrete conditions, both physical and social (Holy & Stuchlik 1983:19). Although the form and structure of a composition are permanently set and non-changing, the contents of a piece do change because performers change and adapt their interpretations, giving that music the impression of agelessness (Riedel 1966-1969:163). If the heritage from the past blinds us to that which is yet-to-be, so that we can see only what has been, our link with the movement of the divine in Scripture is severed (McGann 2002:13). At the same time, without a past, there would be no present and little hope for a future. In the Bible, while God is the God of history, of heritage, He is also the God who has his finger fixed on the future (2002:13). In the Bible, God's gaze is not on the past Garden of Eden, but on the bride to come down from heaven, and on the new city in the making (2002:13).

This demands creativity and follows the Spirit in our own reinvention of Christian communities for our time (Rhoad 1996:147). There is a need for imitation of the New Testament writers' creativity. Being faithful to the New Testament calls for our creativity like the first Christians, in order to transform our traditions, so as to address the particular context in which our communities are located – as the New Testament writers did for their communities (1996:147). Instead of focusing only on Scripture and tradition with the intention of making systematic, comprehensive interpretations, a missional praxis-theology does theology by first focusing on local and particular issues with the purpose of doing something about the reality and problems that confront the faith community as well as society (Hendriks 2004:33). The diversity of the New Testament reveals that God works in particular, concrete situations to address people where they are and to bring the Kingdom into their midst (Rhoad 1996:147).

Congregational singing is one of the greatest areas of liturgical and theological cross-pollination (Hawn 2003:19); its role in worship is to contribute meaningfully to the total worship experience that should be poignantly focused on celebrating the Christ event (Bradley 2003:363-364). While a congregational song cannot sustain the full weight of the Gospel, it should never be contrary to the Gospel – there is no room for known

error in the text of songs sung by the gathered community (2003:364). As Calvin M. Johansson (1992:123) notes: God's chosen people regularly sang hymns for inspiration, edification, and expressing praise and adoration to God. The more than two hundred explicit references to singing throughout the Bible - the musical practices of the Jewish people, the New Testament Christians, the early church, and the example of our Lord - warrants this assertion, (1992:123). This means liturgical music must be faithful to the Bible and it must glorify God; it must edify the congregation and the music should be made in such a way that people sing from the heart, through the spirit and with understanding (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007:72). Liturgical music is a spiritual, verbal and emotional element that proclaims, exalts, rebukes, comforts, motivates and inspires (unpublished document 2007:72).

The reality of suffering as noted in the songs the young people are singing, calls for a public *outcry*. All people who suffer cry out – it is a creaturely and instinctive reaction (Vos, Hogan and Cilliers 2007:158). As Cilliers (2007:158-159) rightly concludes, it is the task of the church, and therefore also of preachers, to supply language that gives form to the primal, human outcry. The significance of this language lies in the fact that it gives voice to suffering; in it suffering is given the dignity of language. The language of lament is more than a public outcry – however justified that may also be. It is more than psychological or religious self-pity. It is a voicing of suffering of individuals or a community within the community of believers, in the presence of God. Cilliers further says that the language of lament is a groaning for grace and a grieving for change. It has an address. It grapples with God for the sake of God, clings to God against God, even if He remains the incomprehensible One (Vos, Hogan and Cilliers 2007:162). That means language of lament is a language of hope.

One thing the songs that the young people are singing are teaching us is that we lament. Lamenting is part of worship; it has a place in worship. Lament anticipates change. The language of lament becomes language of hope because it not only describes what is; it also evokes into being what is not until it has been spoken

(2007:163).

The primary purpose of assembling for worship is to witness to our faith in such a way that others are moved and inspired (McGann 2002:10). And through the songs of lament, the young people present to God their pain and wants from God, His reply. Just as a sermon is a slice of the Gospel, so are congregational songs; they can work in tandem. In preaching sermons, preachers use their theologically informed imaginations to provide an interpretation of a biblical text that will help to make sense of the congregation's life and empower them to live their faith (Bradley 2003:364). In essence, the writer of congregational songs is charged with the same task (2003:364). Hymn singing is part of God's plan for his chosen people (Johansson 1992:125). They are so interconnected with preaching, teaching, prayer, worship and witness that leaders must assume them as normative within their specific areas of responsibility (1992:138).

This means: the role of liturgical ministers is to unlock the assembly's capabilities to witness to their faith in an active way that, simultaneously, builds up the body of believers and praises God (McGann 2002:10). People come to church to worship, to be renewed – to leave refreshed and revived, inspired and healed (2002:13). This already touches on theology that must be realistic about situations in which it is being done. This means that hymn singing must be church-wide, in Sunday School, prayer meetings, youth rallies, private devotions, and family prayers. Everyone in the body should become involved (Johansson 1992:138). Such theology must address national as well as local realities of people to provide vision and guidance for an anticipated future (Hendriks 2004:30).

“We sing because it is a way of praying together. Liturgical music should bring glory to God and it should re-establish an identity of singing and improve the quality of singing” (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007: 74). Singing displays our unity in Christ (Brink & Witvliet 2003:342). There is a need for liturgical music that enables all persons to participate, and that identifies the congregation as the primary choir (2003:342).

In the liturgy, songs and sayings link us with one another and with the past so that we know that we are all God's people (Atkins 2004:71). In more recent history, hymns and songs, which express the Christian faith, have powerfully influenced the corporate memory of who God is and how He acts (2004:71). The experiences of the other, which is also the experience of the self, is in the rhythmic harmony of interaction (Uzukwu 1997:11). There is a rhythmic sharing of experience through music and dance (1997:12).

In most instances, body movement and dancing accompany African music. Without music, dancing and instruments, the African liturgy is as good as dead (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007:74). In order for the dancing and the music in the church not to turn into a mere aesthetic performance, it is essential that they have to be oriented toward communal prayer and praise, and made responsive to the Word and sacrament (2007:74). In his book, *Discipline music ministry: Twenty-first century directions*, Johansson gives a good explanation saying that musical forms are both emotional and intellectual, but in varying degrees. A balance, which features the rational over the irrational, is clearly preferred in worship. The hymn's particular balance between reason and emotion makes it unsurpassed as a vehicle for praise, admonition, inspiration, adoration, exhortation, education and narration. This results in the spiritual merits of hymns as follows:

1. Hymns bring the intellect into worship in a form that also allows for the emotional.
2. Hymns translate into powerful aesthetic and artistic forms of theoretical, doctrinal and propositional truths.
3. Hymns show the interrelatedness among the theological tenets of the Christian faith.
4. Hymns can systematize the teaching and/or the reviewing of scriptural great doctrines.
5. Hymns allow the worshipping community to recount the story (i.e. the historical aspects of our faith) and often simultaneously point to the messianic age.

6. Good hymns display a comprehensive theological content and have the ability to contextualize specific emphases in relevant language.
7. Good hymns are well-suited to Christian worship because they centre on God rather than on self.
8. Great hymns show versatility in handling a variety of theological emphases, while maintaining the centrality of God as the subject.
9. The hymn is the only congregational musical form that thoroughly and systematically celebrates the cycle of historical biblical events that form the bedrock of our faith.
10. The hymn, as congregational music, requires the exercising of the mental and spiritual disciplines characteristic of mature Christians.

Johansson (1992:126-127) continues by saying that the greatest contribution hymns make to the church is their fleshing out of biblical material in a passionate form. They emphasize the content displayed through the feeling, tone, urgency and colour of artistic forms. They are a “people’s art”, a biblical/musical form of the collective people of God.

In this way, congregational music can be integral to a blessed life and provide a foretaste of heavenly bliss (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007:74).

The following topic will discuss the findings from the empirical study of the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod.

6.3 FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

From the discussion, it has been noted that for several generations, missionaries had exported Eurocentric hymns around the world. Dube (2000:9) quotes Mudimbe in saying that, of the entire African burden, the missionary was also, paradoxically, the best symbol of colonial enterprise. He devoted himself sincerely to the ideals of colonialism, the expansion of civilization, the dissemination of Christianity and the advance of progress.

This means that there was no dividing line between missionaries and their colonizing counterparts. Western experts have approached their studies with a Western rational, philosophical and theological mind, while regarding African culture as immoral, deceitful, satanic, devilish and criminal (Mbonigaba 1994:21). Some Europeans believed that Africans had no soul, no sense of history and, therefore, Christianity, a historical religion, could not easily take root (1994:21). Thus, the missionary church played a part in the domination of peoples, which combines political, economic and cultural sovereignty by foreigners (Power 1995:232). And, as the people's culture is ignored or demeaned in the early steps of evangelization, it is inevitable that harm is done to these people and that it is difficult for the Gospel to penetrate to the roots of their culture and their lives (1995:233).

The result of this was borne by the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod's present official hymnbook, which has mostly English/Scottish tunes used in the liturgy. Linda (1997:39) observes that, upon Africans' conversion to European Christian denominations, white missionaries attempted to stamp out any vestiges of their indigenous culture and religion.

Letsosa and De Klerk have quoted Brown that congregational songs are in trouble nowadays, as our culture undermines it through social mobility, performance-oriented popular music, electronic discouragement and over-amplification (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007:65). The current popular music, the true nerve centre of contemporary musical life, has become louder and louder (Johansson 1992:145). The rising sound levels engender in the listener a proportionate lack of sensitivity, and an aesthetic hardness and callousness sets in (1992:145). Church members use only the well-known hymns in the official hymnbook of the CCAP Nkhoma Synod. This hymnal appears to have little importance for most young members, yet the church has not taken any measures to address this. Consequently, this has compelled the youth to choose what songs they want to sing, and to choose the instruments, gestures or dances in accompaniment. The singing of traditional Malawian music is a reaction to

their non-acceptance of the existing official hymnbook, which contains mostly English/Scottish songs with their own strange tunes.

By singing the traditional Malawian songs, the youth try to escape two different lives of worship. They want to leave behind the Western culture, which is alien to them, and prefer to remain in the African culture that, from birth, has been their own.

It has also been noted how some musical laymen composed music that has won the hearts of many Malawians, how Donovan Katsulukuta continued with the English/Scottish tunes after having had proper musical formation and training from choral workshops he attended, and how this training helped him to compose polished songs that are theologically sound and, at the same time, preferred by many people. Furthermore, how another man, Dalimon Kafa, made a contribution to Malawian music by blending the *Mganda* tune and *nyau* lyrics to create a well-loved melody. As a teacher who was often transferred from one school to another, Kafa's music became one of the most loved tunes in Malawi. Recordings of his songs with the national radio and television station helped to further the spread of his music.

Through this development and rising of these two musicians, the old type of music (English/Scottish tunes) could be blended with the new traditional Malawian music. This resulted in the creation of a conducive environment for music, bringing together "the past" and "the present." The outcome of this was tolerance for the two types of music and the accommodation of those church members who love both.

The negative results of the empirical research on the role of music were the following: the church's negligence to monitor what the youth are singing has, in some instances, resulted in songs that give the congregation empty words that never mention God or Jesus. This is because church leaders, or a theologian, made no effort to examine and polish them after the youth had composed them. Therefore, the duty of a foreigner (for such compositions, a theologian) in the development of local theologies was neglected (Schreiter 1985:19). It was neglected to note that a foreigner (theologian) could not

have the lived experience of other communities - experience that can challenge and enrich a local community (1985:19). Such music fails to appreciate tradition that protects the memory of the community, and is then applied to the new situations it faces day by day (Atkins 2004:24). The tradition has to be appreciated, and reshaped in response to the circumstances, but never abandoned (2004:24).

Due to the church leaders' negligence to help with music development, devastating developments have taken place through choir festivals. How they are conducted does not create an environment for worship. Here, although done with the very best of intentions, the music may be inappropriate, even contrary to church music's ultimate goal, simply because its deeper purpose and the methodology for achieving it have never been ascertained (Johansson 1992:13). This means that, despite such songs indeed mentioning God or Jesus, choir festival performances are for other purposes than the spiritual dimension of life in God. Choir festival performances have songs that are not soulful, that do not touch hearts and release spiritual power within the community (McGann 2002:16).

As Bradley (2003:365) states, the meaning of music resides in people, not in sounds. There is no sense of God or worship of any kind in choir festival performances, other than greed for money. Thus, God is not glorified. He must compete with money and money is declared the winner at choir festivals.

In some cases, where choirs use electronic instruments, the latter are considered more important than the words. There is no one to teach the youth what is right and what is wrong. There is no one to point out that instruments used with liturgical music should be used as accompaniment and not to dominate (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007:72) Yet, the youth live alongside those in the church who could have helped them.

It has also been noted that, in some cases, choir members do not fully participate in singing the official hymnal songs. They prefer traditional Malawian music to English/Scottish songs. This has been noted in the way they reconfigure English/Scottish tunes

into traditional Malawian tunes. In his book, De Klerk (2001b:273) notes that the churches in the last decade have discovered that the Gospel is understood better and is more readily accepted when its presentation and reception, as well as the reaction to it, is rooted in one's own culture. The music that the missionaries introduced to the Malawian people was clothed in a non-Malawian skin resulting in it being alien to Malawian culture.

Unfortunately, many new popular choral songs (borrowed from the Malawian tradition) have not lasted for very long as they have not been written down and are not officially part of the liturgy. Also, because there is no logical theological content in these songs, they are doomed to a short life (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007:74).

Although the youth in Malawi sing traditional music of the Chewa culture, this culture is not part of religion, and thus is totally excluded from the church. Culture is something that can exist on its own without other influential dimensions of life affecting it (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007:76).

Such findings demand the church's attention in Malawi to reconfigure her approach to music in order to make sense of the present world in which she is serving. Johansson (1992:115-116) rightly says that organization is essential to effectively manage a discipling music ministry. When goals and methods are marshalled into a working structure, based upon the resources of the congregation (for the time, parish), this can be started. The overall goal of maturing God's saints needs a carefully balanced plan to inspire the congregation to move forward, but not to the point of total disorientation. Once the liturgical text is given proper priority, the music becomes an explicit confession of faith and not a mere polyphonic performance (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007:75).

From the findings of this research, my hypothesis has been proven to be true, that meaningful theological–liturgical enrichment in Malawi cannot take place without taking

note of, and liturgically evaluating and reinterpreting, traditional choral music²⁷. Continuous reinterpretation and reconfiguration is necessary for the Gospel to be relevant to people who receive it. Such theological–liturgical enrichment will promote a relevant trustworthy problem-solving approach to life. It is about making sense in each particular context and culture to each particular group of people that receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Traditional Malawian choral music sung by the young people attempts to verbalize Malawian reflections about God from a grassroots background and culture. The analysis of recorded and transcribed hymns has served as an illustration of “doing theology” within the parameters of advancement and extension of the wisdom about God and his relation to his people.

Regarding this, many questions arose concerning developments in the traditional Malawian choral music sung by young people in choirs and other Gospel bands. The research tried to address these questions from a responsible theological–liturgical focus, grouping them around four key words: context, ecclesiology, spirituality and reconfiguration. The liturgy in the Malawian context can be enriched in the light of the findings of this research that tries to answer the following key questions: what are the young people singing? In what contexts do they sing these songs? What unfamiliar themes have developed? What would the ecclesiological effect be if the contemporary songs were incorporated in the official hymnbook? How can what has taken place help the church to clarify, avoid or correct issues? In what ways do young people express their emotions through the songs they compose and sing? How do they experience God, and what God-images do they articulate when they sing these traditional songs? From a biblical and, more specifically, a New Testament perspective, what is the on-going dialogue between the Christian faith and indigenous culture? How did experiences of the early Christians influence their contexts and cultures? What are the

27. Here, music, words, dance or performance are one thing. They cannot be separated. But in this dissertation, I focused on the content of the words and dealt with such findings from an analytical social dimension to theological liturgical dimensions. That means, interpretation of the contents of the songs had to move from within the contexts in which these songs were sung. The music is available on tapes.

indigenous valid forms that the young people use in doing theology through music?

Below are some recommendations and suggestions.

6.3.1 Recommendations and suggestions

Since the youth form more than half of the CCAP-Nkhoma Synod membership, from the above discussion, the questions I sought to address include: how can the Malawian church engage in the development and production of newer forms of songs that will incorporate both English/Scottish and traditional Malawian choral music? How can meaningful, theological–liturgical enrichment in Malawi be incorporated in the songs that the youth are singing? How can a Malawian remain a Malawian while being a Christian? How can the Chewa culture be included in the church liturgy through the songs that the youth sing? How can there be continuous reinterpretation, blending and reconfiguration of the contexts, about which the youth sing, to make the Gospel relevant to corresponding times? How can the Gospel make sense in each particular context and culture to each particular group of people who receive that Gospel of Jesus Christ? How can the attempt of the youth to verbalize Malawian reflection about God from grassroots help to advance and extend the wisdom about God and his relation to his people?

The discussion has clearly shown how important the Malawian liturgy should include songs that are context sensitive as the gospel is contextual in its very essence. The Church needs to reclaim the language of lament in the liturgy if that liturgy is to be meaningful to the people using it. If we contend that preaching is a language of hope (Vos, Hogan and Cilliers 2007:159), we will have to relearn to also include songs of lament. There can be no language of hope without songs of lament. There is therefore great need for the traditional Malawian songs to be included in the official hymnbook of the CCAP Nkhoma Synod.

Some recommendations and suggestions follow:

1. Liturgical music should bring glory to God. It should serve to enact the relationship that the worshipper has with God in Christ (see chapter 4).
2. The development of liturgical music should involve the whole grassroots community of faith, whose experience is an indispensable source of theology and whose acceptance of theology is an important guarantor of its authenticity, as well as the role of smaller groups within the community, who actually give shape to that theology. Such liturgical music should have theological integrity (see chapters 2, 5 & 6).
3. In the Malawian context, liturgical music should include both the old and the new songs: English/Scottish hymns with traditional Malawian music (see chapter 4).
4. Liturgical music should be vernacular. It should develop from within the culture (see chapters 4 & 5).
5. Liturgical music should enable all persons to participate and should support the actions of the assembly in worship (see chapter 4).
6. Liturgical music should make worshippers leave the worship feeling refreshed and revived, inspired and healed (see chapters 4 & 6).
7. Liturgical music development and production should always involve gifted lay Christians. Emphasis should be placed on lay leadership training programmes (see chapter 4).
8. Liturgical music should not be static. Rather, it should be dynamic by being open to change, whilst linking the experience of God with the experience of life (see chapters 3 & 5).

9. Liturgical music compositions should always meet the church's demands – the songs must offer fresh, new religious experiences to the congregation within the church itself, as well as to the congregation outside, i.e. the person in the street, in the fields and in the offices (see chapter 4).
10. The religious quests of their own times should always confront liturgical music composers while using their own medium, which is music (see chapters 3 & 4).
11. In dealing with liturgical music, the modern church should develop a sense of musical toleration, which welcomes the various idioms of contemporary society. Modern church members should be able to reconcile the previous patterns of worship with the changed perceptions (see chapters 4 & 5).
12. The congregation, as the specific target of ministry, the choirs, instrumental ensembles as the means of ministry, and the leader(s) (e.g. of the children's choirs, pianists, music committees, the music director, and the church minister – who form the management team for improving liturgical music) should always assist liturgical music (see chapter 5).

6.4 ACTION RESEARCH: COLLECTIVE EFFORTS TO ADDRESS AND SOLVE PROBLEMS

Upon having identified these problems in the research areas, I shall return to these areas for a collective effort to address and solve these specific problems, with the aim of empowering those involved in the situation. As Wepener (2006:4) says, this is “participatory action research based on the subjects’ involvement in decisions regarding the questions asked,” and also “a research process where people involved in the situation being studied, are enabled (in partnership with researchers and other role-players) to become actively involved in collective efforts to address and solve their social problems.” I intend to do the following:

1. *Theological–liturgical education through workshops*

After the findings, I shall return to the areas of research and bring together church leaders and youth leaders (choir conductors and some committee members) to sensitize them to the findings of the research. This will encourage the people to be actively involved in addressing and solving the problems of music in the church and will also help those involved in the situation as traditional and renewal-minded people need one another when it comes to working in the church. By doing that, theological as well as liturgical development will be pursued, through teaching. This reflects “the family orientated approach” proposed in this dissertation, where every member of a family is, at least, involved in whatever happens in the family. In so doing, every family member is empowered and involved in solving future problems.

2. *Music composition workshops to empower local musicians*

I shall bring together gifted members in the areas of research and provide training lessons for them on how to develop traditional Malawian music. This will focus on how liturgical music can be composed – music that will include idioms that speak from within the people’s cultural context (see chapters 4 & 5).

3. *Recording and writing of songs*

There will also be a need to make recordings of composed songs on cassettes and to write them down to make them available for those attending the workshop, so that they can learn and incorporate them into the liturgy (see chapter 4).

4. *Formation of music committees*

Since the above points require a well-organized approach, music committees will be formed from the levels of prayer houses, the congregation, the presbytery and synod. The criterion for these committees will include gifted lay persons who are already interested in music development. Such lay people, together with interested church ministers, must be sensitized on how their liturgical music standards could be improved (see chapters 4 & 5).

5. *Choir competitions*

In partnership with these committees and other role-players, choir competitions will be introduced with the aim of producing quality and theologically sound liturgical music (see chapter 4).

To run the activities will demand finances. Therefore, I shall emphasize the importance of the local donor – and they themselves should contribute to the project from their own resources, including: food (maize flour and vegetables), firewood and their zeal to work for the project.

In addition to local donors, finding a sponsorship for such a project is necessary, which is of great importance for the development and production of liturgical music in Malawi.

I do hope that once this has been achieved, liturgical music in Malawi will have been transformed by being user-sensitive and truly interpreted, blended and reconfigured to fit into the church's new situation today.

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APPENDIX A

TRADITIONAL MALAWIAN SONGS

1. OBADWANSO AMADZIWA KUMUPONDA DIABULOSI²⁸ (Ingoma tune)

(Solo) *Obadwanso amadziwa Kumuponda diabulosi (2x)*

Born again Christians know how to trample the devil

Phuzitseni ndikamponde diabulosi

Teach me to trample the devil

(All) *Ndikamponde diabulosi*

I will trample the devil

(Solo) *ye-ye-ye- ndikamponde diabulosi*

Yes, yes, yes, I will trample the devil

(All) *Ndikamponde diabulosi*

I will trample the devil

(Solo) *Kumpoto ndikamponde diabulosi*

In the north, I will trample the devil

(All) *Ndikamponde diabulosi*

I will trample the devil

(Solo) *Pakati ndikamponde diabulosi*

At the centre, I will trample the devil

(All) *Ndikamponde diabulosi*

I will trample the devil.

2. MTIMA WANGA UYAMIKE²⁹

(Solo) *Mtima wanga*

My heart

(All) *Mtinga wanga uyamike*

My heart should give thanks

28. This is a missiological song reminding those who are born again Christians of their duty to trample the devil. The one singing, though already involved in mission work, is speaking on behalf of those who are Christians but are not fulfilling their duty and also those who have not accepted Jesus, to be taught how to trample the devil. Although Jesus is not directly mentioned, it is implied in the phrase "Born again Christians know how to trample the devil". There is spiritual battle between the devil and those who have accepted Jesus. Such battle should spread all over Malawi.

The second meaning is coming from the phrase, "teach me how to trample", a sign of total dependence on Jesus on this fight; that Jesus should teach them even new ways of fighting the devil.

29. This is hymn number 12 in the official hymn book of the CCAP Nkhoma. Instead of using the original tune, the singers reconfigure the song by blending it with traditional Malawian melody in praise of the King who saves and is from heaven. The singers' hearts have enough reasons to give thanks to this King; for what he has done in their life. He has washed their sins. In the end, everyone has to acknowledge this in praise of the King. As the father, he leads them, keeps them and saves them.

(Solo) *Mfumu yaku . . .*

The King of . . .

(All) *Mfumu yakumwamba – mwamba anandiombolatu ine*

The King of heaven above, he saved me.

Verse 1

(Solo) *Nanditsuka*

Washed me

(All) *Nanditsuka mtima mwanga*

Washed in my heart.

Chorus

Amen Alleluah Amen (4x)

Amen Alleluah Amen

Verse 2

(Solo) *Nthawi zonse*

All the time

(All) *Nthawi zonse monga atate*

All the time like the father

(Solo) *Atitsogo*

He leads

(All) *Atitsogolera ife*

He leads us

(Solo) *Natisunga*

And keeps us

(All) *Natisunga mmanja mwake natipulumutsa*

And keeps us in his hands, saves us

(Solo) *Natipulu*

He saves

(All) *Natipulumutsa natitsogolera ife*

And saves us, leads us.

3. **ANANENA MAU MOSE**³⁰ (Ingoma tune)

1. *Ndipo ananena mau Mose awa*

And Moses said these words

Ndinatulutsawe Kapolo mdziko Kwa Iguputo Kuja

I delivered you out of slavery in Egypt

Musakhale ndi milungu ina, usadzipangire fano losema ndithu

Do not have other gods, do not make for yourself graven image

Usazitumikire izo, usazigwadire izo, Ndine wa nsanje

Do not serve them, do not bow down to them, I am a jealous God.

2. *Usatchule dzina langa pena paliponse*

Do not mention my name anyhow

Chifukwa yense wotero walakwira ndithu

Because anyone who does this is guilty indeed

Kumbukira tsiku langa Kulisunga tsiku iri nuliremekeze

Remember my day to keep it and honour it

Masiku asanu ndi limodzi uzigwira ntchito zako lasabata ayi

Six days you shall labour all your work but not on Sabbath.

3. *Lemekeza tate ako ndi mayi ako*

Honour your father and your mother

Uti ukhaletu nthawi pano pa dziko

That you should live longer on this world

Osaba, usachite dama, usamnamizire mzako

Do not steal, do not fornicate, do not bear false witness to your neighbour.

30. The singers singing in a traditional Malawian Ingoma tune sings from the 10 commandments in Exodus 20:1-17. The song is reminding the singers of their responsibility as followers of him who chose them. As they sing, they should incorporate all what was meant for Israel because they are the chosen people of God.

4. **NTHAWI ZONSE TIDZAYIMBA ZA DZINA LA YESU**³¹ (Rumba tune)

1. *Nthawi zonse tidzayimba za dzina la Yesu*

We will sing of the name of Jesus always

Pamabvuto, pamtendere, nthawi zonse tidzayimba dzina lakelo

In trouble, in happiness, we will always sing his name

Alipo ena amapondereza mau Ambuye kuti akamvere

There are some who refuse the Word of the Lord, that it should not be heard

Ndikudziwa ine tsiku lomaliza ukatha moyo wawo

I know on the last day, when their life is over

Ndipo apita kuti woyera mtima, tikunyadira poona ambuye tsiku lomaliza

And where do the pure in heart go, we are proud in seeing the Lord on the last day

Pakuti ali yemweyo Ambuye Yesu

Because the Lord Jesus is the same.

Chorus

Ali yemweyo ambuye Yesu nthawi zonse ndidzayimba za dzina la Yesu

The Lord Jesus is the same all the time. I will sing of the name of Jesus

Pamabvuto, pa mtendere, nthawi zonse ndidzayimba za dzina lakelo

In trouble, in happiness, I will always sing of his name.

2. *Alipo ena inu amapondereza mau Ambuye kuti akamvere*

There are some, I tell you, who refuse the word of the Lord that it should not be heard

Amayiwala kuti Yesu nanena siridzatayika lemba liri lonse

They forget that Jesus said not even one word will be lost

Mkana mutani inu, mkana mupondereze, siridzatayika lemba liri lonse

Whatever you may do, whether you refuse, not even one word will be lost

Oyera mtima inu, adzayimba nyimbo Kutama Ambuye tsiku lomaliza

You, pure in heart, will sing a song thanking the Lord on the last day

Pakuti ali yemweyo, Ambuye yesu nthawi zonse tidzayimba za dzina la Yesu

Because the Lord Jesus is the same all the time, we will sing of the name of Jesus.

31. This song is unique in that the singers have used Rumba tune from West Africa for their song. Not only Malawian melody, but also far away from Malawi. A tune originally heard in bars, pubs is reconfigured by being blended with the gospel. This confirms that the meaning of music resides in people, not in sounds (Bradley 2003: 365). Music has meaning because of its context (Hawn 2003: 5). From another angle, this is showing the universality of music.

The singer makes fresh vows to sing for the Lord Jesus always, in whatever circumstances – be it in trouble, in happiness, they will sing to His name. The singers even warn those who refuse Jesus' word to be heard. Such people will not see the Lord on the last day when their life will be over. This implies that those who refuse Jesus' word will go to hell.

The mention of Nebuchadnezzar, the oppressing King in verse 3, shows that there is a deeper meaning to the song, its not just spiritual. In a country where those in power are oppressing people, Jesus will overcome them on the singers' behalf on the last day. Just as God saved the Israelites from the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, he will also save them from the Kings of this world. Here, Jesus is synonymous with God.

3. *Nebukadinezara, mfumuyo ya nkhanza inazuza anthu, ana a Mulungu*
King Nebuchadnezzar, the oppressor, oppressed people; children of God
Koma Mulungu inu, anapulumutsa, amithenga ake ku ng'ango ya moto
But oh! God, saved them, his messengers from the furnace of fire
Ndichifukwa chake tisamade nkhwana, mfumu ya mdziko ndi mafano ake
This is why we should not be troubled by the king of the world and his idols
Ena analipo Koma anapita. Nawonso apita akapanda Kulapa
There were some, but are gone. They will also go, if they do not repent
Ali yemweyo Ambuye Yesu nthawi zonse tidzayimba za dzina lakero
The Lord Jesus is the same all the time, we will sing of this name.

5. **MOYO WATHU IFE**³²
Moyo wathu ife, ulendo umenewu wofunikira Kwambiri
Our life, this journey is very important
Tidzayenda bwanji ngati njirazo ndi zambiri
How will we walk, if the ways are many
Kulibwino Kuzichotsa izo, ulendo udzayenda bwino
It is better to remove them, the journey will be good.

Chorus

Tikakhala Kuseri Kwa Mitambo, bola moyo wathuwu tikalapa,
We will be beyond the clouds, provided we change our life
Kuzichotsa zowawa za mdziko (2x)
Removing the pains of this world
Inu bambo mwaononga onse, pafunika kukhala chabe
You father, you have spoiled all, you need to stay away
Kodi tikanyalapsyatu moyo uno, tikunenawa ndi mapemphero (2x)
If we do not care about this life, what we are saying are prayers
Talapani zoipa mumudziwe mpulumutsi
Repent your sins, know the Saviour
Ukachotsa zoipa zakufuna mtima wako
When you remove sins which your heart likes
Chipatatu chauchimo tikunena mapemphero
The gate of sin that we are talking about is prayer
Talapani zoipa
Repent your sins.

32. In this song, Christian way of living is compared with a journey that needs only "one way". Those who follow the "one way" will be beyond the clouds. A metaphor of "way" is used here. People should be careful with this world by repenting of their sins and know the saviour.

6. **MUDZE KWA YESU³³** (with slogan – “Yesu! Wamoyo! Jesus is alive!) (Ingoma tune)

1. *Mudze kwa Yesu Musachedwe Kalata yilozera njira*
Come to Jesus, do not delay the letter shows the way
Amayitanatu tonsefe, mvomerani lye lero (Dc)
He calls all of us – obey him today.

Chorus

Tidzakondwa ife wokhawo, podzasonkhana komwe kuli lye
Only we will rejoice, when we will be gathered where He is
Tidzakhala naye komweko, kudziko iro losafa (Dc)
We will be with Him there, the world without end.

2. *Lolani ana, mumvere Mulunga, tsegulani mitima yanu*
Children accept obeying God, open your hearts
Sankhani lye, bwenzi lanu, musachedwe mudze nonse
Choose him your friend, do not delay come all.

7. **OPANDUKA ACHITA CHIFUNIRO CHAKE³⁴**

Opanduka achita chifuniro chake
The rebellious do their will
Adana nawo uphungu wabwino
Oppose good counsel
Akanitsitsa kuopa Yehova
They strongly refuse fearing Jehovah
Angotekeseka Kuchita zoipa (2x)
Always busy doing evil.

Chorus

Angotekeseka, angotekeseka, angotekeseka ndi zoipa
They are busy, they are busy, they are busy with evil
Padziko pano chabwino palibe
On this earth, there is nothing good
Timange ulendo wopita Kwathu
Let us pack for the journey to our home

33. This is also a song in the official hymn book but the tune has been reconfigured by blending Ingoma tune with the gospel. The song invites people to come to Jesus who is calling them all. Only those who come to Him will rejoice, when all people will be gathered.

34. This is a song taken from the book of Proverbs and is a song of hope for heaven. Because so many are busy doing evil, those who do good are few. Since this is the situation, the best way is to pack up for the journey to our home (heaven). In the process, this evil world is contrasted with heaven. There is in this world epidemic, war, diseases and death. This is also reflected in the many deaths as a result of HIV & AIDS. The singer laments that many people will not enter the Kingdom, because of being busy doing evil.

Anthu sadziwa chobwera mtsogolo angotekeseka ndi zoipa

People do not know what will come next, they are busy with evil

Ndi zachisoni anthu ambiri sakalowa nawo mu ufumuwo

It is sad many people will not enter the kingdom

Silo dziko muli miliri, nkhondo, matenda ndi infa (2x)

Look at this world where there is epidemic, war, diseases and death

Ndi zachisoni, anthu ambiri sakalowa nawo muufumuwo

It is sad many people will not enter the Kingdom.

8. KWAYIKIDWA KWA MUNTHU³⁵

Kwayikidwa kwa munthu kufa kamodzi

Human beings destined to die once

Zikatero chatsalira ndi chiweruzo (2x)

After that then judgement.

Chorus

Kumande, kumanda, kumanda

Graveyard, graveyard, graveyard

i – i – i! Moto kulanga, kowopsya

i – i – i! Fire punishing, fierce

(Solo) *Infayi iribe kaso yatenga mayi, bambo, Mnyamata, msungwana*

Death has no partiality, has taken the mother, father, boy, girl

Ulendo wakumanda

Away to the graveyard

(All) *Amayi akupita, abambo akupita i – i – i! Kumanda (2x)*

The mother is going, the father is going i – i – i! To the graveyard

Infayi iribe Kaso yatenga mayi, bambo ulendo wa Kumanda

Death has no partiality, it has taken the mother, father, away to the graveyard.

35. This song is coming from Hebrews 9:27 that it is appointed for human beings to die once, and that after that comes judgement. The context from which this song is developing is the deaths that are taking place due to HIV & AIDS, and this is a warning before this death comes to the one listening to the song. Death has no partiality. It kills anybody be it a father, a mother, a boy or a girl, taking them to the grave. Here death is personified. He comes to take whoever he wants. There is also a warning in the song that after death, there is judgement. So the important point is to be ready for the coming judgement by accepting Jesus.

9. MAPETO AFIKA³⁶

1. *Mapeto Afika, tiyeni tikhale maso*
The end has come, let us be alert
Muzochitika zonse zapadziko (2x)
In what is happening in the world.

Chorus

- (All) *Zikubvuta, zikubvuta, zikubvuta*
It is difficult, it is difficult
- (Solo) *Kulapa munthuyo padzikoli*
For a person to repent on earth
- (All) *Zikubvuta, mawu Akuwamva, koma zikubvuta*
It is difficult, they hear the word but it is difficult
Ndichite chiyani nanga nthawi ndiyo yapita
And what must I do for time is up
Ndidzayankhanji tsiku iro Yesu akadza?
What will I answer Jesus when he comes?
Kulapa munthuyo padzikoli zikubvuta
It is difficult for a person to repent on earth.
2. *Zonse zawonekera zimene Yesu ananena*
All that Jesus predicted has come true
Ukuti bwanji kodi mbalewe?
What do you say, you brother?

10. CHIKONDWERERO³⁷

- (Solo) *Chikondwerero*
Joy
- (All) *Tikachipeza nthawi yochepa, mabvuto abwera*
When we have it for a short while, troubles come
- (Solo) *Dziko lapansi*
This world
- (All) *Muli mabvuto, Yesu alipo akuthangateni*
There are troubles, Jesus is present, let him help you.

36. Looking at the way things are happening, the singer sees that the end has come and people should be alert and ready although others are refusing to repent. They hear the word but cannot listen and it is difficult to tell them. The singer is concerned because he/she needs to tell Jesus of what he/she had done.

37. This is a song of warning for those who think are enjoying in this world. Yet in actual fact, such joy is temporal. The worldly joy is tainted with troubles. Such people are warned that there will be no conferring in heaven. A metaphor of a court is here cited where in worldly courts a person is free to present his views to the case. That will not be the case in heaven and the best thing is to come to Jesus now before it is too late.

Chorus

(Solo) *Oh! Chikondwerero*

Oh! Joy

(All) *Chikondwerero tikachipeza nthawi yochepa, mabvuto abwera (2x)*

Joy, tainted by troubles that come

(Solo) *Dziwani kuti*

Know that

(All) *Uko kumwamba kulibe khoti lochezerana*

There, in heaven, there is no court to discuss.

11. SEZANI MTANDA³⁸

(Solo) *Sezani mtanda*

Carry the cross

(All) *Wayiye Yesu, atero Mbuye fulumirani (2x)*

Of Jesus, the Lord says hurry.

Chorus

(Solo) *Ufulu omwe*

The freedom that

(All) *Uli padziko watichepera tifuna Kumwamba*

That is in the world is little, we want heaven

(Solo) *Zofuna moyo*

What life wants

(All) *Tikuzipeza koma chinthu chimodzi moyo watibvuta (2x)*

We are getting them, but one thing, life is difficult.

12. YESU ANATI³⁹

Yesu anati kwa ophunzira ake

Jesus said to his disciples

Kanthawi pangono ndikusiyani nokha ndikwera kumwamba

In a short while, I will leave you alone, I go to heaven

Kukakonza malo msadere nkhawa ndidzabweranso

To prepare a place, do not be troubled I will come again.

38. This is a song of following Jesus. Cross-bearing is very important because people need not be cheated with the freedom of this world. The world can give what people want but not life and true freedom. Therefore it is important to carry the cross – here carrying the cross is following Jesus.

39. This song is coming from John 14:2. It is a song of hope to all who have followed Jesus. In Jesus' absence, the Holy Spirit, the counsellor will do greater things to all who believe. At the end of the song, there is a commission to go and proclaim the gospel to people of all nations to repent.

Chorus

(All) *Dikirani, dikira*

Wait, wait

(Solo) *Yesu popita kumwamba nanena ndi ophunzira*

Jesus when going to heaven said with the disciples

Sindikusiyani nokha tsopano dikirani

I do not leave you alone, now wait

(All) *Iripo nkhoswe ina ndiye Mzimu Woyera*

There is another counsellor, the Holy Spirit

Adzachita zazikulu kwa inu abale anga

He will do great things to you my brothers

Mukalandira mzimuwo, yendani, phunzitsani anthu amitundu yonse

When you receive the Spirit, go, proclaim to people of all nations

Atembenuke mtima (2x)

To repent of their hearts.

13. LIDZE MSANGA TSIKULO⁴⁰

1. *Lidze msanga tsikulo lolonjezedwa ndi Ambuye*

Let the day come quickly promised by the Lord

(Solo) *Aaa!*

Aaa!

(All) *Nalinena polawira (2x)*

That was said when saying bye.

Chorus

(All) *Muli chimwemwe dziko lonse lam'mwamba*

There is joy in the whole heavenly world

(Solo) *Muli chimwemwe dziko lonse lam'mwamba tidzakondwera*

There is joy in the whole heavenly world

Dziko lonse lam'mwamba (2x)

The whole heavenly world.

40. This song is in the official hymn book but the tune has been reconfigured by blending traditional tune with the gospel. The message in the song is that if this world wants joy, that joy comes with Jesus, the King of heaven and earth. The singer is looking more to the lack of joy in this world, and because the earthly Kings have failed to bring joy, it is only Jesus who can achieve that, and he/she awaits that day when he/she will rule, to come quickly.

The song is also giving an advice that when in this world, people should never depend on what they do because Satan has put traps and may not know they are already in that trap.

2. *Dziko lino chimwemwecho chikudza ndi Yesuyo*
On this world, joy comes with Jesus
Mfumu yathu yakumwamba ndi dziko lonse lapansi (2x)
Our King of heaven and the whole earth.
3. *Tikamakhala padziko lapansi tisadalire zomwe tikuchita*
When we are on this earth, we should not depend on what we are doing
Poti msampha wa munthuyo wakula, Satanayo walimbika mkhondo (2x)
Because the trap of a person is great, Satan has enforced war.

14. YESU TENGENI INE⁴¹

1. (All) *Yesu tengeni ine (2x)*
Jesus take me
Ndirira, Oh! Oh! Yesu tengeni, Yesu tengeni
I cry, Oh! Oh! Jesus take me, Jesus take me
- (All) *Yesu tengeni*
Jesus take me
- (Solo) *Ndirira, Oh! Oh! Yesu tengeni ine*
I cry, Oh! Oh! Jesus take me
- (All) *Padzikoli yakula nkhondo, tikamakhala ngati mabwenzi ife*
On this world, war is so much, when we live like friends
Osadziwa ena ndi nkhondo
Not knowing some are war (enemies)
Kukhala nawo kuona khalidwe lawo, mau awo, ayi ndi nkhondo
Staying with them, looking their way of life, their words, no, it's war
Sali mkudziwa kuti Yehova m'mwamba tsiku lina adzatha zonse (2x)
They do not know that Jehovah in heaven one day will end all this.
2. *Ukani Yehova mtipulumutse*
Wake up Jehovah, you should save us
Achuluka otisawutsa moyo
There are many troubles in our life
Tidziwa tsiku lina, adzamasula msampha oyipa omwe tatcheredwa (2x)
We know one day, He will unbind the evil trap we have been trapped in.

41. The singer in this song is desiring to be taken from this world by Jesus because friends of this world are untrustworthy. They are not real friends. What these friends do; their way of life, their words are all false. Only Jehovah in heaven will end all this. The confidence in the singer's heart is that although God does not intervene now, one day He will unbind the evil trap people have been trapped in. The song is talking about temptations that Satan puts on God's people, but that one day people will be released from all those temptations.

15. **PACHIYAMBI MULUNGU**⁴²

Pachiyambi Mulungu nalenga Adamu pamodzi ndi Hava

In the beginning God created Adam and Eve

Nawayika m'munda, kotero njoka ija inanyenga Adamu m'munda wa Edeni,

And put them in the garden, such that, that serpent cheated Adam in the garden of Eden,

Natchola lamulo

And broke the law.

Chorus

Ndiri pano ochimwa ine ndiri pano Mbuye wanga

I am here, I, a sinner, I am here, my Lord

(Solo) *Adamu ulikuti iwe, Mbuye wanga (2x)*

Adam where are you, My Lord

(All) *Ulemerero watha mdziko lino*

There is no glory in this world?

Ndiri pano ochimwa ine ndiri pano Mbuye wanga

I am here, I, a sinner, I am here, my Lord.

16. **ABALE ANGA MSANDISOWETSE MTENDERE**⁴³

1. *Abale anga msandisowetse mtedere*

My relatives do not trouble me

Padziko lapansi ndalakwanji mukundibvuta nthawi zonse

What wrong have I done in this world, you are troubling me all the time

Munena, "iwe Choka funa kolowera" (2x)

You say, "You, get away, know where you can go."

Chorus

Mwana wamasiye kudandaula

An orphan complaining

Amayi ndiribe, bambo ndiribe

I have no mother, father I do not have

42. This song is talking of the great love of God that searches for the sinner wherever he/she is, and one is required to say, here I am, a sinner, forgive me. Of course, Adam did not repent of his sin as indicated in this song.

43. This is a real experience of an orphan being pushed from the deceased parents' home by the parents' relatives. The orphans are being denied food, shelter, clothing, peace. This is a cry of an orphan. The cry is not to the relatives of the deceased parents but to God who is the only one who can care for him/her in this world. He/she has no mother, he/she has no father and they left him whilst young.

The orphan then warns those who think will stay in this world forever because one day they will die and kingship, honour all those will not go with them to the grave.

Although, there is no mention of God in the song, the orphan is crying to somebody who can hear him/her. Someone who is above this world. This is implied in the statement, "do not be cheated with this kingship". The orphan is talking to him who has power over the grave and this one must be God.

Ndasauka kulira, kulirira amayi anga

I am troubled crying, crying, my mother

Andisiya ndiri wa mngono, mwana wamasiye kudandaula

She has left me, whilst young, an orphan complaining

Amayi ndiribe bambo ndiribe

I have no mother, I have no father.

2. *Tisanyengedwe ndi ufumu, ulemu omwe tiri nawo*

Do not be cheated with kingship, honour that we have

Mdziko lino zonsezi zidzatsala padziko

In this world, all this will remain on this world

Pomwe mudzalowa inu mmanda (2x)

When you will enter in the grave.

17. **LIKUPITA DZIKO LAPANSI**⁴⁴

1. *Likupita dziko lapansi, mabvutoso akuchuluka*

The world is passing away and troubles are multiplying

Kumvera machenjezo a Mulungu zikubvuta (2x)

To follow the warnings of God, is becoming difficult.

Chorus

(All) *Onani, onani, onani, onani*

Look, look, look, look

(Solo) *Ee! Dzikoli labvula*

Ee! This world has troubles

(Tenor) *Onani, onani, onani, onani, dzikoli labvula*

Look, look, look, look, this world has troubles

(Bass) *Onani dzikoli labvuta*

Look the world has troubles

(Solo) *Dziko lapansi yakali – yakali kumachimoko*

The world is bent on sin

Kutembenuka anthu ambiri alephera (2x)

To repent, many people have failed.

44. In this song, the world is being taken to be on a journey to the judgement day. But between “the now” and the “that day” the world (people) must listen to the warnings from God. Unfortunately, the world is bent with sin, Jesus will therefore deny them on the judgement day.

2. *Lachiweruzo Yesu adzaticana*
On the judgement, Jesus will deny us
Inu chokani mwayesa padziko mkwanu (2x)
You, get away, you think this world is yours.

18. AMBUYE YESU AKUBWERA⁴⁵

1. *Ambuye Yesu akubwera kuweruza dziko lino*
The Lord Jesus is coming to judge this world
Kodi udzatani ndi machimo mbale wanga talapa (2x)
What will you do with your sins? My brother, repent.

Chorus

Koma ochimwa onse adzatsala popeza kumwamba kulibe wochimwa
But all sinners will remain because there are no sinners in heaven
Ambuye Yesu anayesa kuwalangiza
The Lord Jesus has tried to advise them
Amamumveka chisoti chaminga (2x)
They crown him with a crown of thorns.

2. *Abusa ndiwo akulalika za uthenga wabwino*
Church ministers are preaching about the good news
Komatu anthu akunyoza nkhutukumve zachuluka (2x)
But people are cursing, those who do not want to listen have multiplied.

19. MAIKO NDI MIPINGO⁴⁶

1. *Maiko ndi mipingo zasandulika nsengwa zonsezeramo uchimo wadziko lapansiri,*
Countries and churches have turned into containers for carrying sins of this world,
Zonsenzi zasuluka Kweza maso kwa Yehova akoleletse Mzimuyo samayangana nkhope (2x)
All this has gone out of fashion, look, lift your eyes to Jehovah to kindle the Spirit who is not biased.

45. This song is showing that the oppression, the troubles people are facing, have forced them to depend on Jesus. The song is also reminding people of the pains Jesus went through, i.e. crown of thorns, to save people from sin. Yet those who do not want to listen to him have multiplied.

46. This song is revealing that there is no place where there is no sin in this world. Whether in countries, in churches, there are sins all over. This song is coming from a background where in one of the radio stations (Radio 2) in Malawi, there is a programme that announces on what has happened that day. From such a programme, many stories mention sins done by church members, a place that was supposed to be an example for the world. The song is then encouraging believers to point their eyes on God so that he can kindle the spirit in these difficult moments. Jesus is crying when he sees this and that reminds him of the pains he went through on the cross to save sinners. The song then encourages everyone to go to God where there is protection.

Chorus

Akulira Yesuyo, zowawa nanzimvera pa mtanda
Jesus is crying, the pains He faced on the cross
Nakhomedwa, kupulumutsa wochimwa
And was nailed, to save sinners.

2. *Mwamera mizu abambo koma muli pa uchimo*
You are immovable father, but you are in sin
Kumbukirani kwanuko kudziko la chirendo
Remember your home, the foreign world
Anzeru, asayasi nawonso akupita, mukhaliranji Mdzikolo lopanda Chitetezo (2x)
The wise, scientist, even they are going, why do you live in a world where there is no protection?

20. MULINAZO⁴⁷

Mulinazo sizikutanthauza ntchito zanu ndizokoma kwa Yehova
What you have does not mean your works are good before Jehovah
Yehova afuna inu mumudziwe, kumwamba achikondi adzakondwera
Jehovah wants you to know Him, in heaven those with love will rejoice
Wolungama m'mwamba adzakondwera (2x)
The just, in heaven, will rejoice
Sintchito zako zamkondweretsa kuti Yehova akudalitse (2x)
It is not your works that has pleased Jehovah that he should bless you
Ena akondwera awadalitsa ah! ah!
Some rejoice because they have been blessed ah! ah!
Taonani ena akulira, aya anzawo
Look, some are mourning, they have lost their loved ones
Wolirawo sanachimwetu kopambana iwo wokondweralawo (2x)
The mourners have not sinned more than those rejoicing
Mwachitazi ndi mdalitso mwaupeza kuti Yesu awonekere kwa inuyo
What you have done is, you have found blessing so that Jesus should be noted of you
Thandizani wolumala mkana a masiye
Help the disabled even the orphans
Kumwamba achikondi adzakondwera (2x)
In heaven, those with love will rejoice.

47. This song is stressing that we are saved by faith and not by works, and that faith should be expressed by love that will be noticed through helping the disabled and the orphans. The outcome is that those who love will rejoice in heaven.

21. **CHALIRODZA MCHIYANI DZIKO**⁴⁸

1. *Chalirodza mchiyani dziko lapansili?*

What has cursed this world?

Nthawi yothayitha likulowerera (2x)

Time is already up, yet it is going astray.

Chorus

Kumachimo komweko ndiko dziko likathere

Right there, where there is sin, is where the world will come to an end

Taonani dziko lino m'bale wanga samalira

Look, this world my brother, look out (beware)

Kumachimo komweko ndiko dziko likathere

Right there, where there are sins, is where the world will come to an end

Taonani dziko lino m'bale wanga samalira

Look, this world brother, look out (beware).

2. *Ndalimbana nako Kulimbana Kokoma*

I have fought the good fight

Dziko likamatha zanga ziri bwino

I will be okay when the world comes to an end.

22. **NTHAWI ZINA**⁴⁹

(Solo) *Nthawi zina*

Some time

(All) *Nthawi zina*

Some time

(Solo) *Ndikamaganiza*

When I consider

(All) *Ndikamaganiza*

When I consider

(Solo) *Zochita Satana*

The deeds of Satan

(All) *Zochita Satana*

The deeds of Satan

48. In this song, the composer is shocked with the world. The way it is continuing to sin, when time is already up, and is warning the world that right there, where they are in sin, the world will come to an end. Lucky are those who will finish as Paul finished in 2 Timothy 4:17; "I have fought the good fight" and because of that he/she will be okay when the world comes to an end. Of course, here there is no mention of God or Jesus.

49. This song is comparing the characters of Satan with those of Jesus and has come to a conclusion that Satan is a liar, he comes during the day and when darkness comes he runs away. "Day" and "darkness" are metaphors for two times. First "day" meaning things are okay then "darkness" when one has been put in problems. It is therefore only Jesus who is the better one to follow.

- (Solo) *Ndiye wachinyengo*
Is a cheater
- (All) *Ndiye wachinyengo*
Is a cheater
- (Solo) *Ndiri moyo*
When I am alive
- (All) *Ndiri moyo*
When I am alive
- (Solo) *Amandiramulira*
He controls me
- (All) *Amandiramulira*
He controls me
- (Solo) *Koma ndikagona*
But when I am asleep
- (All) *Koma ndikagona*
But when I am asleep
- (Solo) *Andithawa zedi*
Sure, he runs away
- (All) *Andithawa zedi*
Sure, he runs away
- (Solo) *Ndazindikira lero*
I have realised today
- (All) *Ndazindikira lero, wabwino ndi Yesu (2x)*
I have realised today, Jesus is the good One!

23. TAONANI MTENDERE⁵⁰

1. *Taonani mtendere, dziko liri kunena*
Look at peace the world is talking about
Ena akukondwera pomwe ena akulira
Some are glad while others are mourning
Ndi ufulu wanji womakomoka ndi mantha?
What type of peace where you become unconscious because of fear?
Ena akuseka pomwe ena akulira (2x)
Some are laughing while others are mourning.

50. This is a warning song that people are in the last days. The world is talking about peace but there is no real peace because when some people are at peace, others are not. The alternative world provides universal peace not only for Jewish people, and by not accepting Jesus, one is battling against him. This world is bad, be wise by knowing your Jesus whilst you are alive. The song is showing that knowing Jesus is wisdom an understanding from Proverbs 9:10. The singer is able to see fire in Gehenna prepared for those who do not accept Jesus. What is important is to come to Jesus who is the judge.

Chorus

(Alto) *Ano ndi masiku wotsirizawo, wotsirizawo, wotsirizawo,*
These are the last days, last days, last days,

Wotsirizawo, wotsirizawo, oh!, Ano ndimasiku.

Last days, last days, oh! These are the days

(All) *Wotsirizawo (3x)*

Last days

(Sop) *Ano ndimasiku wotsirizawo*

These are the last days

Anthu ali pa nkhondo Kulimbana ndi Yesu

People are at war battling with Jesus

Za awo, za awo, wotsiriza

Of those, of those, last days

2. *Dziko lino laipa mbale wanga*

This world is bad, my brother

Chenjera dziwa yesu wako pomwe ukali ndi moyo

Be wise, know your Jesus while you are alive

Moto ndauona Kusonyeza Gehenna

I have seen the fire, showing Gehenna

Yesu akadza adzatiweruza bwanji?

When Jesus comes, how will he judge us?

24. MASIKU ADZANA⁵¹

Masiku adzana kunalibe infa yatsiku ndi tsiku monga lero

In the days past, there were no daily funerals like today

Wonani lero anthu alikufa, nzeru zatha chilengedwe cha dziko (2x)

Look today people are dying, no wisdom can stop it amongst the creatures of the world.

Chorus

Mtundu wanga watha, watha

My race is finished, finished

Mtundu wanga watha, watha, wathaa

My race is finished, finished, finished

(Sop. & Alto) *Zoona mtundu wanga wathaa*

Truly, my race is finished

51. The high rate of deaths these days can never make one creature say I am wise to stop this and as a result, the whole race has finished. Blessed is he/she who knows Jesus whilst on this earth because it is only Him who gives hope in such difficult times.

Dziko lapansi zinthu zasautsa (2x)

The world, things have become difficult

Zothetsa nzeru ziripo zambiri

Things which are puzzling, are many

Wamwayi wodziwa Yesu akadali moyo

Blessed is he who knows Jesus, whilst living

Wonani lero anthu alikutha, nzeru zatha chilengedwe chadziko (2x)

Look today people are dying, no wisdom can stop it amongst the creatures of the world.

25. DEMETRIO⁵²

Demetrio wosula Siliva wakonda timilungu

Demetrius, a silversmith, has loved small gods

Anachita phokoso, ananyoza ntchito ya Yehovayo

Made a noise, spoke ill of God's work

Pomwe Paulo analalika za Yesu mfumu (2x)

When Paul preached about Jesus the King.

Chorus

(Alto) *Tikukhala dziko lobvuta*

We are living in a difficult world

(All) *Dziko lobvuta (2x)*

Difficult world

(Sop) *Tikukhala dziko lobvuta (3x)*

We are living in a difficult world

Ngati sufuna kulapa dziwa kuti dziko lapansi ndilo dziko lamasautso

If you do not want to repent, know that this world is the world of troubles

(Tenor) *Tikukhala m'dziko lobvuta*

We are living in a difficult world

(All) *Dziko lobvuta, opembedza kwa milungu yosadziwika uko ku Athene analipo ndithu*

Difficult world, those praying to other gods there in Athens were sure, present

Paulo anali mkuchenjeza, wolalika akunena

Paul was warning, those preaching are saying

Tiyeni tirape (2x).

“Let us repent”.

52. This is a story from Acts where Demetrius, a silversmith, had loved small gods instead of God. People are always between following Jesus or following the other gods (idols). What is needed is to repent from such idols.

26. **KUNO KUDZIKO TIDZACHOKA ULENDU**⁵³

1. *Kuno kudziko tidzachoka ulendo wakwathu uko kumwamba*
From this world we will depart, going on a journey to our heavenly home
Wofuna kudzakondwelera ndi ulendowu alape mtima
The one who wants to enjoy the journey, should repent in his heart.

Chorus

- (Sop.) *Padziko pano mpaweni, padziko pano mpaweni,*
This world is for others, this world is for others,
Padziko pano mpaweni, mpaweni, mpaweni (2x)
This world is for others, is for others, for others,
- (All) *Padziko pano mpaweni, padziko pano mpaweni, mpaweni, mpaweni*
This world is for others, this world is for others, for others, for others
- (Sop.) *Paweni, paweni, paweni, paweni, paweni*
For others, for others, for others, for others, for others
Padziko pano mabvuto Satana waliwononga
On this world, troubles, Satan has destroyed
Nanga ndichite bwanji ndi zowawazi (2x)
And what should I do with these sufferings?
Anthu ena sadziwa dziko lino tidzachoka,
Some people do not know that we will leave this world,
Ulendo wakwathu uko Kumwamba
Journey to our home there in heaven
Anthu ena Sadziwa tsiku lina tidzachoka ulendo wakwathu
Some people do not know that one day we will leave, going to our home
Kuno Mkwaweni (2x)
Here, is for others
Paweni, paweni, paweni!!!
For others, for others, for others
Padziko pano mpaweni (3x)
This world is for others
Mpaweni, mpaweni
For others, for others.

53. The singers in this song feel they have a home other than this world. Their home is heaven and the one who wants to enjoy the journey should repent of his sins. This is implying that those who are going to heaven are travelling together with those who are not. But a time is coming when there will be separation of the two groups. On this world, Satan has destroyed with sufferings and troubles, implying that those people who are oppressing others in this world, are blind of the danger that is to come. The singer ends with a quotation from Ecclesiastes 1:2 not to be cheated with things of this world which are vanity of vanities. Such things have no profit or gain. But Jesus is the true peace of the world. Then the singer invites people to repentance.

2. *Tisanyengedwe ndi zadziko ndi zachabe chabe*
Do not be cheated by things of this world they are all vanity
Ziribe phindu, koma kwa Yesu mtendere ulipo
They have no gain, but with Jesus, there is peace
Mkofunika tirape mtima (2x)
It is important, we should repent our hearts.

27. **CHIDWI CHIKACHOKA**⁵⁴

1. *Chidwi chikachoka chikondi chimazirara*
When there is no enthusiasm, love cools down
Taonani Satana dziko walisakaza (2x)
Look, Satan has destroyed the world

Kuonongetsa zopezapeza, nkondo zikamachitika

- Destroying what had already been acquired, when there is war**
Katundu amaonongeka, miyoyo imasakazika
Properties are destroyed, lives are destroyed
Taonani ena adana ndi Chilungamo, ena adana ndi chilungamo
Look, some oppose righteousness, some oppose righteousness.

Chorus

- (Alto) *Adana*
They are against
- (All) *Ndi chilungamo eeh! Ndi chilungamo*
Righteousness eeh! Righteousness.
- (Alto) *Adana*
They are against
- (All) *Ndichilungama (2x)*
Righteousness
- (Sop) *Zidzachitika masiku womaliza, anthu padziko adana ndi chilungamo.*
It will happen in the last days, people on earth will oppose righteousness.
- (Sop) *Kuwadzudzula, muchitazi ndi tchimo mutembenuke, ayamba nawe nkondo (2x)*
Repudiating them, what you are doing is sin, you should repent, they start war with you
- (Alto) *Adana*
They are against
- (All) *Ndi chilungamo oh! Ndi chilungamo*
Righteousness oh! Righteousness

54. This is a cry that Satan has destroyed this world. Properties which were earned have been destroyed by war and when people oppose righteousness. This is what was prophesied long ago that would happen in the last days. They are against righteousness. Righteousness here is the title for Jesus.

(Alto) *Adana*

They are against

(All) *Ndi chilungamo*

Righteousness

(Alto) *Adana*

They are against

(All) *Ndi chilungamo*

Righteousness.

2. *Kaya mulalikire wochimwa atembenuke*

Whether you preach that sinners repent

Ena amakhumudwa, chidwi chikachoka (2x)

Some are disappointed, if they have no enthusiasm

Kuonongetsa zopezapeza, nkondo zikamachitika katunda amaonongeka

Destroying what had already been acquired, when there is war, properties are destroyed

Miyoyo imasakazika, taonani ena adana ndi chilungamo (2x)

Lives are destroyed, look, some oppose righteousness.

28. **KULI KANTHU CHAKA CHINO**⁵⁵

Kuli kanthu chaka chino kuli kanthu

There is something going on, this year, there is something going on

Ali ndi mwana agwiritse poti dziko lauluma (2x)

Whoever has a child must hold firm, since the world has become angry

(Alto) *Oh! oh! oh! (2x)*

Oh! oh! oh!

Katuleni nkhawa zanu zonse kwa Yesu mamuna wa mtanda (4x)

Bring all your anxiety to Jesus, the man of the cross.

55. The singer upon seeing the extent to which sin has gone, sees the end of the world so eminent. But there is still room to bring our anxiety to Jesus who suffered on the cross for higher sins.

29. **UMASIYE UMAZUZA**⁵⁶

Umasiye umazuza pomwe mwana alibe mayi kapena alibe bambo

Being an orphan pains, when a child has no mother or father

Amasowa chimwemwe pomwe ena akukondwera, nthawi zonse pachimwemwe

He lacks joy, while others are happy, all the time in happiness

Amawona potamire, Mbuye wawo alipo

They find someone to trust, their Lord is present.

Chorus

Mukupita kuti mayi wanga, nanunso bambo wanga

Where are you going my mother, even you my father?

(Alto) *Ndatsala*

I am left

(All) *Wamasiye ine (2x)*

An orphan, I

(Sop) *Ndiribe mayi, abambo, wamasiye ine*

I have no mother, father, an orphan, I

Mundisunge mwana wanu wamasiye ine (2x)

Keep me, your child, an orphan, I.

30. **YESU WAPAMBANA**⁵⁷

1. *Yesu wapambana wayiposa infa*

Jesus was triumphant, has conquered death

Anatitu ndatha, ndagonjetsa infa (2x)

He said, I have finished, I have conquered death.

Chorus

Zowonadi wamoyo Yesu

It is true, Jesus is alive

Anatitu ndatha, ndagonjetsa infa

He said, I have finished, I have conquered death.

56. This song is saying that being an orphan is painful. When you do not have a mother or a father, it pains. An orphan lacks joy while others are happy all the time, because their lord is present. The word "lord" here is standing for parents not for God or Jesus.

The child is singing this song whilst the body of his/her parent is being carried to the grave. It is a cry of a child who is now left alone, the whole future is darkened. He/she thinks of the many sufferings orphans have passed in his own sight, and now he is one of them.

In a context where death rate is increasing everyday, the last phrase "keep me, your child" is sung when coming back from the grave after the burial. The "keep me, your child" may have a two fold meaning: first, crying to the parents' relatives to keep him/her, or crying to God who never leaves His people along.

57. This is a resurrection song of Jesus after overcoming death in the grave. That even though Jesus' death was due to the hard-heartedness of the people that killed Him, He had still conquered death. This is an assurance of all those who trust in him that they will also be raised from the dead.

2. *Kuyipa kwa anthu kunaphatu Yesu*
The evilness of people killed Jesus
Yesu anaitu ndatha, ndagonjetsa infa (2x)
Jesus said, I have finished, I have conquered death.

31. **DZIKO LAWENI**⁵⁸
Dziko laweni lomwe tikhala
The world we live in belongs to others
Ndamva kuyitana mwana wanga
I have heard a call my son

(Alto & Sop.) *Ine wosokera, wosokera kutali, ndamva kuyitana*
I am lost. Completely lost. I have heard a call
Ine wosokera, wosokera kotaliko
I am lost. Completely lost
Ndamva kuyitana mwana wanga (2x)
I have heard a call my son.

32. **ZIRI KWA INU KUDZIWA**⁵⁹
1. *Ziri kwa inu Kudziwa za ulemmerero wa Atate*
It is up to you to know about the glory of the Father
Ambuye kodi nthawi yino mubwezera ufumu wa Israel (2x)
Lord, is this the time you will restore the Kingdom of Israel?

Chorus

(Solo) *Alleluah*

Alleluah

(All) *Mudzalandira Mzimu Woyera ndipo mudzakhala mboni zanga*

You will receive the Holy Spirit and you will become my witness

Kumalekezera a dziko (2x)

To the end of the world.

58. The song is saying that people live in a foreign world but there is another world that is theirs from where the singer heard God's call. The person here was in sin but now has heard the call from God; "my child come". The person now comments, "although I was completely lost, God is calling me". This is the great love of God.

59. This is a song from the discussion between Jesus and His disciples where the disciples wanted to know if that was the time to restore the Kingdom of Israel. Jesus tells them that they will receive the Holy Spirit and become His witness to the end of the world. Jesus was not a King of this world but a King of their hearts where the Holy Spirit dwells.

2. *Kodi mbale wanga lero ulapa zoyipa zako zonse?*
My brother, will you today repent all your sins?
Ambuye atabwera lero, udzapita nawo kumwamba? (2x)
If the Lord comes today, will you go with them to heaven?

33. TIRI KUTHOKOZA YESU⁶⁰

1. *Tiri kuthokoza Yesu mpulumutsi wathu*
We are thanking Jesus our Saviour
Ndiye njira ndi choonadi cha moyo wangawu (2x)
He is the way, the truth of my life.

Chorus

Yesu wanga, mwana wa Mulungu
My Jesus, the Son of God
Nafera iwe ndi ine kuti tikapulume ife
He died for you and me so that we should be saved
Ku mlandu wa infa (2x)
From the power of death.

2. *Yesu anazunzika pamtanda pajapo*
Jesus was troubled on that cross
Kufera iwe ndi ine kuti tikapulume (2x)
To die for you and me so that we should be saved.

34. PANJIRA YA KUMANDA⁶¹

1. *Panjira ya ku manda ine ndidzayenda ndekha ine*
On the way to the grave, I will go alone
Nyali yanga itazima, ulendo Kumanda
After my lamp is extinguished, my journey to the grave.

60. This song is from John 14:6. The singers are thanking Jesus, their Saviour, because He is the way, the truth of their lives. He/she is my Jesus, the Son of God. See the saying "my Jesus", such an intimate relationship with Jesus. "The Son of God" – because of that intimate relationship, they too become children of God, as their Jesus is the Son of God.

This Jesus died for all people to be saved from the power of death. He was troubled on the cross to die for people's sins to be saved.

61. The composer here uses a metaphor of lamp for life – he will be alone on his way to the grave, when his lamp will be extinguished. Meaning, he/she will go whilst being carried by people, but dead to the grave. The singer, knowing that God is holy, asks the Father to forgive him/her and let his name be written in the Book of Life.

Chorus

Ndidzayenda ndiri gone ine pa mapewa a anthuwo

I will go whilst lying on the shoulders of the people

Nyali yanga itazima, ulendo wa kumanda (2x)

After my lamp is extinguished, my journey to the graveyard.

2. *Atate ndinachimwa ine Khululukireni ine*

Father, I sinned, forgive me

Lembani dzina langa mu buku la moyo, mu buku la moyo

Write my name in the book of life, in the book of life.

35. MUNDIBISE MBUYE WANGA⁶²

1. *Mundibise mbuye wanga malo oyerawo*

Hide me, my Lord, in holy places

Ndiwone kuwala kwanu, ine ndiwone nkhope yanu (2x)

I should see your light, I should see your face,

Chorus

(Solo) *Ta-a-a*

Ta-a-a

(All) *Ngakhale namondwe awomba nyanja yoyendamo*

Although storms blow, the lake I will travel on,

Ndiwone kuwala kwanu, ndiwone nkhope yanu (2x)

I should see your light, I should see your face

2. *Tate, tate wanga, mpulumutsi mundibise*

Father, my Father, Saviour, hide me

Yesu, Yesu, Mbuyanga, ndiwone nkhope yanu

Jesus, Jesus, My Lord, I should see your face.

36. YE-YE-YE-SUYO KAMBA NAYE⁶³

1. (Alto) *Ye-ye-ye-suyo Kamba naye*

Je-Je-Je-sus, speak with Him

62. This song is taken from Revelation 22:4 where his servant shall worship Him and they shall see His face. The singer is seeing that there is evil in this world and he/she wants to hide in God. Even when there are storms, he/she will travel on. He/she should see His light, I should see His light. This implies the final day when Jesus will welcome those who had faith in Him. Those people will have to see His face – will be with Him.

63. This is a song encouraging people to live with Jesus in this world, to speak with Him, chat with Him. It is a life of being with Jesus all the time. This is the life that is encouraged here.

(All) *Ye-ye-ye-suyo Kamba naye*
Je-Je-Je-sus, speak with Him

(Sop) *lye*
He

(All) *-Suyo kamba naye*
Je-sus speak with him

2. (Alto) *Ye-ye-ye-suyo cheza naye*
Je-Je-Je-sus, chat with Him

(All) *Ye-ye-ye-suyo cheza naye*
Je-Je-Je-sus, chat with Him

(Sop) *lye*
He

(All) *-Suyo cheza naye*
Je-sus chat with him.

37. TATE NDINE MWANA WANU⁶⁴

1. *Tate ndine mwana wanu m'kana ndine wochimwa*
Father I am your child, although I am a sinner
Ndingolirira kwa inu mundikhulukire ine (2x)
I just cry to you, you should forgive me.

Chorus

Machimo anga mngambiri, mngosawerengeka
My sins are many, uncountable
Mundikhulukire ine (2x)
You should forgive me.

2. *Ndinachimwa poganiza ndipolankhulanso*
I sinned in thoughts and in speech
Ntchito zanga ndachimwazo mundikhulukire'ne (2x)
Even in my deeds, I have sinned, you should forgive me.

64. This is a song from official hymn book, but the original tune has been reconfigured by blending with a traditional malawian melody. It is a repentance song, requesting the Father to forgive him/her, because he/she sins in thoughts, in deeds and in speech.

38. **AYITANA ANTHU ONSE**⁶⁵

1. *Ayitana anthu onse, ku mtanda wake, Mbuye*
He is calling all people to his cross, Lord
Komwe kuli madalitso, moyo, chipulumutso
Where there are blessings, life, salvation.

Chorus

Bwera msangawe ayitanawe
Come quickly he calls you
Bweratu ku mtandawo udzapeza chitetezo mwa Yesu Kristu Mbuye
Come to the cross to find protection in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. *Pamtandapo anafera, kuyitana anthu onse*
On the cross he died, calling all people
Olandira moyo mwa lye adzapulumutsidwa
Those who receive life in him will be saved.

39. **MASIKU ANGA PADZIKO**⁶⁶

1. *Masiku anga padziko angotsala pang'ono*
My days on this earth are remaining few
Zedi Ndikhumbira mudzi uwo, mudzi wokongola zedi
Truly, I desire that village, the village so beautiful.

Chorus

Mbuye bwerani msangatu, onani dziko landida
Lord come soon, look the world has hated me
Bwerani msangatu mudzandivuwule m'nyanjayo yodzadza ndi ululutu –
Come soon you should lift me out of the sea full of pain –
Machimo a m'dzikoli, tabwerani mudzandiranditse
Sins of this world, come and rescue me.

65. In this song, the Lord is calling people to His cross where there are blessings, life and salvation, and everyone is being urged to come quickly to the cross where there is protection in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus here is presented as the giver of life, implying that he is the Creator (cf John 1:3).

66. This song is taken from Revelation 21:2 – “a new city”. The singer recontextualizes the word “city” into a village to suit his context where there is no city but a village, and sees that his days are numbered on earth and desires that village, the village so beautiful. He wishes Jesus to come quickly because this world is hating Him. He is seeing a preferred world in this village. It's understood when one looks at the context from where these songs are sung; contexts of hunger, disease, HIV & AIDS, poverty, enmity, envy, jealousy, unemployment, corruption, disease. The singer wants Jesus to come quickly because he is tired with these problems. Jesus should come quickly before he is swallowed by this world.

2. *Ambuye wanga mundimvere chisoni ine*
My Lord, have pity on me
Ndatopa zedi idzanitu msanga Mbuye
I am so tired, come soon, Lord
Lisanandimeze dziko
Before I am swallowed by the world.

40. YESU MUNDISUNGETU⁶⁷

1. *Yesu mundisungetu m'fupi ndi mtanda wanu*
Jesus keep me near your cross
Ndipezepo kasupe wonditsuka mtima
I should find the fountain that cleanses my heart.

Chorus

Mtandawo, mtandawo, nditamande mtanda
The cross, the cross, let me honour the cross
Mpaka moyo wangawu udzapume m'mwamba
Until my life will rest in heaven.

2. *Pa mtandapo ndiona mwana wa Mulungu*
On the cross, I see the Son of God
Ndithandize Mbuye wanga Kuyendabe nanu
Help me my Lord to continue walking with you.

41. YEHOVA NDI MBUSA WANGA⁶⁸

1. *Yehova ndi mbusa wangadi, ndiribe kusowa ine*
Jehovah is really my shepherd, I do not want
Andigonetsa bwinoli mu msipu okoma
He makes me lie down in green pastures.

67. The singer is seeing power in the cross of Jesus because of his blood that was shed as a fountain that cleanses his/her heart. He/she says he/she should honour the cross until he/she rests in heaven. He/she imagines how it was when Jesus, the son of God, was crucified, and he/she asks him as his Lord, to help continue walking with him.

68. This song is taken from Psalm 23 and the singer sees that it is God who cares, who provides, who leads in paths of righteousness. In him, there is such a self giving love, goodness and mercy shall follow him/her and rejoice for dwelling in the house of God forever. Although he/she is in this world of evil, God will still be with him.

Chorus

Anditsogolera njira zakulungamazo

He leads me in paths of righteousness

Chifukwa changa ayi koma cha m'dzina lakelo

Not because of my own accord, but for his name's sake.

2. *Zokoma ndi zakuyanja zidzanditsatako*

Goodness and mercy shall follow me

Ndikhala mnyumba ya Mlungu ku nthawi zonsezo

I dwell in the house of God for ever.

42. TAMVA MAU AKE⁶⁹

1. *Tamva mau ake kuyitanane, dziko lamabvuto lindizunzane*

We have heard his voice calling me, the world of problems, is troubling me

Tsono ndabwererane, osalungamane, Mbuye ndifuna kukakhala mu Ufumu Kumwamba

So I now return, unrighteous I am, Lord I want to live in the Kingdom of heaven.

Chorus

Mbuye wanga ndidalira inu

My Lord I depend on you.

2. *Tsiku lomaliza moyo wa padziko*

On the last day, the life of the world

Dzuwa lidzazima, mwenzi udzafa, mitambo idzapeteka,

The sun will not shine, the moon not seen, clouds will be moved

Nthawi idzathanso

There will be no more time

Ndichiritseni, nditonthozeni, ndimasuleni, ndichire

Heal me, comfort me, free me, I should be healed.

69. The song tells of wishing to stay with the Lord in heaven, and to achieve that he/she repents of his/her sins to live with the Lord in heaven and then confirms of his/her dependence in the Lord. He sees the judgement day when the sun shall not shine, the moon will not be seen, clouds will be removed. There will be no time. Here, "the healing", "comforting" in the song does not mean from physical illness, but he will have been relieved of the pains of this world into the Kingdom of glory in heaven where the sun will not shine, the moon will not be seen and there will be no clouds. This is a picture of Revelations 22:5 that in that city there shall be no need for lamp or sun for the Lord God will be their light and they shall reign forever and ever. Such a picture is in denial of this evil world, where there is no peace nor love.

43. NDIKWEZA MASO ANGA⁷⁰

1. *Ndikweza maso anga kwathu, ndi ku mapiri*
I lift my eyes home, to the hills
Thandizo langalotu lidzera kwa Yehova
My help comes from Jehovah.

Chorus

Wakulenga za m'mwamba ndi zapansipa
Who made things in heaven and on earth
Phanzi langa literereke amene asunga, sadzaodzera
Even when my foot be moved, the one who keeps, will not slumber.

2. *Yehova ndiye mthuzi wanga*
Jehovah is my shade
Wakudzanja langa lamanja, dzuwa Siridzaomba usana
Of my right hand the sun shall not smite you by day.

44. ONA MWANA WA NKHOSAYO⁷¹

1. *Ona mwana wankhosayo watisezera zoipa*
Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins
Lapa m'balewe machimo, Yesu anatiferafe
Repent your sins my brother, Jesus died for us.

Chorus

Analira pa mtandapo Mlungu wanga, Mlungu wanga
He cried on the cross, My God, My God
Mwandisiiranjini ine, Kwatha! Yesu anatero
Why have you forsaken me, it is finished! Jesus said so.

2. *Yesu Khristu pa mtandapo anayang'ana maliya*
Jesus Christ on the cross looked at Mary
Mudziririre kwa otsala popeza ine Kwanga Kwatha
You should weep for those remaining because my side has ended.

70. This song is taken from Psalm 121, although with some adjustments here and there. His/her help comes from God the Creator. Even when tempted, He will not slumber, He is his/her shade. This is similar to the Chewa beliefs that God is Chiuta (the one who give shade).

71. This is hymn 324 in the official hymn book. It talks about the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, which is coming from John 1:29. The singer is encouraging people to repent and be washed by Jesus' blood because he died for them.

45. ALLELUAH IMBIRANI YESU⁷²

1. *Alleluah imbirani Yesu, mfumu yathuyi*
Alleluah sing for Jesus our King
lye ali wachifundo, tiyamike tonsefe
He is of mercy, we should all give praise.

Chorus

Wauka m'manda muja infayo yagonja
He is risen from the grave, death has been conquered
Wagonjetsa infa Yesu
Jesus has conquered death.

2. *Yesu ndinu mpulumutsi mwagonjetsa infayo*
Jesus, you are the Saviour, you have conquered death
Pa mtandapo munafera kuombola dzikoli
On the cross you died to save the world.

46. TAMANI MPHAMVU YA YESU⁷³

1. *Tamani mphamvu ya Yesu, angelo agwade*
Let us trust the power of Jesus, let angels bow
Tulutsanitu ko-o-lona
Bring out the crown.

Chorus

Mumveke, mumveke, mumveke, mumveke Mbuyeyo
Crown him, crown him, crown him, crown the Lord.

2. *Inu osankhidwa a-ake owomboledwanu*
You, his chosen ones, the saved
Tamani mpulumutsiyo
Trust the Saviour.
3. *Anthu onse ndi mitundu padziko linotu alemekeze Mfumuyo*
All people and nations of this world should praise this King.

72. This song is giving praise to God and to sing for Jesus, their King, because he is of mercy and has conquered death. He is the Saviour who died on the cross to save this world.

73. This is hymn number 164 in the official hymnbook. It is inviting people to trust in the power of Jesus because he is above angels and therefore, these angels must bow before Him. This is a song of victory after being raised from the dead, and it will also be at the judgement day when those saved will receive the crown. So people are invited to trust the Saviour.

47. MESSIAH⁷⁴

Messiah, Messiah, Messiah, Messiah ndimuomboli wadziko lonseli

Messiah, Messiah, Messiah, Messiah is the redeemer of the whole world

Osana kwa Yesu, Mfumuyo yathu

Hosanna to Jesus our King.

Chorus

Mpulumutsi wadzikoli watifera pamtandapo Allelluah

The Saviour of this world has died for us on the cross, Allelluah

Muli moyo lero lino, dziko lonse ndikumwamba

Today, there is life in all the world and heaven

Kondwerani, Satanayo alibenso mphamvu

Rejoice, Satan has no more powers

Iero mphamvu zonse zapatsidwa kwa lye Messiah

Today all powers have been given to Him, Messiah

Osana m'mwamba, osana Messiah (just repeating these words)

Hosanna in heaven, Hosanna Messiah

48. NJIRA YATSOPANO YA CHOONADI⁷⁵

1. *Njira yatsopano ya choonadi yopita ku mwambako*

The new way of truth going to heaven

Ndikuyenda, ndikulankhula ndi Mbuye

Is walking, I talk with the Lord

Poomba namondwe mpulumutsi wandigwira dzanja langa

When storm blows, the Saviour is holding me by my hand

Ndikuyenda, ndikulankhula ndi Yesu

Whilst walking, I talk with Jesus

(Solo) *Nd . . .*

And . . .

(All) *Ndiyenda (2x), ndikulankhulana naye, pa ulendowo*

I walk and speak with him, on the journey

74. Here the Messiah is the redeemer of the whole world. He is Messiah, Saviour because he died for them on the cross. So they must sing Allelluah. Today there is life on earth and in heaven because of His death. Let them celebrate, Satan has no more powers, today all powers have been given to Jesus.

The meaning of this song is both spiritual as well as political. When an oppressive King or ruler is dead or removed from the chair, Jesus takes the authority and becomes the people's redeemer. It is spiritual, when Jesus comes, he will redeem His people.

75. This is an encouraging song that Christian living should always be a walk with the Lord who shows the new way of truth, on the way to heaven. Such people can never be shaken even when storms (troubles) blow (come) because the Saviour is holding them their hands.

(Bass) *Pa . . .*

(All) *Paulendowo wonkha kokongolako pobzolera ukachita bwinowe*
On the journey going to the beautiful places, provided that you do well
Ndiyenda, ndiyenda ndi kulankhula ndi Yesu
I walk, walk and talk with Jesus.

2. *Alleluah yamikani Mbuye mfumu ya mafumu onse*
Alleluah thank the Lord, King of all kings
Ndikuyenda ndikulankhula ndi Mbuye
I walk and speak with the Lord
Poomba namondwe mpulumutsi wandigwira dzanja langa
When storm blows the Saviour is holding my hand
Ndikuyenda ndikulankhula ndi Yesu
I walk and speak with Jesus.

49. TINGANAME KUTI SITIMVA⁷⁶

1. *Tinganame kuti sitimva wachikondi Mulungu*
Can we say we do not hear that God loves
Anatipatsa, anatilenga tonse angwiro
He gave, he created all perfect
Ukwati timachita wodzipatsa
Marriage we apprehend for ourselves.

Chorus

Atate ndagonja, atate ndagonja, Atate ndagonja, Atate ndagonja
Father I surrender, Father I surrender, Father I surrender, Father I surrender.

2. *Kodi ufuna kukhala wolungama, ugwade kwa Mulungu ndikugonja,*
Do you want to be righteous? Bow to God and surrender,
Ukadzagonja mwachikhulupiro
When you shall surrender in faith
Ambuye adzachotsa zochimwa zako
The Lord will remove your sins
Atate ndagonja (4x)
Father I surrender

76. This song shows how unthankful people are to God. He has given them Jesus and created a perfect world, yet they don't obey His word. They marry anyhow without the blessings from God, but God is still loving; if one surrenders in faith, he/she will be accepted.

(Solo) *Zowawazi zanditopetsa (2x)*
These sufferings have made me tired

(All) *Atate ndagonja, Atate ndagonja (2x)*
Father I surrender, Father I surrender
Ambuye mundigwire, ndipeze mpumulo
Lord hold me, I should find rest
Atate ndagonja, Atate ndagonja
Father I surrender, Father I surrender

50. INU MUYESENI YESU⁷⁷

Inu muyeseni Yesu, mau anu ozama kuti ine mkauzire abale anga
You, taste Jesus, your deep words, so that I can tell my brethren
Anga, kuti ndekha ndalephera zaufumu wa kumwamba,
That on my own I have failed the Kingdom of heaven
Kuti ine mkauzire abale anga
That I can tell by brethren
Adzamva liti anthu awa, ufumu wakumbamba wayandikira (8x)
When will these people listen? The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.

51. AGALATIA WOPUSA INU⁷⁸

(Solo) *Agalatia wopusa inu, anakulodzani ndani*
Oh! Foolish Galatians, who bewitched you?
Inu amene tiri ndi inu anakulangizani ndani
You who were with us, who instructed you?

(Solo) *Pamaso . . .*
In the presence . . .

(All) *Pamaso pa inu wopachikidwanu, ichi chokha ndifuna kuphunzira kwa inu*
In the presence of You who were crucified, this alone, I want to learn from you

(Solo) *Mwayamba ndi zabwino, Kutsiriza ndi zathupi? (2x)*
Having begun with good, ending with the flesh?

(All) *Mwayamba mzabwino, Kutsiriza ndi zathupi?*
Having begun with good, ending with the flesh?
Ichi chokha Yehova chinamuyipira
This alone God was unhappy with.

77. This is a missional song needing help to tell his relatives to feel the goodness of Jesus. The work of the Lord is a joint venture for the gospel to be spread. There is the idea of interdependence in the work of the Lord.

78. This song is taken from Galatians 3:1-5. It is a warning not to relax with Christian life. There is need to finish the journey by always depending on God till they reach heaven. Failure to do that will result into being in the flesh, yet started with good things.

52. **AMBUYE NDIRITENGENI**⁷⁹

Ambuye nditengeni ndikufuna ndikalowe kumwambako

Lord take me, I want to enter heaven

Zadziko lino nadzisiya ine ndikufuna ndikalowe kumwambako

Of this world, I have left, I want to enter heaven

Kutamba kuja ndasiya, ndikufuna ndikalowe kumwambako

I have left witchcraft, I want to enter heaven

Uhule uja ndasiya, ine ndikufuna ndikalowe kumwambako

Prostitution I have left, I want to enter heaven

Ndikalowe kumwambako (3x), ine ndikufuna ndikalowe kumwambako

I want to enter heaven, I want to enter heaven.

Chorus

Ndayenda-yenda ine padziko lapansi

I have gone to and fro on this earth

Koma mtendere sindinaupeze, Ndazungulira ine padziko lapansi

But I have not found peace, I have gone round on this world

Koma mtendere sindinaupeze

But I have not found peace

Mu njira ya Satana mulibe mtendere, koma mtendere uli mwa Yesuyo

In the path (ways) of Satan, there is no peace, but peace is in Jesus.

53. **DZIKO LINO LAIPA**⁸⁰

1. (Sop.) *Dziko lino laipa (2x)*

This world is evil

(All) *Matenda, kuphana mtundu ndi mtundu (2x)*

Sickness, killing nation by nation.

Chorus

Ndirandireni Mbuye wanga ndikhale wanu wanu (2x)

Receive me my Lord, I should be your own.

2. (Sop) *Mwina lero mkukhala . . .*

Maybe today maybe . . .

(All) *Mwina lero mkukhala lomaliza simudzamvanso mau ake (2x)*

Maybe today is your last day, you will no more hear His word.

79. This song presents a life of wishing to enter heaven and since the world is still full of sins, he does not want to be in it. An element of ascetism is noted in this song wishing to be in a world where there is no sin nor evil.

80. An aspiration of a better world other than the existing one of sickness, killing, nation fighting against another nation. This song is encouraging people to be ready for the coming of the Lord.

54. MTIMA WANU USABVUTIKE⁸¹

1. *Mtima wanu usabvutike ndi zobvuta za m'dziko (2x)*
Your heart should not be troubled with the evils of the world
Mukhulupirire Mulungu, mukhulupirire inenso (2x)
Believe in God, believe in me also.

Chorus

(Sop.) *Yesu*

Jesus

(All) *Yesu anati ine ndine njira ndi choonadi ndi khomo*

Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the door

Palibe angadze kwa atate osadzera kwa ine

There is nobody who can come to the Father without passing through me.

2. *Ndipita kukakukonzerani inu malo kwa Atate*

I go to prepare for you a place with the Father

Ndipo ndidzakutengani kwa ine ndekha

And I will take you to myself.

55. PALI ANTHU ENA⁸²

1. *Pali anthu ena amakonda azawo, iwowo akawona kuti ali ndi chuma*
There are some people who love their friends, when they see that they have wealth
Ndaonera Yobu anali ndi chuma, yobu amkamukonda osauka onse
I have seen in Job, who had wealth, Job was loved by all the poor.

Chorus

(Sop.) *Khalani Chete, ndirekeni*

Be quiet, leave me

Oh! Oh! Ndati ndinene, chondifikira chindifikiree!

Oh! Oh! I want to speak, let come on me what may!

Ndilumirenji mnofu wanga pa mano panga

How will I take my flesh in my teeth?

81. This song is taken from John 14:1 and is encouraging people not to be troubled with the evils of the world because there is a place in heaven prepared for all who have faith in Jesus.

82. This is the Job story. It is a song that is teaching people to love, not because of what those people have, but because it is a requirement to love one another. Also there is need to persevere to circumstances not to the extent of killing oneself, because of troubles or problems. Rather depend on God always trusting in Him.

2. *Pali anthu ena akapeza mabvuto iwowo amanena kuti,*
There are some people when in difficulties, they say that,
Ndikumwa Temik
I will take (drink) Temik
Ndawonera Yobu anapeza mabvuto, Yobu anangotsamira kwa Mulungu Yekha
I have seen in Job, he experienced difficulties, Job just depended on God alone.

56. ANYAMATA NDI ASUNGWANA⁸³

1. *Anyamata ndi asungwana kudziwa mudziwa*
Boys and girls you know very well
Kuti uyu ndi poison – poison samalawa (2x)
That this is poison – you do not taste poison.

Chorus

- (Sop.) **Samalawa, samalawa, samalawa inu (2x)**

You do not taste, you do not taste, you do not taste

- (All) *Poison samalawa (2x)*

Poison cannot be tasted

- (Sop.) *ii! ii! Poison samalawa inu (2x)*

ii! ii! Poison cannot be tasted, my friend

- (All) *Poison samalawa (2x)*

Poison cannot be tasted.

2. *Zachisoni amayi inu, kudziwa mukudziwa*
It is a pity, you women, you know very well
Kuti uyu ndi poison, poison samalawa (2x)
That this is poison, poison cannot be tasted.

3. *Anyamata ndi asungwana tirimbike kupemphera*
Boys and girls, let us be strong in prayer
Kuti mau a Yehova apite patsogolo
So that the word of God can progress.

83. This is a warning song to boys and girls to refrain from sex. The warning is presented metaphorically using the metaphor of poison. Just as poison kills, so too HIV & AIDS. So they should say no to sex, not even to try it. The best is to be strong in prayer so that God's word can work in them and never follow into sin.

57. NDI MPHABVU YANGA⁸⁴

1. *Ndi mphabvu yanga, ndi zeru zanga, ndi njira yanga,*
He is my strength, my knowledge, and my path(way),
Ndi khomo langa, a Yesu ndi linga langa
Is my door, Oh Jesus is my wall of protection.

2. *Ngakhale Satana andizinge, koma ine ndingothawira*
Even when Satan surrounds me, but I will run
Kwa Yesu, ndiringa langa
To Jesus, is my wall.

3. *Dziko lapansi ndirozuza koma ine ndingothawira*
The world will persecute me, but I will run
Kwa Yesu, Ndiringa langa
To Jesus, is my wall of protection.

58. MY PRAYER⁸⁵

Hear my prayer Jehovah, let my cry come to you
Don't hide your face from me in the day of my trouble
Hear my prayer Jehovah, let my cry come to you.

59. MSANDISIYE NDEKHA⁸⁶

1. *Ndikaganiza za abale anga omwe anandisiya kuli chete*
When I think of my brothers who have gone to the grave
Koma sindida nkhawa, ndidziwa Yesu ali nane
But I am not afraid, I know Jesus is with me
A Yesu musandisiye ndekha
Oh Jesus, do not leave me alone.

84. This song is talking about total dependence in Jesus. Jesus is his/her strength, his/her knowledge and his/her path. He is his/her door and his/her wall of protection. Even if Satan surrounds him/her, he/she will still run to Jesus. In contexts where there is hunger, HIV & AIDS, envy, unemployment, the singer looks at Jesus as his wall of protection.

85. This is a prayer where the believer wants God's presence in the time of trouble and he is praying that God's face should not be hidden.

86. This song reminds of the old friends who have since died. The singer is moved by that, but later he/she remembers that Jesus is with him/her. This is an encouragement to him/her. Every time people think Jesus is with them, their fears are removed. The prayer continues even in times of temptations and sin, to let Jesus be with him.

He uses the metaphor of the sun. When the sun is covered in clouds – meaning he/she dies, your light should show him/her the way. A prayer that Jesus should be with him/her all through his life, even at the time of death.

Chorus

Yesu Khristu wachifundo chosatha

Jesus Christ with everlasting mercy

Mukhale nane njira yanga yonse, ndingagwe mmayesero ndikuchimwa

You should be with me on all the way, lest I fall in temptations and sin

A Yesu musandisiye ndekha

Oh Jesus, do not leave me alone

Yesu Khristu wachifundo chosatha, palibe angafanane nanu

Jesus Christ with everlasting mercy, there is none like you

Ndinu nokha Ambuye simusantha

You are the only one Lord who does not change

A Yesu musandisiye ndekha

Oh Jesus, do not leave me alone.

2. *Likabisika dzuwa kumitambo, kuunika kwanu kuonetsa njira yanu*

When the sun is covered in clouds, your light shows your way

Mundigwire dzanja langa, mukhale nane mfupi

You should hold my hand, you should be near me

A Yesu musandisiye ndekha

Oh Jesus do not leave me alone.

60. SATANA WAOPA⁸⁷

1. *Amati andinyenge Satana waopa*

Satan wanted to deceive me, but he is afraid

Ndi zintchito zake Satana waopa ndinapemphera kwa Yesu

With his works Satan is afraid, I prayed to Jesus

Yerere, Satana waopa

Ye! Ye! Satan is afraid.

2. *Ukakhala ndi Yesu, Satana amaopa, amanjenjemera*

When you are with Jesus, Satan fears and trembles

Satana amaopa, ndinapemphera kwa Yesuyo

Satan fears, I prayed to Jesus

Yerere, Satana waopa

Ye! Ye! Satan is afraid.

87. Here is the power of prayer that God hears people's prayers and Satan runs away from people who put their trust in God. He runs away with his sins and temptations. The presence of the authority of Jesus makes Satan to fear and tremble.

61. YESU WANGAYO⁸⁸

1. *Yesu wangayo ndimdziwa, Yesu ndiwabwino ndimdziwa*
My own Jesus, I know Him, Jesus is good, I know Him
Yesu ndi wachifundo, Yesu wangayo, Yesu wangayo ndimdziwa
Jesus is merciful, my own Jesus, my own Jesus, I know Him.

Chorus

Anandifera Yesu wangayo ndimdziwa
He died for me, my own Jesus, I know Him
Kuwombolane, Yesu wangayo ndimdziwa
Saving me, my own Jesus, I know Him.

2. *Yesu wangayo ndimdziwa, Yesu ndiwabwino ndimdziwa*
My own Jesus, I know Him, Jesus is good, I know Him
Yesu ndi wachifundo, Yesu wangayo, Yesu wangayo ndimdziwa
Jesus is merciful, my own Jesus, my Jesus, I know Him.

Chorus

Wandimasula Yesu wangayo ndimdziwa
He has unbound me, my own Jesus, I know Him
Msinga za infa, Yesu wangayo ndimdziwa
The chains of death, my own Jesus, I know Him.

62. NDITAMA YEHOVA⁸⁹

- (Sop & Tenor) *Nditama Yehova wondimasula ine, oh! mama (2x)*
I commend Jehovah, He has delivered me, oh! mama
Singa anadula lye, oh! mama
He broke the chains, oh! mama
Mchipsyinjo wandichotsamo ine, oh! mama
In affliction He has removed me, oh! mama
Moyo wandipatsanso ine, oh! mama
Life, He has also given me, oh! mama
- (All) *Wandimasula ine*
He has delivered me.

88. Here we see the intimacy that is there between the singer and Jesus. Here, is the importance of being closer to Jesus, that one can never be cheated or moved by petty things because the bond with Jesus is so strong.

89. The meaning of this song is twofold. Physical deliverance comes when one is released from an oppressive rule. Whereas spiritual deliverance takes place when one is delivered from the chains of sin.

63. KODOLA YESU⁹⁰

(Sop & *Kodokodo kodola!*

Alto) **Beckoning, beckoning!**

Yesu mukodole, alowe mtima mwako kodola, kodo

Jesus, beckon him, He should enter your heart, beckon him, beckon

(All) *Kodo kodo kodola*

Beckoning, beckoning

Yesu mukodole, alowe mtima mwako kodola, kodo

Jesus, beckon him, He should enter your heart, beckon him.

64. MTAYE SATANA⁹¹

(Sop. & *Mtaye (3x), Satana (3x), Alibe gawo Satana*

Alto) **Throw him Satan, Satan has no part, Satan**

Kwake ndi kupha, kuba, Satana mtaye

His is, to kill, steal, throw him Satan

(All) *Mtaye*

Throw him

(Sop. & *Mponde (x3), Satana (3x), Ambuye ndiririra inu*

Alto) **Trample him, Satan, Lord I cry for your**

Inu Ambuye bwerani, ndiririra Inu

You Lord come, I cry for you

(Sop.) *Mudzachotse ufiti, Ambuye bwerani ndiririra Inu*

You should come and eradicate witchcraft, Lord come, I cry for you

Mudzachotse uhule, mudzachotse ziwawa, nkondonso yabvuta,

You should eradicate prostitution, eradicate confusions, even war has troubled,

Umasiye wachuluka

Being without mother and father has grown

(All) *Ambuye bwerani ndiririra inu*

Lord come, I cry for you.

90. This is encouraging people to call Jesus into their hearts.

91. This song is coming from John 10:10 that the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. So, never make any relationship with him. But instead, throw him, trample him. The singer has full trust in God and requests Him to eradicate witchcraft, prostitution, confusions and war. Being an orphan, Lord come I cry for you. This is really giving a picture of the experiences the youths are going through and they want the Lord to come and deliver them from such situations. That means when there is a good leader who cares for the people, God has delivered them through His servant, just as he did with Moses and the people of Israel in Egypt.

65. MTAMANDENI AMBUYE⁹²

(Solo) *Mtameni*

Let you commend him

(All) *Mtamandeni Mulungu wathu*

Let you trust our God

(Solo) *Mkwezeke*

Exalt him

(All) *Mkwezeke Mulungu wathu*

Exalt our God.

66. SINJIRA YAPAFUPI⁹³

1.(Solo) *Sinjira yapafupi*

It is not an easy road

(All) *Yotsata Mbuye Yesuyo*

Of following the Lord Jesus

Tiyenera kulimba poyenda njira yathuyi

We need to be strong when walking on this road of ours.

2.(Solo) *Kulibe kucheuka*

There is no turning

(All) *Poyenda njira ya Yesu*

When walking the road of Jesus

(Solo) *Usayang'ane wina*

Do not look at anyone

(All) *Angasokeretse iwe*

Lest he makes you go astray.

Chorus

(Solo) *Senza mtandawo*

Carry the cross

(All) *Senza mtandawo (2x), senza pomutsataye*

Carry the cross, carry when following Him.

92. This is a praise hymn, to commend God, trust God and to exalt Him.

This is an invitation to acknowledge the goodness of God. What He is doing for His people. This is in opposition to praising magicians, leaders who have achieved something. What is important is to exalt God.

93. The way of the cross is that of following Jesus. It demands people to leave aside whatever they thought were good for their lives for the sake of Christ. This is an encouraging song to those who have followed Christ. There is need to deny oneself when following Christ.

67. TIRI PAULENDO⁹⁴

1.(Solo) *Tiri paulendo*

We are on a journey

(All) *Wopita kumwamba (2x)*

Going to heaven.

Chorus

(Solo) *Eee! Kumwamba, kulibe njala ndi matenda*

Eee! Heaven, there is no hunger and sickness

(Bass) *Amayi*

Mothers

(All) *Amayi tiyeni tonse tisatsale, tiri pa ulendo wopita kumwamba (2x)*

Mothers, let us all not remain, we are on a journey going to heaven.

2. *Komwe tikayimbe ndi angelo m'mwamba (2x)*

Where we will sing with angels in heaven.

3. *Komwe tikakhale ndi Ambuye mmwamba (2x)*

Where we will be with the Lord in heaven.

68. CHIKHALIDWE CHATHU⁹⁵

1.(Solo) *chikhalidwe chathu*

Our way of life

(All) *Masiku ano ndichodabwitsa kwambiri*

These days, is very strange indeed

(Solo) *Zedi*

True

(All) *Kusamala thupi ndiko kwakula kusiyana ndi mtima*

Caring for the body is what is of first priority than the heart.

Chorus

(Solo) *Kodi ndine rabi?*

Is it one teacher?

(All) *Kodi ndine rabi?*

Is it one teacher?

94. The song is inviting everyone to heaven, where there is no hunger nor sickness. Unlike this world where there is no peace, staying without food, without clothing, in heaven, there is the presence of the Lord, there is peace and joy.

95. This is a concern that people these days are putting interests in caring for their physical bodies other than the heart. This is the danger of materialism that people are never concerned with the Word of God but rather material things.

(Solo) *Kusamala thupi?*

Caring for body

(All) *Kusamala thupi?*

Caring for body

(Solo) *Kusiyana ndi mtima*

Than the heart

(All) *Kusiyana ndi mtima*

Than the heart

Oh Mulungu wanga ine Mulungu wanga ine khululukireni

Oh behold my God, behold my God, forgive me.

2. (Solo) *Chikhalidwe chathu*

Our way of life

(All) *Masiku ano ndichodabwitsa kwambiri*

These days, is very strange indeed

(Solo) *Zedi*

True

(All) *Kusamala chuma ndiko kwakula kusiyana ndi mtima*

Caring for wealth is what is of first priority than the heart.

69. DZIKO LINO NDIROBVUTA⁹⁶

1.(Tenor) *Dziko lino ndilobvuta, eya, ife tidikirila*

This world is difficult, really, we await for

(All) *Ambuye (4x)*

The Lord.

Chorus

Munayamba kale kudikirira pirilani

You started long ago waiting, just persevere

Munayamba kale kudikirira musatope

You started long ago waiting, do not be tired.

2.(Tenor) *Mau ali chimvekere, eya!*

Words are being proclaimed, yes!

Tikhale odikirira

We should be waiting for

96. This is also an encouragement song telling people that they should not loose heart with the troubles of this world, because they have already waited for a longer time, they need not be tired, they should continue to wait for the Lord. It is a song for every one not to loose heart, but to stand firm for the Lord.

(All) *Ambuye* (4x)

The Lord.

3.(Tenor) *Nguluwe idalira, eya!*

Wild pig cried, yes!

Msampha utaning'a

When the trap was about to break

(All) *Eya! Nguluwe* (4x)

Yes, wild pig.

70. **M'BALE WANGA**⁹⁷

1. *M'bale wanga iwe m'bale wanga*

You my brother, my brother

Atipatsa moyo m'bale wanga, m'bale wanga iwe, m'bale wanga

We are given life, my brother, you my brother, my brother.

2. *Kwa Yehova, iwe m'bale wanga*

To Jehovah, you, my brother

M'bale wanga iwe, m'bale wanga

My brother, you, my brother.

3. *Kweza maso, onatu nyenyezi ikutsogolera*

Lift your eyes, look at the star that leads you

Kwa Yehova iwe m'bale wanga

To Jehovah, you, my brother.

71. **MULUNGU NDI MMODZI**⁹⁸

1. *Mulunga ndi m'modzi uyo, oh! Mulungu ndi m'modzi, uyo* (2x)

God is one, that one, oh! God is one, that one

Uyo, uyo, uyo, Mulungu ndi m'modzi (4x)

That one, that one, that one, God is one.

2. *Iye analipo kale, ee! Mulungu ndi mmodzi uyo, lye alipo lero*

He was before, ee! God is one, that one, He is present today

97. This song is telling people the place from where life is given. It is God who gives life and therefore people should lift their eyes at the star to where Jesus is. So too are people told to lift their eyes to the star which will lead them to Jehovah.

98. This is a confirmation that there is no other god but the one God who was before the world and is in the present day. The song is taken from Exodus 20 and in Revelation 1:8 together. God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. He is the Alpha and the Omega, therefore there is need to trust in Him.

Oh! Mulungu ndi m'modzi, uyo

Oh! God is one, that one.

3. *Usapange zinthu zamatama oh! Mulungu ndi m'modzi, uyo*

Do not do showy things, oh! God is one, that one

Usafanizire kalikonse ee! Mulungu ndi m'modzi, uyo

Do not make any graven image ee! God is one, that one.

4. *Woyamba ndi wotsiriza aah! Mulungu ndi m'modzi, uyo*

The beginning and the end aah! God is one, that one

Alefa ndi Omega aah! Mulungu ndi mmodzi uyo

Alpha and the Omega aah! God is one, that one.

72. CHITSA CHA GWEDE⁹⁹

(Solo) *Pachiyambi (4x)*

In the beginning

(All) *Panali mau (4x)*

There was the Word

(Tenor) *Ndipo mauwo (4x)*

And that Word

(All) *Anali kwa Mulungu ndiye Mulungu eeee! (4x)*

He was from God and Himself is God eeee!

Panali mau (4x)

There was the Word

(Tenor) *Mulungu atatha kulenga zonse, pomaliza anapanga munthu (2x)*

When God had finished creating everything, at the end made man

Anati munthu alamulire zonse, Chisoni munthu anachimwa (2x)

He said, man should rule over all things, it is sad man sinned

M'malo moti nyama zimvere munthu, koma munthu anamvera nyama eeee! (2x)

Instead of animals listening to man, man listened to animals

(All) *Panali mau*

There was the Word

(Solo) *Chitsa cha gwede (2x)*

A weak stump.

99. This song is taken from John 1:1. The story in the song is telling of the scandle that has happened as a result of sin. That, when man sinned, instead of animals listening to man, it is man who listened to animals – the Eden Story.

The story is told in a unique, African way. Telling of a weak stump that fell on an old person, compared with a man being fell by a snake. That invited the wrath of God on man. Then, applies this story to today's life; why not repent such a small sin that you will be punished with, if you do not repent.

- (All) *Chitsa chagwede chinagwetsa ndoda eeee!*
A weak stump fell on an old person eeee!
Panali mau
There was the Word
- (Solo) *Kungomvera njoka*
Just obeying the serpent
- (All) *Tinaputa tsoka*
We invited wrath
- (Solo) *Tinaputa inu . . .*
We invited wrath, you . . .
- (All) *Mkwiyo wa Mulungu, eeee!*
The wrath of God, eeee!
Panali mau (4x)
There was the Word
- (Solo) *Kachimo kang'ono – ng'ono*
A very tiny sin
- (All) *Osalapa bwanji?*
Why not repent?
- (Solo) *Osalapa inu?*
You, why not repent?
- (All) *Mungakapsye nako eeee! Panali mau!*
You may be burnt because of it eeee! There was the Word!
- (Solo) *Chitsa chagwede (2x)*
A weak stump
- (All) *Chitsa chagwede, chinagwetsa ndoda*
A weak stump fell on an old person.

73. **INE NDINE MLENDO**¹⁰⁰

1. *Ine ndine mlendo wakumwambako (2x)*
I am a stranger from heaven
Pansi pano ndikonda ine koma mpoipa (2x)
This world I like, is evil

Chorus

Ine ndine mlendo wakumwambako ine (2x)
I am a stranger from heaven

100. This song is in the official hymnbook but the original tune is reconfigured by blending the gospel with traditional tunes. The song is basically reminding people that they are strangers in this world; their home is heaven. Even if they meet troubles, they will reach heaven where these are not present.

Kundiyan dikira Ambuye kwathu mkomweko ndithu (2x)

I am approaching Lord there, is my home

2. *Kwathu mkopambana mkosachimwako (2x)*

My home is wonderful, there is no sin

Zosautsa zonse zapadziko, sizikhalamo

All the earthly troubles, do not exist.

74. TIRITU PAULENDO¹⁰¹

1. *Tiritu paulendo wopita kumwamba*

We are on a journey going to heaven

Ndikatundu tanyamula adzatirandira ndani?

With the luggage we have carried, who will receive us?

2. *Inu mayi, inu bambo tizipita kumwamba*

You woman, you man, we should be going to heaven

Ndikatundu tanyamula adzatirandira Yesu? (2x)

With the luggage we are carrying, will we be received by Jesus?

75. NDITENGENI¹⁰²

1. *Nditengini (2x) nditengeni ine Mbuye wanga*

Take me, take me my Lord

Ndikhale mwana wanu (2x)

I should be your child.

Chorus

Kumwamba kwa Atate, ndidzaimba Alleluah (2x)

The heaven of the Father, I will sing Alleluah.

2. *Msandisiye (2x). Msandisiye ine ulendo onka m'mwamba (2x)*

Do not leave me. Do not leave me, the journey going to heaven.

101. This song is telling people that they are on a journey to heaven and if they go with such luggages (sins) there will be no one to welcome them. The metaphor of luggage signifies sin that people with sin will not be received in heaven.

102. The singer wants to be taken by the Lord. "Lord" here, is God not Jesus. This is expressed in the phrase "I should be your child". Then, once taken, he is anxious to sing Alleluah and does not need to be left on the way before reaching heaven. This relates well with the Chewa understanding of eschatology where good people who die an innocent death, go straight to the place of "rest".

76. **ABALE DZIKO**¹⁰³

Abale dziko komwe likupita inu

Brethren, where the world is going?

Azanga kuitu mabvuto

Friends, there are troubles

Olikangaza akungobvutika

Those who are trying hard, are just wasting time

Udzaphwanyika iwe dzikoli likatha (2x)

You will be broken to pieces when the world comes to an end.

Chorus

(Alto) *Zokoma za mdzikoli (3x)*

The good things of this world

(All) *Abale Sizikhalitsa, lero zipita zinanso zikudza (3x)*

Brethren, they do not stay on, today they go, and some come

(Alto) *Mwasangalala padziko, mwayiwala mlengi*

You have enjoyed in the world, you have forgotten the Creator

Mwakonda ntchito zamdima mwayiwala zidzatha (3x)

You have loved works of darkness forgetting that they will come to an end

(Tenor) *Ambuye akuitana iwe, wadama, bwerera usiye damalo*

The Lord is calling you, fornicator, come back and stop fornication

Ambuye akuyitana iwe wabodza, bwerera usiye bodzalo

The Lord is calling you the liar, come back and stop lying

Ambuye akuyitana wakuba iwe bwerera usiye kubako

The Lord is calling you thief, come back, stop stealing.

77. **WOPITA KU TCHALITCHI**¹⁰⁴

1. *Wopita ku tchalitchi ndi ambiri kukamva mau anu, Ambuye*

Those who go to church are many to hear your Word, Lord

Koma mphabvu ya Mzimu anthu awa, Mbuye wanga, ndithu anayikana

But the power of the Spirit, these people, my Lord, truly, they denied it.

103. This is a warning song to those who do not know that where the world is going, are troubles. The song quotes 1 Samuel 2:10 where it says, "those adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces when the world comes to an end". Then he warns of things of this world that do not stay on. The song is inviting all sinners to stop whatever they are doing, because the Lord is calling them.

This is the great love of God that invites and welcomes all sinners to Himself. There is judgement for those who do not repent but if they do repent, they will have run away from the wrath of God.

104. This song is coming from II Timothy 3:5 and it says that there are people who hold the form of religion but have denied the power of it. This is a picture of a church that seems to have many members most of whom have not accepted Christ, as such, they have denied the power of the spirit. They may come to Church and hear the word, they may know how to preach, they may know how to pray, but do contrary things after service. This is a sign that they have denied the power of the Spirit to live as Christians as it is the Spirit who guides people into all the truth.

Chorus

Ambiri mwa iwowa, obadwanso mngochepa (2x)

Out of these many, born agains are few

Koma mphamvu ya mzimu anthu awa, Mbuye wanga, ndithu anayikana

But the power of the Spirit these people, my Lord, truly, they denied it.

2. *Wodziwa kulalika ndi ambiri, kulalika mau anu Ambuye*

Those who know how to preach are many, preaching your Word, Lord

Koma mphamvu ya Mzimu anthu awa, Mbuye wanga, ndithu anayikana

But the power of the Spirit these people, my Lord, truly, they denied it.

3. *Wodziwa kupemphera ndi ambiri, kutama dzina lanu Ambuye*

Those who know how to pray are many, trusting in your name, Lord

Koma mphamvu ya mzimu anthu awa, Mbuye wanga ndithu anaikana

But the power of the Spirit these people, my Lord, truly, they denied it.

78. MULUNGU ANALENGA MUNTHU¹⁰⁵

(Solo) *Mulungu analenga munthu*

God made man

(All) *Mchifaniziro chake, Adam ndi Hava, nalenganso nyama*

In his own image, Adam and Eve, created also animals

(Solo) *Mulu . . .*

God . . .

(All) *Mulungu analenga munthu namupatsa moyo*

God made man and gave him life

(Solo) *Koma . . .*

But . . .

(All) *Mulungu yemweyo, akhalenso nanyozeka,*

The same God, is being shouted at (despised)

Alipo anthu ena, Mulungu samukonda

There are some people, who do not love God

(Solo) *Anthu oterewa*

Such people

(All) *Adzamkumbuka tsiku lina akadwala*

They will remember Him one day, when they are sick

105. This song is a warning against those who fail to acknowledge the authority of God and is compared to the parable of the potter in Jeremiah 18:1-11. It is a warning against people who try to take the place of God, and they will remember Him when they are sick, or when in trouble. This will be the time they will know that they have no powers to make themselves exist.

(Solo) *Ataganiza*

After thinking

(All) *Choti chimkomere, awapatsa mitengo nayika lamulo*

What is pleasing, they are given trees and they put rules.

79. SATANA POKOPA MUNTHU¹⁰⁶

1.(Solo) *Satana*

Satan

(All) *Pokopa munthu amayamba Kunyengerera*

When convincing (winning) a person, he begins with sweet talk

(Solo) *Pomaliza*

At the end

(All) *Amaluma, amaluma ngati agang'a*

He bites, he bites like termites.

Chorus

(Solo) *Inu, Satana*

You, Satan

(All) *Amaluma iyeyu amaluma*

He bites, he bites

(Solo) *Satana*

Satan

(All) *Amaluma, amaluma ngati agang'a*

He bites, he bites like termites.

2. (Solo) *Mulungu*

God

(All) *Sataya bwenzi, mkana infa imufikire*

Does not leave a friend, even when death comes on him

(Solo) *Iye amagwira*

He holds

(All) *Dzanja la bwenzi*

The hand of a friend

(Solo) *Sataya*

He does not leave

106. This is another example of story-telling songs. Through the story, the message is passed on to the listeners. It's a warning that Satan begins with something that is sweet to win people, but at the end bites like termites. He bites and leaves you alone.

The message is that Satan knows only to put people in trouble, in sin but he cannot let one out of that trouble or sin. He will leave one suffering, struggling with life and perishing. The good news is that God does not do this. God cares for His people, even to the point of death.

(All) *dzanja la bwenzi*
The hand of a friend.

Chorus

(Solo) *Iwe katiye*
You, let us go

(All) *Mwana wanga tiyeko bwera-bwera*
My child let us go, come, come
Katiye mwana wanga
Let us go my child

(Solo) *Sataya*
He does not leave

(All) *Dzanja la bwenzi*
The hand of a friend

80. OPHUNZIRA AMKAFUSA YESU¹⁰⁷

1. (Solo) *Ophunzira*
Disciples

(All) *Amkafusa Yesuyo Ambuye, mutiwuze, tidzaonera chiyani*
They were asking the Lord Jesus, tell us, what will we
Panthawi yomaliza?
See in the end times?

Tidzamva za nkhondo, njala, pomwepo zibvomerezi malo ena
We will hear of wars, hunger, at the same time earthquakes in other places.

2. (Solo) *Adzabwera*
There will come

(All) *Aneneli onyenga adzasokeretsa ambiri ndikuleka namalenga*
False prophets will lead many astray and leave the Creator
Wamwayi iye amene alimbika kufikira chimaliziro
Blessed is he, who stands firm up to the end

Kumvera uthenga uwu wabwino wolalikidwa kwa onse
Obeying this good news, that is preached to all.

107. This is a song of the end of the world from Matthew 24:1-14, when there will be heard of wars, hunger, earthquakes, false prophets, leading people astray. In Malawi, most of these things have taken place. Of late, a certain man by the name Mr Matiki from Blantyre, declared himself to be "Jesus". All this try to confuse the Christians. But blessed is he who stands firm on the Lord to the end, obeying the good news of Jesus Christ.

81. ANTHU IFE TASONKHANA PANO¹⁰⁸

1. (Solo) *Anthu ife*

We people

(All) *Tasonkhana pano kudzamvera mau a Chiuta koma ena,*

Have gathered here to hear the Word of God, but some

Sali pano, maganizo ali kwina

Are not here, their thoughts are somewhere

Anthu oterewa akufanana ndi Chitini Chodooka Kuthiramo Madzi sakhalitsa amangotayika

Such people are like a leaking tin, filled with water does not stay, they just pass out.

Chorus

Abambo awa ngati amva mau awa, ngati amva mau awa, koma mawa mkuwapeza akuthyapa bibida

These men, if they have heard the Word, if they have heard the Word, but tomorrow, being found drinking strong drink.

Amayi awa ngati amva mau awa, ngati amva mau awa koma mawa

These women, if they have heard these words, if they have heard these words

mkuwapeza akuchita miseche

but tomorrow found backbiting.

2. (Solo) *Anthu awa*

These people

(All) *Mkafusa kuti olalika amati chiyani, iwo amayankha e! e!*

When asked what was the preacher saying, they answer, e! e!

Kaya, ineyo sindinamvetse, olalika samakweza ndipo mwana amalira

I do not know, I did not hear properly, the preacher was not loud enough and the child was crying

Abale uchimo umawomba ngati mphepo ya mkuntho. Oterewa akufanana ndi chitini Chodooka

Brethren, sin blows like strong wind. Such are like a leaking tin filled with water

Kuthiramo madzi sakhalitsa amagotayika

Does not stay, they just pass out.

108. This is a worship song explaining why people gather. People gather to hear the word of God. Yet there are some who do not listen to the word, they are spiritually away. True worshippers are those who gather with their whole hearts for the Lord.

A metaphor of a leaking tin is then given to those who gather only physically, but in their mind are far away. A leaking tin will never be full because the water will get out straight from the bottom hole. Such is compared to people who hear the word but never make use of it. Instead, they will after service be found drinking beer and backbiting; they will be found in sin.

82. KALEKALE AKAYIMBA CHINGANGA¹⁰⁹

1. (Solo) *Kale-kale*

In the days past

(All) *Amkati akayimba chinganga, zimkabwera ndi nkumba koma lero ndi anthu*

When they rang a drum, pigs were the ones that used to come, but today it is people

(Solo) *Inutu abale*

You brethren

(All) *Mwalowerera mmase, mudzachoka liti?*

You have gone deep into beer drinking, when will you get out of it?

Chorus

(Solo) *Inutu abale*

You brothers

(All) *Mwalowerera*

You have gone astray

(Solo) *Chibwanabwana*

Being childish – being childish

(All) *Ngati cha chule*

Like that of a frog

(Solo) *Abale*

Brethren

(All) *Mwalowerera*

You have gone astray

(Solo) *Mujowa*

You jump

(All) *Popanda dzenje*

Where there is no hole.

2. (Solo) *Anthu inu*

You people

(All) *Muli ndi chibwana, chibwana ngati chabulu*

You are childish, childish like that of an ass

(Solo) *Kupita kudibi*

Going to a dipping tank

109. This song is a good example of how things of daily life can be blended with the Christian message. Here, there is the aspect of animal life to explain behaviour. In Malawian culture, for pigs to come to eat, a bell was rung and the pigs would come. Such is what is now happening to people. When beer is brewed, a bell is rung for people to come and drink. So, this is the picture that is being depicted in this story, and is being condemned.

Folk tales are then told of a frog that jumps where there is no hole. This is being childish like an ass that goes to a dipping tank but never washes into it. This is a picture of those people who go to church, hear the word, but come home without being blessed by the word.

(All) *Wosadiba*
But not getting into the dipping tank

(Solo) *Pobwera*
When coming

(All) *Ali ndadiba*
Saying I have dipped myself.

83. INFA YATHETSA NZERU¹¹⁰

(Solo) *Inu infa*
You, death

(All) *Yathetsa nzeru dziko lonse lapansi*
Has confused the knowledge of the whole world

Abale maloya, majaji ngakhalenso madokotala
Brethren, lawyers, judges, even doctors

Njira ya kumanda imkasowa chifukwa chowirira, koma lero njira iyi iri ngati kumsika
The way to the graveyard could, in the past, not be seen because it was bushy, but today

Koona matenda mzipala ngati fodya wa okishoni
The way is like a market, looking at diseases in hospitals like tobacco for auction

Kuona maliro mmothale, ngati sopo mwa alumale
Looking at dead bodies in the mortuary, like soap in the shelves

Sikanthu kena infa, miriri yachuluka
It is not something, death, there are many epidemics.

Chorus

Zoterezi sazengereza miriri yachuluka, ofunika kuyamba kupepesa kuti mwina akhululuke
Such things, you do not delay, there are many epidemics. It is needed to start apologizing so that, maybe, he can forgive

110. This song is giving a true picture of how death has taken roots in Malawi. In the past, people would go to the graveyard once in a while. As a result, the path to the grave was impassable because it was busy. But today, the path is as wide as going to a market place. A number of metaphors are then given like this; looking at sick people in hospitals, like bales of tobacco at the auction floors. Looking at the dead bodies in the mortuary, like soap in the shelves. This is nothing but there are many epidemics. Such a picture gives one the extent at which death has devastated Malawi. Maybe this picture is developing from the 2001/2002 famine that claimed a lot of lives in Malawi, or from HIV & AIDS.

The song ends with a prayer, asking for forgiveness from God so that He can eradicate such epidemics. An example of Pharaoh is then cited that because of disobedient to God, many children died. In the same way, the people's disobedience may have annoyed God. So, the people have to ask God to forgive them that his anger may be removed.

One can see a stigma on those who have HIV & AIDS from this part of the song, which needs to be dealt with by church, as well.

2. (Solo) *Zoterezi*

Such things

(All) *Zimkachitika pa nthawi ya Farao, Farao anathetsa ana chifukwa chosamva*

Were happening in the time of Pharaoh, Pharaoh made many children die because of disobedience

Kusamva kuti woononga Mulungu, anakwiya

Not listening that God, the destroyer was annoyed

Tiyeni timpemphe kuti mkwiyo utichokere

Let us ask him that the anger should be removed.

84. NANGA MCHIYANI BAMBO?¹¹¹

1. (Solo) *Nanga mchiyani bambo?*

What is it father?

(All) *Chomwe mwayamba, pomwe banja muli nalo, mudzakumana ndi Edzi, womwewo wakumanda*

That you have started, while you have a family, you will bump into AIDS, that will take you to the grave.

Chorus

Yesani kudzisunga amayi, abambo, mnyamata, mtsikana

Try to abstain mother, father, boy, girl

Moyowu mngokoma

This life is good.

2. (Solo) *Paulo ali kunena*

Paul is saying

(All) *Kunena kwa Akorinto, kuli bwino atakhala ngati ine wosakwatira*

Saying to the Corinthians, it is better to be like me; being unmarried.

85. SOLOMO INALI MFUMU¹¹²

1. (Solo) *Solomo*

Solomon

(All) *Inali mfumu yoweruza mirandu, inkaweruza mirandu*

Was a king, judging cases, he was judging cases

111. This is a warning song to an unfaithful, married husband or wife who goes along with other women or men, instead of being faithful to his wife or husband. The warning is extended to boys and girls. The warning is that such acts result into an HIV & AIDS victim. The best is to abstain because life is good and one needs not die as quickly. Then, the song cites an example of Paul who said, "it is better to remain unmarried than engaging into such things".

112. This song is directed mainly to those who have been privileged to judge cases that they need to do that with equity and without partiality. They need to learn from Solomon who judged cases with equity. The secret of which was wisdom from God.

(Solo) *Mfumu*

King

(All) *Mosakondera komabe moona*

Without being biased, but with equity

(Solo) *Anthu*

People

(All) *Ankayamikira*

Were applauding him.

Chorus

(Solo) *E! E!*

E! E!

(All) *Inkaweruzza mirandu*

He was judging cases

(Solo) *Mfumu*

King

(All) *Mosakondera komabe moona*

Without being biased but with equity

(Solo) *Anthu*

People

(All) *Ankayamikira*

Were praising for that.

2. (Solo) *Tsiku lina*

One day

(All) *Inadza mirandu ya akazi amdzikomo, ankalimbirana tiwana*

Came cases of women of that country, they were battling for children

(Solo) *Kamodzi*

One

(All) *Kanali kakufa*

Was dead

3. (Solo) *Mulungu*

God

(All) *Ndiyo mfumu yoweruzza mirandu, idzaweruzza mirandu*

Is the King who judges cases, He will judge cases

(Solo) *Mfumuyo*

The King

(All) *Mosakondera komabe moona*

Without being biased, but with equity

(Solo) *Anthu*

People

(All) *Adzayamikira*

Will applaud Him.

86. KUNALI CHINKHONDO KUMANDA¹¹³

1. (Solo) *Kunali chinkhondo kumanda pakati pa Yesu ndi infa*

There was great war in the grave between Jesus and death

(All) *Kunali chinkhondo kumanda*

There was great war in the grave.

Chorus

(Solo) *Yesu anawina*

Jesus won

(All) *Infa kumanda inapereka salenda*

Death in the grave did surrender

(Solo) *Infa inaluzi*

Death lost

(All) *Infa kumanda inapereka salenda*

Death in the grave did surrender.

2. (Solo) *Infa inafusa,*

Death asked,

(All) *“Iwe Yesu uti utani, uti udzuke, koma sizitheka” – Kunali chinkhondo*

You Jesus, what do you want to do? Do you want to rise? But it will not happen. There was great war.

3. (Solo) *Yesu ananena,*

Jesus said,

(All) *Yesu ananema, “iwe infa, pamtanda paja ndidakuleka,*

Jesus said, “you death, on the cross I left you,

113. Here is another creative style of explaining what Jesus did in the grave, when He was buried. Death is being personified, fighting against Jesus and finally Jesus won the battle when Satan surrendered.

There was a discussion between death and Jesus in the grave. Death asked Jesus, “You Jesus, what do you want to do? Do you want to rise? That will not happen”. Jesus replied, “you death, on the cross, I left you deliberately, I knew your powers are here in the grave”. So Jesus got hold of the neck of death, death tried to jump, but Jesus broke all his jaws and saliva came out uncontrollably from his mouth. Death then started saying, “I have stopped! I have stopped! I will never do it again”. Jesus said, “You death, a person who abides in me and I in him, for sure, you will never conquer” (An interpretation of John 15:4).

There is here the power of creativity, imagining a vivid battle in the grave with a vivid picture of what happens in daily life situation, when people fight. The message is to show that Jesus won the battle and is risen. He has therefore opened the way for all those who believe in Him.

Ndinkadziwa kuti infa iri kuno kumanda”

I knew that death is here in the grave.”

4. (Solo) *Yesu anagwira pakhosi pake pa infa*

Jesus got hold of the nake of death

(All) *Yesu anagwira pakhosi pake pa infa*

Jesus got hold of the nake of death

Nitere, kuti ijowe, nayigulula – gulula zibwano

Death tried to jump, Jesus broke all his jaws

Chidobvu pa! pa!, infa mkumati, “ndaleka, ndaleka, Yesu sindidzachitanso”

Saliva flowed out uncontrollably! Death then began saying, “I have stopped, I have stopped, Jesus, I will never do it again!”

(Solo) *Ee!*

Ee!

(All) *Kunali chinkhondo kumanda*

There was great war in the grave.

5. (Solo) *Yesu ananena,*

Jesus said,

(All) *Yesu ananena, “iwe infa munthu wokhala mwa ine inenso ndikhala mwa iye,*

Jesus said, “You death, a person who abides in me and I in him, for sure,

Ndithudi, sudzamuthanso”

You will never conquer him.”

(Solo) *E! e!*

E! e!

(All) *Kunali chinkhondo kumanda*

There was great war in the grave.

87. INU CHISOMO CHA MULUNGU CHODABWITSA¹¹⁴

1. (Solo) *Inu chisomo . . .*

You, the grace . . .

(All) *Chisomo cha Mulungu chodabwitsa; ndikakhumudwa, anditonthoza;*

The grace of God is amazing, when I am disappointed, He comforts me,

Ndikasokera andibweza. Ambuye ali mkufusa dziko lapansi ngati wina alipo,

When I go astray, He calls me back. The Lord is asking the world if there are any,

abwere ndimchitire chifundo

he should come and do him mercy.

114. This song is showing how good the grace of God is and the great love that he has for humanity. The gates of heaven are opened. He is ready to welcome anyone who repents.

Chorus

Matchalitchi onsewa cholinga chake mchiyani?

All these churches, what is the main aim?

Munthu asakaonongeke; maulalike, munthu asakawonongeke,

A person should not perish; the preachings, a person should not perish,

Chitsitsimutso, munthu asakawonongeke

Revival meetings, a person should not perish.

2. (Solo) *Inu mukamvomereza*

You, when you accept

(All) *Mukamvomereza machimowa kwa iye, mwayi ulipo lero, sipenayi m'pompano ndi chipata*

When you accept your sins to Him, there is the opportunity, today, this is none other than

Cha kumwamba – Yakoba anatero

The gate of heaven – Jacob said

Goli achotsa Ambuye, singa adula

The yoke, the Lord removes, chains, he breaks

(Solo) *Inu zengerezu*

You, delaying

(All) *Zengerezu analinda kwawu – Kwawu, pakadafunda galu wamkota anajiwanso*

Delaying resulted in being a failure. “It is still warm,” resulted in an old dog being killed

Uchimo mkang'oma wosasewera, ukakayimba ulendo ndiwomwewo, wopanda Yesu sungasiye

Sin is a small drum, do not play, when you beat it, that is your journey, without Jesus you cannot stop.

3. (Solo) *Inu, Satana*

You, Satan

(All) *Satana kaligwiritsa popanda Yesu sungasiye, anthu asatana akamanena pakometsa,*

Satan holds fast, without Jesus, you cannot stop, when people to Satan, “It is so good”,

Padawatentha

They were burnt

(Solo) *Padamtenthayo ndi uyu*

The one who was burnt is this one

(All) *Ngati pali chinthu chofuna kuleka; leka. Koma mowawu, ngati pali chinthu chofuna kuleka; leka.*

If there is something you need to stop, stop. But beer, if there is something you need to stop, stop

Koma ufitiwu akamadya, ufiti leka. Zoti matenda ndi mthenga wa infa wosazidziwa

But witchcraft – when you eat, stop witchcraft. That sickness is the message of death, you do not know

Bambo, lolani Yesu mu mtimamo, kuti muleke lolani Yesu mumtimano

Man, accept Jesus in your heart, to leave, let Jesus enter your heart.

88. DZIKO LINO LIRI KUMATSITSO¹¹⁵

(Solo) *Dziko lino*

This world

(All) *Dziko lino liri kumatsitso taonera zizindikiro zomwe Ambuye anazinena pouza ophunzira*

This world is on a steep slope, we have noted from the signs that the Lord said, when telling his disciples

(Solo) *Eti Ambuye*

that The Lord

(All) *Anati kudzakhala njala, nkhondo, mtundu ndi mtundu udzaukirana. Izizi, zirikuchitika lero*

Said there will be hunger, war, nations against nations rising against each other. These are happening today

(Solo) *Uko sikuti ndi dala koma kusowa chikondi*

This is not deliberate, but lack of love

(All) *Inu, pali machimo ena mkumtundu; amayi komweko, bambo komweko, ana komweko*

You, there are some sins that are hereditary, the mother there, their father there, children there

(Solo) *Mukatsakula wayilesi*

When you switch on a radio

(All) *Mbiri za nkhondo ziri kumvekadi mayiko ena*

News of wars are really heard in other countries

Kuukirana, kulimbirana ulamuliro, uko sikuti ndi dala koma kusowa chikondi

Rising against each other, fighting for leadership, this is not deliberate, but lack of love.

89. KODI MUMADZIWA¹¹⁶

(Solo) *Kodi mumadziwa?*

Do you know

(All) *Opemphera omwewa sakalowa kumwamba?*

The same people who pray will not enter heaven?

(Solo) *Chifukwa Chiyani inu?*

You, for what reason?

115. This song is alerting people of "the end times" in which they are in. They must therefore be ready for the coming of the Lord.

116. This song is warning against those who are in the church but have not been born again. Because they are not born again, they still do works of darkness. Such people will not enter heaven. There is also told in the song rules surrounding Holy Communion. That those who are polygamous, backbiters should not partake of Holy Communion. If they do, there is a curse of growing thin, and being dead after great suffering. The best thing to do is to leave those sins.

- (All) *Ntchito zamdima ali nazo, kuyenda – yenda osaleka*
Works of darkness they have, they go to and fro, without ceasing
Amayi osaleka, inunso tere osaleka, inu abambo osaleka, inunso tere osaleka,
The mother without ceasing, even you also without ceasing, you father without ceasing,
Iwe mnyamata osaleka, iwe msungwana osaleka, inunso tere osaleka
Even you also without ceasing, you boy without ceasing, you girl without ceasing, even you also without ceasing.
- (Solo) *Inu pali . . .*
You, there are . . .
- (All) *Pali anthu ena adagwa mu mpingo chifukwa cha mitala*
There are some people who are no more in the church because of polygamy
- (Solo) *Wamitala amadya mgonero kodi?*
Does a polygamist participate in Holy Communion?
- (All) *Ayi sakudya Mgonero*
No, he does not participate in Holy Communion
- (Solo) *Wamiseche amadya mgonero Kodi?*
He who backbites, does he participate in Holy Communion?
- (All) *Ayi sakudya Mgonero*
No, he does not participate in Holy Communion
- (Solo) *Ngati alipo muno oterewa*
If there are here such people
- (All) *Asadye nawo Mgonero atenga tsoka*
They should not partake of the Holy Communion, lest they be cursed
- (Solo) *Ati tsokalo lotani?*
What type of a curse?
- (All) *Tsoka la liwonde-wonde, maliro ozuzikira popita kumanda. Bambo tuluka iwe yamba kuganiza*
A curse of growing thin, being dead after being troubled before going to the graveyard, you father come out, start thinking
- (Solo) *Iwe tuluka (2x)*
You come out
- (All) *Tuluku, tuluku (2x)*
Come out, come out.

90. MUNAMVA ZOTANI ABALE¹¹⁷

1. (Solo) *Munamva zotani abale?*
What did you hear brethren?

117. This song is warning members of the church who are unfaithful to their wives or husbands, yet they say they are Christians. The song is stressing that those who are called by the name “Christian” should live by it through good works. Faith without good works is dead (James 2:17).

- (All) *Mbiri yoyipa, yochititsa manyazi mu mpingo*
Bad news, so shameful in the church
- (Solo) *Anthu ambiri*
Many people
- (All) *Anthu ambiri mabanja alinawo kuyenda-yenda wosaleka*
Many people have families but without being faithful to their marriage partners
- (Solo) *Akulu ampingo inunso tere*
Church elders, you also
- (All) *Wosaleka*
Not stopping
2. (Solo) *Inu, zidzachitika*
You, it will happen
- (All) *Tsiku lobwera Mbuye*
The day of the coming of the Lord
- (Solo) *Etu munthu*
Yes, a person
- (All) *Munthu ali yense adzaonetsa ntchito zomwe ankachita*
Every person will show whatever work one was doing
- (Solo) *Inu, kaya wa nyanga*
You, who do witchcraft
- (All) *Adzaonetsa nyanga zomwe ankachita iye ali moyo*
He will show the witchcraft that he was doing whilst alive
- (Solo) *Abambo adzakufunsani nyanga iri m'thumbayi ndi ya ndani, inu mudzatani?*
**Father, you will be asked, whose is this witchcraft material that is in your pocket?
 What will you do?**
- (All) *Ayi siyanga*
No, it is not mine
- (Solo) *Inu koma?*
But you?
- (All) *Mudzaona nyanga zikubwera apo, nyangazo ziri nyamu, nyamu,*
You will see the witchcraft materials coming there, coming step by step,
Abambo musakane munandikonza ndinu nomwe
Father do not deny, you are the one who made us.

91. MTENDERE NDI UFULU NDI ZOSIYANA¹¹⁸

(Solo) *Mtendere ndi ufulu ndi zosiyana*

Peace and freedom are different

(All) *Mtendere ndi ufulu ndi zosiyana. Padziko lapansi palibe mtendere, mtendere ndi wosoweka*

Peace and freedom are different. On this world there is no peace, peace is scarce

(Solo) *Kaya mngwachuma?*

Is it the rich?

(All) *Kaya mngwachuma mtendere ali nawo?*

Is it the rich who has peace?

(Solo) *Kaya olumala?*

Or the disabled?

(All) *Kaya olumala mtendere ali nawo?*

Or the disabled who has peace?

(Solo) *Wa buzimizi*

A business person

(All) *Wabizimizi mtendere ali nawo?*

Has a business person peace?

(Solo) *Nthawi zonsezi*

All these times

(All) *Nthawi zonsezi umangoti, “nditani ine nditani”?*

All these times, just saying, “What shall I do, what shall I do?”

Ndi munthu wanji okhalira nditani, mpaka tsiku la infa?

What type of a person, who spends his life saying, “What shall I do”, up to the day of death?

Padziko lapansi palibe mtendere, mtendere ndiwosoweka

On this world, there is no peace, peace is scarce.

92. AKHRISTU A LERO ALI NGATI MPENI WA SENGWA¹¹⁹

(Solo) *Akhristu alero ali ngati?*

Are Christians of today like

(All) *Mpeni wa msengwe wakuthwa mbale ziwiri Uu!!!*

A two-edged knife? u! u!

118. This song is showing that there is no real peace in this world because even when you hear people say, “I have peace”, they do not really have that peace. You hear them say, “what shall I do, what shall I do?” Yet on the other hand, they were saying they have peace.

The song is advocating for Jesus as the one who brings real peace to the world because he is the prince of peace (Isaiah 9:6).

119. This song is presented in a true traditional way with a metaphor of two edged knife, representing Christians who, on one side, do what Christians should do and on the other side doing the contrary to what Christianity teaches. There is a warning that such Christians will be burnt and whipped by the Lord. This is a clear picture of how a father punishes a child. But in this picture they will be burnt, after being whipped.

Wonsewa pamodzi adzawatentha

All these together will be burnt

Anthu wochimwa, anthu wotamba, akuba, anyawu

Sinful people, witchcraft, thieves, Nyau dancers

(Solo) *Akhristu alero mbali yina zachikunja, mbali yina Chikhristu*

Christians of today one side for the world, the other side for Christianity

(All) *Wonsewa adzawatentha pamodzi*

All these will be burnt together

(Solo) *Anthu wochimwa, akuba, wadama, wanyanga, wanyau*

Sinful people, a thief, fornicator, witchcraft, Nyau dancer

(All) *Adzakwapula (repeating the word), Ambuye adzakwapula akhristu otere*

They will be whipped, the Lord will whip such Christians.

93. TISIYE ZA UCHIMO¹²⁰

(Sop.) *Anyamata tisiye za uchimo*

Boys let us stop that which is evil

Tayandika ku dziko la chilendo (DC)

We are approaching a foreign country

(All) *Anyamata tisiye za uchimo*

Boys let us stop that which is evil

Tayandika kudziko la chilendo (DC)

We are approaching a foreign country.

Chorus

Kumwambako ife tikadzafika

In that heaven, we, when we reach there

Singa za infa Yesu adzazidula

The chains of death Jesus will break

Njala, nkhondo, izi tidzazisiya

Hunger, war, these we will leave behind

Mwa mtendere ife tidzakhala

In peace we will live.

120. In this song, boys are encouraged to leave sin because they are approaching a foreign country of heaven. When heaven is reached, the chains of death will be broken by Jesus. Hunger, war, these will be left behind and they will live in peace.

The song is teaching that it is death that separates people from hunger, war and suffering when they die and it is Jesus who breaks the chains of death when people die and live in peace with him.

94. TIKWEZE MBENDERA¹²¹

Tikweze Mbendera popita kumwamba

We should raise the flag, when going to heaven

Tikweze Mbendera padziko lapansi (DC)

We should raise the flag in the world.

Chorus

(Sop) *Tiri ndi mtendere, tiri ndi mabvuto*

We have peace, we have troubles

(Sop) *Tiri ndi mtendere*

We have peace

(All) *Mtendere watha*

Peace has ended

(Sop) *Tiri ndi mabvuto*

We have troubles

(All) *Mtendere watha*

Peace has ended

(Sop) *Ayo! Ayo! Mtendere watha*

My goodness! My goodness! Peace has ended

(All) *Ayo! Ayo! Mtendere watha*

My goodness! My goodness! Peace has ended.

95. DZIKO LAPANSI¹²²

(Sop) *Dziko lapansi*

The world

(All) *Dziko lamabvuto*

The world of troubles

(Sop) *Chofunika lero*

What is needed today

(All) *Tipite Kumwamba*

We should go to heaven

(Sop) *Mtendere wadziko*

The peace of the world

121. Here is another use of a metaphor of a flag. The flag is a metaphor for doing what Jesus requires of people as opposed to what the world offers. This means that people should preach the gospel of Christ in this world as they go to heaven, whether in peace or in difficulties. There are troubles because peace has ended, and this peace will be found in heaven after people have raised their flag all through to the time of death.

122. This song is really accusing those who have money and are not caring for the poor with it. This is analogous to the parable of the rich man and the poor man Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. The poor here are seeing a better world in the future when Jesus comes to this world. Such a situation is what the youths are going through, the rich people are never helping the poor.

- (All) *Ufuna ndalama*
Requires money
- (Sop) *Ife osauka*
We, the poor
- (All) *Nanga tichitenji?*
What shall we do?
- (Sop) *Ife mtendere*
We, peace
- (All) *Timaufuna*
We want peace
- (Sop) *Tiribe ndalama*
We have no money
- (All) *Nanga tichitenji?*
What shall we do?
- (Sop) *Ife*
We
- (All) *Ife tikundike chuma chakumwamba*
We should bank wealth from heaven
Kulibe mabvuto, ndalama zidzagonja (DC)
There are no troubles, money will be defeated.

96. KODI UFUNA KUWOMBOLEDWA¹²³

1. (Sop) *Kodi ufuna kuwomboledwa iwe?*
Do you want to be saved?
- (All) *Iripo mphabvu mmwazi wa Yesuyo (DC)*
There is power in the blood of Jesus.

Chorus

- (Sop) *Iwe*
You
- (All) *Pita pa mtanda nutule zoyipa*
Go at the cross and leave your sins
- (Sop) *Iwe*
You
- (All) *Idza nusambe m'mwazi wa Yesuyo*
Come and wash in Jesus' blood
- (Sop) *Inu wothodwa bwerani kwa Yesu uyo*
You who are laden, come to Jesus

123. This is hymn 367 in the official hymnbook and is inviting those who need to be saved that there is power in the blood of Jesus. One has to go at the cross and his sins will be washed away by Jesus' blood.

(All) *Wonani azanu ife tapulumutsidwa*
Look at us, your friends, have been saved

(Sop) *Pita*
Go

(All) *Pita pamtanda*
Go to the cross

(Sop) *Iwe*
You

(All) *Idza nusambe mwanzi wa Yesuyo*
Come and wash in Jesus' blood.

2. (Sop) *Inu wolema idzani kwa Yesuyo*
You who are tired, come to Jesus

(All) *Wonani azanu ife tawomboledwa*
Look at us, your friends, have been saved.

97. **DZIKO LINO NDI LONYENGA**¹²⁴

Dziko lino ndi lonyenga liribetu chilungamo
This world cheats, it has no justice

Ndaonera a Yudasi ndi ansembe kale lija
I have seen from Judas and the scribes long ago

Anazunza Mbuye Yesu, wosachimwa pa mtandapo
They troubled the Lord Jesus, who never sinned on the cross.

Chorus

Khululukireni Mbuye, pa mtandapo ndinachimwa
Forgive me Lord, on the cross I sinned

(Sop) *Pamtanda paja ndinachimwa*
On the cross I sinned

Osadziwa kuti ndinu Mbuye wanga
Not knowing that you are my Lord

Lero ndipempha khululukireni Mbuye
Today, I request, forgive me Lord

Pa mtandapo ndinachimwa
On the cross, I sinned.

124. This song is teaching how injustice can penetrate through in this world as if it is itself, justice. Judas and the scribes troubled Jesus as if he was a sinner. Only very late did people realize that they were wrong and Jesus was innocent. One person realizes that Jesus was innocent and repents to the Lord for killing Him on the cross. This killing of Jesus on the cross is represented today by the sins of people and there is need to realize them and repent them.

98. **MULUNGU WANGA TAONANI**¹²⁵

1. *Mulungu wanga taonani anthu anu a dziko lapansi*
My God look, your people of the world
Akukhaliratu mikangano, akulozanatu zala pakanwa
They are fond of quarrelling, they are pointing fingers on the mouth
Kulimbirana utsogoleri ife anthu apa dziko
Fighting for leadership, we people of the world
Paja Yesu munanena kale dziko linotu ndi lamabvuto
You Jesus, already said, this world is full of trouble.

Chorus

- Bwerani Yesu bwerani*
Come Jesus come
Yendani ndithu bwerani
Sure, hurry come
- (Sop & Alto) *Akalephera ena sakondwera*
When others have failed, are not happy
Athamangira kutola zida
They rush at picking arms
Kuononga mizimu ya anthu
Destroying lives of people
Yendani ndithu bwerani
Sure, hurry, come.
2. *Ife anthu a padziko za mtendere ndizo tinayiwala*
We people of the world, of peace, we have forgotten
Paja Yesu munanena kale dziko linotu ndi lamabvuto
You Jesus already said, this world is of trouble
Tikudikira dziko la mtendere
We are waiting for a world of peace.

125. This song is teaching about struggle for positions in this world. I think the background for this song is the battle that is there when people want to occupy certain positions, be it in politics or in the church. The song says, "Jesus foretold of these things beforehand" (cf Matthew 24:1-12). With such conflicts, the believers want Jesus to come soon because when one of the aspirants fails to get the position, they resort to war and never think of peace. The singers are recontextualizing their present context by blending it with what Jesus offers and what comes into their mind is a reconfigured context of peace.

99. **DZIKO LAPANSI SIKWATHU**¹²⁶

1. *Dziko lapansi anthu ife sikwathu*
We people, this world is not our home
Sitingakhalitse pakuti ndirachinyengo
We cannot stay long, because it is corrupt
Makolo athu, abale athu, anatisiya
Our parents, our relatives, left us
Ulendo wa ku manda
Journey to the grave.

Chorus

- Tidzauponda ulendo wadzidzidzi*
We will step forth, an emergency journey
Tidzalondola mmapazi mwawo ife
We will follow in their footsteps
- (Sop & Alto) *Mnali nawo Makolo omwe ndimkawakonda ine*
I had parents whom I used to love
Koma lero kulibe, atsikira kumasano
But today are not there, they have gone to the graveyard
Mnali nawo abale omwe ndimkawakonda ine
I had relatives whom I used to love
Koma lero kulibe, anatsikira kumasano
But today are not there, they have gone to the graveyard
Mnali nawo abwenzi amene ndi mkawakonda ine
I had my friends whom I used to love
Koma lero kulibe, anatsikira kumasano
But today are not there, they have gone to the graveyard.
2. *Likadzafika tsiku la ulenda wanga*
When the day of my journey arrives
Zobvala izi adzachita kundimveka
These clothes, they will dress me
Adzandikuta ndi nsaru zokongola ngati chikondi
They will cover me with beautiful clothes as though it's love
Koma adzanditaya, adzanditenga nandiyika m'bokosi
But they will throw me, they will take me and put me in a coffin

126. This is an orphan crying for his/her parents, relatives or friends. Such is a true reflection of the situation in Malawi where many children are orphans. This orphan imagines when he/she too will die that he/she will be covered with beautiful clothings as if he/she was loved. But they will take him to a place he did not want. There is here no mention of God. It is therefore an individual lament struggling with life whilst in great pain of being an orphan.

Kundifikitsa komwe sindinafuneko

Taking me to where I did not want.

100. KUKHALIRA MANONG'O-NONG'O¹²⁷

Kukhalira manong'onong'o, kukamba zanu simudziwa

Fond of backbiting, talking of your own you don't know

Khalidwe lanu ndi lachabe, lokhalira, kodi mwamva?

Your way of life is bad, fond of, "Have you heard?"

Amayi mukamva zinthu pakhomo panu simukhalapo

Women, when you hear a thing, you don't want to stay at your home

Mumatandala mmakomo, kufalitsa zomwe mwamvazo

You stay away in other people's homes, spreading what you have heard

Abambo mkamva zinthu simufuna kuzisunga

Men, when you hear a thing, you don't want to keep it

Koma ndipita kwa aujeni, nkhanayi ndiwadziwitse

But I will go to so and so, I should let them know this news

Kodi mwamva achemwa, ndiuzeko inu nokha

Have you heard my sister, let me tell you only

Inuyo msauze munthu nkhanayi ndi yachisisi

You should not tell any person, this news is a secret

Kodi mwamva achimwene zachitika mmudzi muno

Have you heard my brother, what has happened in this village?

Mtakuuzani, msati ndine inuyo sungani pakamwa

When I tell you, do not say it's me, keep your mouth shut

Amayi inu sinthani, amvano samatero mijedu sipindula

You women change, a member of women's guilds does not do that, backbiting is useless

Zisiyeni mzakutha

Stop them, they are useless

Abambo khalidwe iri paradizo simukalowa

Man, this way of life will stop you from entering paradise

Yehova adzakubwezani, mijedu sayifuna

God will return you, he doesn't want backbiting.

127. This song is warning against backbiting among people. Such way of life must be changed because they are fruitless and useless. Continuation of such a way of life results into failure to enter paradise. This also is a kind of warning against laziness because being found in other people's homes just to say, "have you heard" is a sign of being unproductive, of being lazy, of not working.

101. **NJALA**¹²⁸

Dziko lapansili chabwino palibe

This world has nothing that is good

Munthu naye walimbika nkhaza

A human being is busy mistreating

Ndimkayesa chuma ndi moyo

I thought that wealth is life

Tsogolo langa ine sindiona (2x)

My future, I don't see

Analipo othandiza kale, obvutika chifukwa cha njala

There were those who assisted in the past those suffering because of famine

Olemera sanatenge iwo ubale uja lero nautaya

The rich did not take that relation, today they have put aside

(Solo) *Ine sindiona mayi, gogo*

I do not see mother, grandmother

(All) *Ine sindiona za tsogolo langa*

I do not see my future.

102. **IWE YONA**¹²⁹

Iwe Yona, wataya chikhulupiriro

You Jonah, you have lost your faith

Iwe Yona, ona Chombo Chikumira (2x)

You Jonah, look the ship is sinking

Tipange mawere kuti tione chachitika

We should cast lots so that we know what has happened

Tipange mawere, chombo chathu chikumira

We should cast lots, our ship is sinking

Timponye mmadzi Yona ndiye waseza zoipa

We should throw Jonah into the water, does that one hold this evil?

Timponye mmadzi Yona chombo chathu chikumira

We should throw Jonah into the water, our ship is sinking

(Sop) *Iwe Yona, ona chombo chikumira*

You Jonah, look the ship is sinking

128. This song is explaining the experiences of 2001/2002 famine, where many people died. During this time, even those who had food could not share to those who did not have. Not even give to their relatives. Because of this, those who had no food, could not see their future. Years before 1994, people would share what they had with others in such difficult times, but now the rich are hardly helping the poor. Here too, there is no mention of God in the song.

129. This is a story of Jonah who had lost his faith and forced others to suffer as well. The song is teaching that the sin of one person may affect so many people if one does not repent of his/her sins. The song is also teaching that people cannot run away from God. People should therefore be faithful to God's call, otherwise there are negative consequences if people fail to do God's task.

- (All) *Timponye mmadzi Yona, chombo chathu chikumira*
We should throw Jonah into the water, our ship is sinking
- (Sop) *Masiku atatu, mmimba mwa chinsomba*
Three days in the belly of the fish
- (All) *Timponye mmadzi Yona*
We should throw Jonah into the water
Ife lero tingathawe bwanji, tsiku lina Ambuye adzatifuna
How can we today run away? One day the Lord will need us
Timponye mmadzi Yona, chombo chathu chikumira (repeat several times)
We should throw Jonah, our ship is sinking.

- 103. ULENDU WA KUMWAMBA**¹³⁰
Ulendo wa kumwamba, ulendo wa kumwamba
The journey to heaven, the journey to heaven
Tidzasiyana, tidzasiyana malinga mkhalidwe (2x)
We will part, we will part according to our way of life
Anthu oyerera, anthu ochimwa, tidzasiyana
The holy ones, the sinners, we will part
Tidzasiyana malinga mkhalidwe (2x)
We will part according to our way of life.

Chorus

- Tidzasiyana malinga mkhalidwe*
We will part according to our way of life
Anthu oyerera, tidzasiyana inu
The holy ones, we will surely part
Anthu ochimwa, tidzasiyana inu
The sinners, we will surely part
Nyamu, nyamu, tidzasiyana inu (3x)
Ascending, ascending, will will surely part
Anthu oyerera tidzasiyana malinga mkhalidwe
The holy ones, we will part according to our way of life
Tidzasiyana malinga mkhalidwe
We will part according to our way of life.

130. This is a warning song that people will be separated on their way to heaven. This will be done according to the deeds people do; those who did the word of God from those who lived in sin.

104. MTUNDU WATHA¹³¹

Mtundu watha, abale mtundu watha (3x)

People have finished, brothers people have finished

Anthu atha inu kupita kumanda inu

People have finished, going to the grave

Kumalo osabwerera, kumanda, kumanda (2x)

To a place of no return, to the graveyard, to the graveyard

Kusamvera kwathu ife kwabweretsa zonsezi inu

Our disobedience has brought us all this

Abale mtundu watha, abale mtundu watha (2x)

Brothers, people have finished, brothers, people have finished

Tithawire kuti ife abale, alongo, mphabvu ya satanayo yatizungulira (2x)

Where should we escape to? Brothers, sisters the power of Satan has surrounded us.

105. KODI TIDZAPUMA LITI?¹³²

Kodi tidzapuma liti Ambuye, mutiyankhe e e? (3x)

When will we rest Lord? You should answer us

(Solo) *Oh! Mbuye*

Oh! Lord

(All) *Mbuye, Mbuye, Mbuyeyo, Mbuye, Mbuye, Mbuyeyo, ndatopa*

Lord, Lord, oh Lord, Lord, Lord, oh Lord, I am tired

(Solo) *Padziko lapansi, ndifuna kumwamba, ndikapumule*

Of this world, I want heaven, I will rest

(All) *Ndatopa, ndatopa, ndatopa*

I am tired, I am tired, I am tired

(All) *Uye, Uye, Uye, Uye, Uye, Uyeyo, ndatopa*

Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord, I am tired

(Solo) *Kulibe matenda, kulibe maliro, mtima wanga ukuti*

There is no disease, there is no death, my heart says

(All) *Ndatopa, ndatopa, ndatopa*

I am tired, I am tired, I am tired

(Solo) *Ndiko kwabwino*

It is where its good

131. The song is ascribing the many deaths as a result of HIV & AIDS which is coming as a result of disobedience. That means if people obey, they will be healed of such situations.

This is implied that those who have HIV & AIDS, disobeyed and therefore, are sinners they need to repent. This stigmatisation needs to be addressed by the church if the HIV & AIDS victims are to be accommodated in society.

132. This is a cry for a place of rest. The singer is asking the Lord when his/her sufferings will come to an end. The background of this song too seems to be the 2001/2002 famine. The singer awaits a world of rest with the Lord.

(All) *Ndatopa*

I am tired.

106. UMASIYE¹³³

Amasiye onsewa ndakopeka, ndagwira Yesu (2x)

All the orphans I am convinced, I have held Jesus

(Solo) *Oh! Dada muli ku njo*

Oh! Dad there is joy

(All) *Oh! Yaya, mwa Yesu muli ku njo*

Oh! Grandmother, in Jesus, there is joy

(Solo) *Muli mtendere, muli chikondi, muli umodzi*

There is peace, there is love, there is unity

(All) *Mwa Yesu, muli ku njo, mwa Yesu, muli ku njo, mwa Yesu, muli ku njo*

In Jesus, there is joy, in Jesus, there is joy, in Jesus, there is joy.

107. ISAKE ADAONA MASIKU AMUTHERA¹³⁴

Isake adaona masiku amuthera

Isaac saw that his days were numbered

Anauza Esau, ndikupatse madalitso (2x)

He told Esau, I want to give you blessings

Mkazi wake atamva, iyeyo nasirira

When his wife heard, she was jealous

Anauza Yakobo, tipangane za chinyengo

She told Jacob, let us agree evil

Ali kuti mwana wangayo, ndimupatse madalitso (repeat several times)

Where is my son, I should give him blessings.

108. KU IGIPUTO¹³⁵

Ku Igiputo, ku Igiputo, ku Igiputo, ku Igiputo (2x)

In Egypt, in Egypt, in Egypt, in Egypt

Anafika pa nyanja, nadandaulira Mose (2x)

They reached the sea, and cried to Moses

Amose, taonani adani aja afika (2x)

You Moses, look the enemies are here

133. This song is giving a way out for an orphan. That the orphan has to hold fast to Christ Jesus in whom there is joy, peace, love and unity. There is all that misses to an orphan in Jesus.

134. This song is teaching how parents can live towards their children that they need to handle them fairly and always considerate in handling issues.

135. This song is telling of total dependence upon God in whatever circumstances because it is God who saves and it is God who has power to overcome people's enemies.

Pamenepo aIsrael anayimba nyimbo

There, the Israelites sang a song

Kuyimbira Yehova amulemekeze

Singing to Jehovah in praise

(Sop) *Tiyimbe*

We should sing

(All) *Yehova ndiye waku – wondipulumutsa (2x)*

Jehovah is the one who saves me

(Sop) *Israel nayenda pa nkhondo, ndiulendo wawo wonkha ku Kenani (2x)*

Israel travelled in war, in their exodus going to Canaan

(All) *Yehova ndiye waku – wondipulumutsa (4x)*

Jehovah is the one who saves me

Atuluka aMose anamenyanso pa nyanja (2x)

After crossing, Moses stretched his hand over the sea again

Nanga ife titani, aMose tikufa (2x)

What shall we do? You Moses, we will die

(Sop) *Ulendo*

The journey

(All) *Ku Kenani, ku Kenaniko, ku Kenani, ku Kenaniko*

To Canaan, to Canaan, to Canaan, to Canaan

(Sop) *Israel nayenda mmabvuto (2x), ndi ulendo wawo wonka ku Kenani*

Israel travelled in difficulties (2x), with their journey going to Canaan

(All) *Ku Kenani, ku Kenaniko, ku Kenani, ku Kenaniko*

To Canaan, to Canaan, to Canaan, to Canaan.

109. KWATHU¹³⁶

(Solo) *Kwa-a-athu, tidzapita zowawazi tidzazisiya (2x)*

At our home, we will go, all these sufferings, we will leave behind

Abale samalani, adani omwewa afuna ineyo ndisiye zolalika, luso lijalo lero liri mwa adani

Brothers be careful, the same enemies want me to stop preaching, that skill today is in the enemies

Oh! Hiye! Oh! Oh! Oh oh! Chikondi chanu chathadi

Oh! What! Oh! Oh! Oh oh! Your love has really ended

(All) *Chikondi chanu chathadi (8x)*

Your love has really ended

(Solo) *Pa dziko lapansi, munthu wayiwala, akana Ambuye, akonda ndalama*

On the world, a human being has forgotten, he denies the Lord loves money

136. This song is warning that the enemies (the devil) are not happy when people do the work of the Lord. The enemies have no love for God, and money is what they love as their God. But God sent Jesus, the one who never sinned, that he should die for all people. So, in Jesus, people have the hope of home forever, where there will be no sufferings.

Komatu inuyo, munatuma mwana, mwana wosalakwa, kuti atifere, abale oh! Hiye!

But You, You sent a Son, a Son who never sinned, that He should die for us, brothers oh! What!

(All) *Oh! Hiye! Oh! Oh! Oh oh! Chikondi chanu chathadi*

Oh! What! Oh! Oh! Oh oh! Your love has really ended.

110. KUKONDA KULEMEKEZA¹³⁷

Kukonda kulemekeza ndi nyimbo za Yehovayo

Loving praising with songs of Jehovah

Wamwayi Oh – oh! Oh – oh! Wokana mkhalidwe wochimwa

Blessed Oh – oh! Oh – oh! He who refuses evil ways of life

Mkhalidwe wochimwa (2x)

Evil ways of life

Sindidzalola satana kunditsatsira ine malonda ake

I will not allow Satan to display his business to me

Malonda ake-e-e-eee (2x)

His business

Toto, toto ine, kumwamba Yesu amakana (2x)

No, I, no, in heaven, Jesus does not allow

(Solo) *Kusatu fodyayo, nanga mowawo, kubaku kumene, kutamba*

Smoking. What about beer, even stealing, even witchcraft

Kumene, ndewo kumene, ine toto

Even fighting? I don't

(All) *Toto, toto ine, kumwamba Yesu amakana (6x)*

No, I no, in heaven Jesus does not allow.

111. TINALI ADANI NDI MAU A YESU¹³⁸

Tinali adani ndi mau a Yesu, lero tamasulidwa, Mbuye zikomo (3x)

We were enemies with the Word of Jesus, today, we are rescued, Lord thank you

Usazengereze, e-e! Wochimwa iwe bwerera

Do not delay, e-e! You sinner return

Usazengereze, e-e! Dziko lino ndilosautsa

Do not delay, e-e! This world is difficult

137. This song is teaching that it is loving to praising with songs of Jehovah, that is needed in the life of those who follow Jesus. People are warned against following what the devil sells to them. The sins he offers are compared to the business that he does to people. People are encouraged not to accept or buy that because Christ in heaven does not allow it. He does not allow smoking, beer, stealing, witchcraft, even fighting. He does not want them. There is moral teaching in this song.

138. This song is teaching about the great love of God in Jesus Christ who rescues all who return to Him. Those who have been rescued have a responsibility of calling others as well and those who hear need not delay because this world is difficult.

(Solo) *Tipite, kwathu, tikapume, ndatopa, mabvuto tsiku liri lonse*
We should go home to rest, I am tired, troubles every day

(All) *Dziko lino ndilosautsa (6x)*
This world is difficult

(All) *Usazengereze e-e! Wochimwa iwe bwerera*
Do not delay e-e! You sinner return
Usazengereze e-e! Dziko lino ndilosautsa
Do not delay e-e! This world is difficult.

112. **NDI TSIKU LA PENTEKOSTI**¹³⁹

Ndi tsiku la pentecosti, ophunzira analandira zokoma (3x)
It is on the day of Pentecost, the disciples received good things
Nayimba owu! Owu! Hosana (3x)
And sang oh! Oh! Hosannah
Malilime, malilime, malilime, malilime, malilime (3x)
In tongues, in tongues, in tongues, in tongues, in tongues Come Jesus.

113. **LIKUDZA TSIKU**¹⁴⁰

1. (Sop) *Likudza tsiku (2x)*
The day comes
(All) *Tsiku lomaliza Mbuye adzabwera Kudzatenga wolungama (2x)*
The last day, the Lord will come to take the faithful
(All) *Kudzakhala phokoso polandira mdalitso (2x)*
There will be noise, when receiving blessing
Onse woyera, onse adzayima nagwada pansi
All saints, will all stand and kneel down
Pamapazi a Yehova (2x)
On the feet of Jehovah.

2. (Solo) *Likudza tsiku*
The day comes
(All) *Tsiku lomaliza Mbuye adzabwera Kudzatenga wolungama*
The last day, the Lord will come to take the faithful

139. This is a pentecost song, narrating in brief what happened on that day. The coming of the Holy Spirit is described as "good things; they spoke in tongues". The last phrase that is stated is "inviting Jesus to come". The question is whether the coming of Jesus is to rule the world or to judge the world, or to take them. This is not explained.

140. This is an encouraging song to believers as the song is taking about the last day, when the Lord will take the faithful. It will be a great day, when He will come with power and honour. The sinners will be crying when receiving judgement and taken away from the feet of Jehovah. There will be joy among the faithful as they go to stay with God forever. Whereas the sinners will be mourning as they go to hell.

Kudzakhala kulira polandira chiweruzo

There will be crying when receiving judgement

Onse ochimwa, onse adzalira, nawakwatula pamapazi

All sinners, all will cry, and taken up from

A Yehova (2x)

The feet of Jehovah.

114. CHIKONDI CHA DAMA¹⁴¹

Chikondi cha dama chodula miyoyo

The love for fornication, reduces life

Chadula anthu, asamukira ku manda

Has lessened people, have been transferred to the graveyard

Samalira moyo wako (4x)

Take care of your life.

(Tenor) *Kulibe sitolo yogulitsadi moyo (2x)*

There is no shop that sells life

Ena makolo anu, mwadza mkatundu osakufunsani

Some of your parents, when you bring things, they don't ask you

Ongulandirira osakufunsani

Just receive without asking you

(All) *Samalira moyo wako, samalira moyo wako*

Take care of your life, take care of your life.

115. KWABWERA DANDAULO¹⁴²

1. *Kwabwera dandaulo, m'badwo walerowu, mbali zina taononga*

There has come a petition, generation of today, in some ways, we have spoiled

Asungwana omwewa kuwauza malangizo zaulemu adasiya

The same girls, when you give them advice, they have stopped respect

Akumvala zachimuna kuderera abereki

They are putting on men's clothes, disregarding advice of parents

Kalanga padziko, kalanga chisokonezo

Oh! On this world, oh, confusion

Kalanga padziko, tigwire mtengo wanji? (7x)

Oh! On this world, what shall we do?

141. The song is teaching how some parents tolerate their children from bringing things they do not know, where they are coming from. This is a reflection of the report discussed above that some parents encourage their girls for sex work for food. This song is a warning against this.

142. This song is discouraging freedom of dress which was started after 1994. The discouragement comes as a petition from those who had since died that generation of today has spoiled the world that girls have stopped respecting advices and even to the extent of wanting to fight the parents if they are advised.

The song is a cry that this world is full of confusion and what should be done to it, is not known.

2. *Kwabwera dandaulo m'badwo walerowu*
There has come a petition, generation of today
Mbali zina taononga, anyamata omwewa
In some ways, we have spoiled the same boys
Kuwauza malangizo, zaulemu adasiya
Giving them advice, they have stopped respect
Akuti bambo chenjerani bwino, bwino zingavute
The say, man be careful, be careful, things can go bad.

116. **TCHIMO LANGA ATATE**¹⁴³
Tchimo langa Atate, landibisira nkhope yanu Atate yowalayo (4x)
My sin Father, has hidden your face, Father that shines
Tate, Tate, khululukireni, Tate, Tate, khululukireni (4x)
Father, Father, forgive me, Father, Father, forgive me
(Solo) *Kuba, kuba, miseche yonse, kaduka, msanje*
Stealing, stealing, all backbiting, ill-feeling, jealousy
(All) *Kunali kwanga, kunali kwanga, kunali kwanga*
Was for me, was for me, was for me
Tate, Tate, khululukireni, Tate, Tate, khululukireni
Father, Father, forgive me, Father, Father, forgive me.

117. **NDEKHA MTANI?**¹⁴⁴
(Solo) *Ndekha mtani?*
Alone, what should I do?
(All) *Kukwezeka dzina la Yesu, azanga bwerani tikwezeke dzinali (2x)*
Spreading the name of Jesus, my friends come, we should spread his name
(Solo) *Ntchitoyi*
The work
(All) *Ifunika kugwirizana, kudzipereka, ndiponso kuthandizana (repeat several times)*
Requires working together, dedication and helping one another.

143. This is a repentance song, where the singer has realized he/she was separated from God because of his/her sins. He/she then repents to the father. He/she is not ashamed of pronouncing all the sins he/she had done before God. The song is teaching that salvation comes only through repentance of sins and that no one can save him/herself except God Himself in Jesus Christ.

144. This is a song encouraging cooperation when doing the work of God. Group work in the work of the Lord is what is encouraged here. People must work together in spreading the gospel of Jesus. Ecumenism is encouraged here, denominations must work together in the field of the Lord.

118. **KUMWAMBA KULI**¹⁴⁵

Kumwamba kuli, kumwamba kuli madalitso

In heaven there are, in heaven there are blessings

Ndichite bwanji kuti mkakuone, ndimulemekeze Ambuye Yesuyo

What should I do to enter, I should praise the Lord Jesus

Oyipawo, oyipawo, oyipawo adzatsala (2x)

The sinners, the sinners, the sinners will remain behind

Oyipawo, oyipawo, oyipawo adzatsala, akulira mpaka Jahena

The sinners, the sinners, the sinners will remain whilst crying up to Gehenna.

119. **TSOKA IWE MBAGE**¹⁴⁶

Tsoka, iwe Mbale, njingayo wakwerayo mkumatsitso (2x)

Unfortunate, you brother, the bicycle you are riding is going on a steep slope

Ndipo kunali zibvomerezi, mngelo natsika nachotsa mwalawo mmanda mulibe Yesuyo wauka (2x)

In the grave, there is no Jesus, He is risen.

(Solo) *Yesuyo ayitana mbale*

Jesus calls you brother

(All) *Kuti ukagwire ntchito yake (2x)*

That you should do his work

Ndipo kunali zibvomerezi, mngelo natsika nachotsa mwalawo

And there were earthquakes, the angel came down and removed the stone

Mmanda mulibe Yesuyo wauka (2x)

In the grave, there is no Jesus, He is risen.

120. **PANALI MUNTHU WINA WOLEMERA**¹⁴⁷

Panali munthu wina wolemera (2x)

There was a certain rich man

Ankamvala zobvala za mtengo wapatali (2x)

Was wearing very expensive clothes

145. This song is talking about heaven, where the singer is an aspirant. He/she wants to see heaven because there are blessings there and he/she is trying to find a way to enter this place and praise the Lord Jesus.

Such a place will not be entered by sinners. Instead, sinners will cry and cry until they reach Gehenna.

The song is teaching about the two destinations people will reach, either heaven or Gehenna.

146. This song is talking about the resurrection of Jesus Christ that is recorded in Matthew 28:2. Mathew narrates that there was an earthquake and the angel sat upon the rock after rolling it and Jesus had risen.

The song is giving hope to all who accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour because they will be raised from the dead just as Jesus was raised. This teaching is taken from Romans 6:5.

147. This song is discouraging materialism in this world, because everyone will leave behind whatever he/she possesses, when going to the grave. People are just but corpses, even when they live in iron sheets – roofed houses, they will all go to the grave. There is no God mentioned in this song.

(Tenor) *Yawa, yawa (2x)*

These, these

(All) *Ndi maliro (2x), Kumuona wolemera nyumba*

Are corpses, seeing rich people, their houses

Zawo za malata, kumanda gogobede

Roofed with iron sheets, at the graveyard will lie

(Tenor) *Yawa, yawa (2x)*

These, these

(All) *Ndi maliro (2x), kumuona wolemera nyumba zawo*

Are corpses, seeing rich people, their houses

Za malata, kumanda gogobede

Roofed with iron sheets, at the graveyard will lie.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE, QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What were the positive factors that the missionaries brought to the Chewa culture?
2. How do you assess the Missionaries' approach to mission work in the central part of Malawi, among the Chewa?
3. What was the missionaries' approach on the preaching of the Gospel?
4. What led to the 2001/2002 famine?
5. How many people died of the 2001/2002 famine?
6. What are the main causes of the sufferings that people are experiencing in Malawi?
7. How can these causes of famine be rectified?
8. Why are you composing and singing traditional songs instead of singing the officially accepted songs in the hymnbook?
9. What is the difference between the traditional songs that you are singing and the official songs in the hymnbook?
10. How did you acquire the skills of composing and conducting?
11. What causes many choir members not join in singing the officially accepted songs that are in the hymnbook?
12. Why are some of the youth leaving the Church to join Pentecostal churches?
13. What effect will the introduction of traditional songs have on the liturgy in Malawi?
14. What do you think can be done to improve church music in Malawi?

APPENDIX D