



NORWEGIAN  
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# Africa Pentecostalized?

Understanding the African appropriation of Pentecostalism in light of African perspectives.

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Gudrun, without you this would not have been completed!

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Finishing a thesis like this feels like quite a sensation. Paul writes to the Ephesians that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of the dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." (chapter 6:12). This is an important verse among those whom I have been writing about. Spiritual warfare is rooted in this verse. Still my struggle has always been against flesh and blood. My own flesh and blood. Now I have overcome one of the greatest battles so far in life. I would never have achieved this without help and support from especially two good Samaritans in my life.

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## **Abstract**

This paper focuses on African perspectives on the African appropriation of Pentecostalism. The main perspective comes from Ogbu Kalu's book *African Pentecostalism*. The paper outlines two of his theories. The first; his theory of Pentecostalism as a third African response to the gospel, after Ethiopianism and the African Indigenous Churches. The second, his theory of a resonance between Pentecostalism and African maps of the universe.

The paper is concerned with resonating worldviews as an explanation for the rapid growth and appropriation of Pentecostalism in Africa. It outlines the African worldview as expressed in African Traditional Religion. It also outlines the history of Pentecostalism and its main spiritual and theological concepts.

The research carried out in this paper takes a turn towards a discussion of contextualization and inculturation, and asks the question if whether African Pentecostalism can be seen as a contextualization of Christianity in Africa.

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# CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction

African Pentecostal-type Christianity<sup>1</sup> has been under scrutiny for decades. One of the first to describe it was the Swedish missionary and theologian Bengt Sundkler, in his research on African Initiated Churches (hereby called AICs)<sup>2</sup> in South Africa. In his earliest assessment he – because of the many elements of African traditions – accused some of the AICs to "in the end become the bridge over which Africans are brought back to the old heathenism from whence they once came".<sup>3</sup> This was a main Western attitude toward the AICs. Traditional religions, traditions and worldviews were expected to be abandoned when Christianity, as the civilized religion, entered.<sup>4</sup> Any remnants of African traditional culture were seen as heathenism, and were often demonized.

The attitude toward African Pentecostalism has changed within the last decades. While Sundkler and his contemporaries warned about traditional cultures being 'bridges' back to 'heathenism'<sup>5</sup>, more recent research suggests an alternation of this 'bridge' as an explanation on the growth of Pentecostalism in Africa, seeing traditional cultures as being 'bridges to Christianity'. The argument is that there is a resonance between Pentecostalism and African traditional culture. One who has really elaborated this view is the late Nigerian Ogbu Kalu. He follows:

"... the rapid growth of African Pentecostalism is especially important as a dimension of Africans' allure to the pneumatic ingredients of the gospel that resonate with the power theme in indigenous religions, the power that sustained the cosmos, the socioeconomic and political structures, the power that gave meaning to life's journey from birth to death, and the sojourn in the ancestral world to reincarnated return to the human world."<sup>6</sup>

Kalu also refers to other scholars who emphasize "how Pentecostalism engages the resources of African indigenous cultures in pursuit of its own agendas. They draw attention to large areas of

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1 This term is used in order to avoid misunderstandings. An elaborated discussion on approaches and definitions of Pentecostalism follows in chapter 2.

2 Also called African *Independent* Churches; African *Instituted* Churches; African *Indigenous* Churches.

3 Sundkler, 1961, p.55

4 cf. Max Weber's thesis of 'disenchantment' as an example.

5 In Sundkler's defence: he later abandoned this terminology.

6 Kalu, 2008, p.4



resonance between Pentecostalism and African maps of the universe."<sup>7</sup>

This research is concerned with Pentecostalism and the resonances between Pentecostalism and African worldviews. In a descriptive way I will try to outline the different worldviews encountering each other constituting African Pentecostalism. I will explore the main theories of Ogbu Kalu's book *African Pentecostalism*. Here I will concentrate on the resonance between what Kalu calls African 'maps of the universe' and Pentecostalism. I will then discuss his theories with the use of research carried out by other African scholars, exploring African perspectives on the African appropriation of Pentecostalism.

Before I explore the African perspectives, I will outline my own understanding of how to define global Pentecostalism. This is needed in order to establish my understanding of the concept on which I am researching. I will identify the roots of Pentecostalism, the emergence of it, and its developments. Then I will offer a categorization of Pentecostalism which will come in handy when working with African Pentecostalism.

## **1.2 Statement of research problem**

I want to prepare an understanding of why Pentecostalism seems to be so attractive in Africa. I will outline Ogbu Kalu's understanding of a resonance between African traditional culture and Pentecostalism, and then add perspectives from other African scholars.

And the research problem follows:

***How can we understand the appropriation of Pentecostalism in Africa in light of Ogbu Kalu?***

Research questions will be:

*In what way do Pentecostalism and African traditional culture resonate?*

*Are there confrontations between African traditional culture and Pentecostalism?*

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p.171

## 1.3 Materials

Ogbu Kalu's book *African Pentecostalism* will be my research object. About Pentecostalism, this is the only book by an African scholar to comprehend the whole area of sub-Saharan Africa. It is valuable for me to outline an African account of African Pentecostalism.

### 1.3.1 The curriculum

During the last two decades the number of publications on global Pentecostalism has multiplied. In the last decade, though, the most important books on global Pentecostalism has been multi-author collections of essays.<sup>8</sup> These have proved to be valuable research, and give deep and comprehensive introductions to the field. Still, single-authored productions are needed on contextual theologies, and on global Pentecostalism in particular. These provide more coherent perspectives. Walter Hollenweger's *Pentecostalism* (1997)<sup>9</sup> and Allan Anderson's *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (2004) are both watersheds in literature concerning global Pentecostalism. While Hollenweger's book is concerned with the different roots of Pentecostalism, and mainly with the classical one, Anderson, on the other hand, give a broader introduction to global Pentecostalism, and provides a typological approach to it. Still it is the multi-authored books that are most often published. Allan Anderson co-edited an important book; *Studying Global Pentecostalism* (2010), which deals with different perspectives on studying global Pentecostalism. There are also four similar books widely recognized; *From Babel to Pentecost* (2001); *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing* (2011); *Christianity in Africa and in the African Diaspora* (2008) and *African Identities and World Christianity in the Twentieth Century* (2005).

African Pentecostalism is not discussed sufficiently enough in any of these books. They are only 'scratching the surface'. This is one of the weaknesses with all of these book. They provide excellent introductions, and they give insights on elements that are important in different contexts. But as far as African Pentecostalism is concerned we need in depth studies and books dedicated to it.

Ogbu Kalu is the only African to comprehend such a study in a single book. Ghanaian scholar J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu is also one of the most prominent African scholars on African

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<sup>8</sup> cf. Kollman, 2010, p.4

<sup>9</sup> Not to be confused with Hollenweger's *The Pentecostals* (1972), which is also considered as a milestone in research concerning Pentecostalism. I found it to outdated to be relevant here.

Pentecostalism. He wrote in 2005 a book entitled *African Charismatics*. This was three years before Kalu's *African Pentecostalism*. Still, Asamoah-Gyadu is more concerned with Ghanaian and West African Pentecostalism, and mostly leaves the Eastern and Southern parts of Africa out of interest. This is fair, since Ghana, maybe together with Nigeria, has become the center for Pentecostalism in African.

African scholars have gained more and more acknowledgment the past years. The multi-authored books on global Pentecostalism that are published nowadays reflect their field of research in their lists of authors. African scholars are thus taken seriously. But the curriculum is still lacking African perspectives in theology and missiology. Comprehending African perspectives on global Pentecostalism is not a task of infinite proportions.

Initiatives on publishing African multi-authored books on Pentecostalism has been taken, but not by Western publishers. Action Publishers in Nairobi, Kenya, published in 2003 a multi-authored book called *Charismatic Renewal in Africa. A Challenge for African Christianity*. The authors of these book are mostly East African, from Tanzania and Kenya, making it a valuable contribution to the field of African Pentecostalism.

### **1. 3. 2 Selection of materials**

In the next chapter I will outline my understanding of Pentecostalism, its roots and its developments. I will mostly use Allan Anderson's *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* and Vinson Synan's *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition* in this favor. These are among the most used literature in this respect.

In the African discourse I will collect African research from multi-authored books. I will not include Asamoah-Gyadu's book *African Pentecostalism* notably in this discourse. This is because the book is too comprehensive compared to other African contributors. I also feel the need to include more scholars from other parts of Africa, like East Africa. The book *Charismatic Renewal in Africa* will be used, because it is an important contribution to African research on African Christianity. It is also important simply because it is East African. I will also use African-authored articles from some of the multi-authored books published in the West. Also African-authored articles from journals will be used.

## **1.4 Method and structure**

I will start this research with an outline of the roots, history and developments of Pentecostalism, resulting in a categorization of Pentecostalism. I feel a strong need to do this. After over five years of studying Pentecostalism I too often encounter misperceptions and misconceptions on Pentecostalism, failing to take the global element of it into consideration, thus missing what I see as the main characteristic of global Pentecostalism; diversity. This will be my contribution to a fair categorization of global Pentecostalism. I also want to establish the concept on which I am researching. I will use chapter two in this respect.

A historical outline of Pentecostalism is needed. Ogbu Kalu's thesis deals with African responses to the gospel as historical phenomena. These become visible through different expressions reflecting the time in which they were conceived. Therefore the aspect of history is important. It is also important to establish an underlying understanding of what Pentecostalism is; how, when and from where it emerged, and how it developed.

After this chapter I will start my scrutinizing of Kalu's theory. We can call it a Kalu walkthrough. Here I will present Kalu's main theories. First; his historical approach, and his theory of Pentecostalism as a 'trail of ferment' in African Christianity. Then, secondly, I will outline his theory about resonances between Pentecostalism and African 'maps of the universe'. In this concern there are some elements that are pointed out as key elements. As I see it, these elements are; (1) spiritual warfare and the notion of evil; (2) prosperity theology; (3) healing. In these we find the resonances most evident.

This is a study on different worldviews encountering, influencing and conflating each other. I will therefore dedicate a fair number of pages outlining these. As I see it, these worldviews are; (1) Western mission worldviews; (2) African traditional worldviews<sup>10</sup>; (3) Pentecostal worldviews; and (4) the biblical worldview. I will not outline these thematically. The Western mission and biblical worldviews will not be that much in focus. On the other hand, the Pentecostal and the African traditional worldviews will be outlined more in detail. The object on which I am researching is African Pentecostalism. The world 'African' represents one worldview constituting it, the world 'Pentecostalism' represents another.

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<sup>10</sup> Ogbu Kalu calls them African maps of the universe.

In the fourth chapter, I will start drawing upon other African scholars. Here I will try to find either contra-perspectives or congruent perspectives. The aim of this research is to scrutinize the theory of a resonance between Pentecostalism and African 'maps of the universe'. In other scholars I will look for the same ideas and compare them with Kalu's.

Then follows a chapter wherein I discuss my findings with my own words. This I will do in my penultimate chapter. Lastly I will conclude my work and look back on this journey, hopefully with joy and enthusiasm.

## **1.5 Importance of the research**

I would argue that studies on global Pentecostalism and contextual theologies are the most important field of the academical discipline of theology. There are several reasons for this:

(1) Pentecostal and Charismatic types of Christianity are the fastest growing movements in global Christianity. It grows most notably in the Global South. In Asia, among old Asian world religions, and in hostile regimes like in communist China; in Africa, among the poorest of the poor, and in the midst traditional religion; and in Latin America, within an already established Church institute. The case of Pentecostal growth in Latin America has led scholars asking themselves whether the whole continent is turning Protestant.<sup>11</sup> One can almost ask the same question in with the case of African Christianity. Allan Anderson writes: "Such a fundamental change has indeed taken place in African Christianity that Pentecostalism has become its dominant expression in many countries."<sup>12</sup>

(2) On continents like Africa and South America, diverse Pentecostal-types of Christianity challenge the mainline Churches with their appealing spiritualities and tempting messages of prosperity and protection from a wide arsenal of evils. When we look at African countries like Ghana, Nigeria, Burundi and Zambia, we can see that Pentecostal-type of Christianity has already made it to both public media and politics.<sup>13</sup>

(3) European Christians still haven't realized the fact that a "gravity shift" in global Christianity has taken place, posing heavy challenges on European theology. Missiology was for a long time a neglected discipline in western theological seminaries<sup>14</sup>, and the enormous growth of

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11 Stoll, David. 1990. *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?* Berkeley: University of California Press.

12 Anderson, 2004, p.121

13 cf. Gifford, 2001

14 "I am sure there is no department of theological study in which the scholarly instruments are so few and so primitive

Pentecostalism in the world has not been taken seriously. Third World theologians are overheard.<sup>15</sup> While Christianity in the west, with all its intellectualism, reforms and history, experiences decrease, Christianity is actually growing faster than ever in the world. But it is a different Christianity. It is a charismatic one, devoid of western criticism.

Andrew Walls was maybe the first to awake people with the idea of an ongoing gravity shift of global Christianity taking place. The Gambian historian Lamin Sanneh commented once that Walls was one of the first to acknowledge African Christianity, and to see that "African Christianity might be the shape of things to come".<sup>16</sup> In 2002 historian Philip Jenkins published his best selling book *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. As a non-theologian he opened even more eyes to the fact that Christianity probably would change due to the gravity shift, writing: "Over the last century ... the center of gravity in the Christian world has shifted inexorably southward, to Africa and Latin America." And he continues with pointing out the difference between what he calls 'Old Christendom' and the new ones emerging in the Global South: "... many global South Christians are more conservative in terms of both beliefs and moral teaching than are the mainstream churches of the global North, and this is especially true in Africa."<sup>17</sup> Allan Anderson follows this: "From being a predominantly European and American religion in the early twentieth century, not only has Christianity shifted southwards, but it has also fundamentally changed its character from a rational, clerical and traditional European religion to a more emotional, spontaneous and multicultural one."<sup>18</sup>

(4) One of the many problems emerging in the wake of this 'gravity shift' is polarization between north and south in theology, spirituality, ethics, worldviews etc. This is clearly to be seen in church partnership programs. Also in great forums like the World Council of Churches we see a polarization between Global South theology and Western theology. Lamin Sanneh gives an example from Minneapolis, U.S., where a general convention in the American Episcopal Church was taking place in 2003. The Third World bishops reacted on the American Episcopal Church's confirmation of an Episcopal gay bishop, something that for them was totally unheard of. The American liberal leaders dismissed their African colleagues as backward and misguided.<sup>19</sup> This would also be the

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as in mission studies. ... Africa and Asia and Latin America and the Pacific and the Caribbean – now major centres of Christianity – are under-represented in works that are meant to cover the entire field of Christian knowledge." Walls, 1996, p.153.

15 This is hopefully about to change. The Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) in the World Council of Churches (WCC) is nowadays promoting a proposal for a new ecumenical mission affirmation to be presented at WCC 10<sup>th</sup> assembly at Busan, Korea, in 2013. The proposal is evidently influenced by Global South theology.

16 Christianity Today, February 2007, Vol. 51, No. 2, *Historian Ahead of His Time*

17 Jenkins, 2002, p.1. 8

18 Anderson, 2010 b, p.15

19 Example taken from Sanneh, 2005, p.213

case in Europe, where many of the Churches are going expressively liberal compared to their counterparts in the South. In 2011 the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT) published what is called *The Dodoma Statement*, rejecting any cooperation with Churches that accept same-sex marriage. The statement also uses harsh words against same-sex marriage, while European Churches embrace it more and more.<sup>20</sup> In 2013 the aspiring Mekane Yesus Church in Ethiopia made a similar statement towards Scandinavian state sanctioned churches, who they felt deviated too much from Biblical teachings. Statements like these can be found all over the African continent, making cooperation in the big forums, like the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and World Council of Churches (WCC), rather challenging.

(5) Polarization is also a problem between denominations in the Third World. In many countries where mainline churches are in majority, Pentecostal and charismatic Christians are oppressed and discriminated. Even in the West, in countries like Greece, Pentecostals are being deeply frowned upon and disliked. In countries like China Pentecostals and charismatics are heavily persecuted, even by the Protestant state-sanctioned Three Self Church.<sup>21</sup>

(6) African Pentecostalism is also in focus in other disciplines, like sociology and anthropology. And that is about time! Sociologist Paul Gifford and Cultural Anthropologist Birgit Meyer have both done important research on African Pentecostalism. According to the Norwegian missiologist Tormod Engelsviken, new disciplines concerning sociology of Pentecostalism and anthropology of Pentecostalism has now emerged.<sup>22</sup>

I would also argue that studies on the fields of missiology and ecumenism in theological faculties, at least in Norway, are too little in focus. Most researchers are concerned with either New Testament studies, systematic theology or Church history. Few are concerned with the parts of the world wherein the very center of the gravity of Christianity has shifted. Still when Christian commitment and participation mostly decline in the West, while they grow in the Global South. As Andrew Walls has argued, Christian theology is colored by the different cultures it encounters.<sup>23</sup> When Christianity encountered Europe it was highly influenced by Western orthodox thinking. It was kind of Europeanized. The same happened when it encountered Celts in Ireland and Britain. Christianity was contextualized into a more appealing nature-approaching religion. Today it is maybe difficult to sort out the very European element of Christianity, simply because Christianity has been European for almost two thousand years. In Africa, for example, Christianity is now a

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20 An English version of the statement is found on <http://www.elct.org/news/2010.04.004.html>

21 Aanje, 2011, p.49-51

22 Engelsviken, 2010

23 Walls, 2002

major religion. Even the majority religion in many countries. But it is a young religion in most parts of Africa, and it is still in the process of integration and appropriation. And when Christianity encounters African 'maps of the universe' it changes. This is what Andrew Walls means with the title of his book named *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*. Now Christianity is Africanized. In hundred years, if the calculations are right, Africanized, Asianized and South-Americanized Christianities will be the dominant expressions of Christianity. Christianity will probably be reduced to being a minor religion in Europe, and European Christianity a minor expression of global Christianity. This is why it is important to follow Christianity's most important developments, which is not theological developments within Western universities, but the rapid transmission of the Christian faith in the Global South, and the developments of Christian theology the integration and appropriation of Christianity lead to. We need to enter the great fields of theology which are located outside our hemisphere. I will quote Kenyan Anglican philosopher John Mbiti:

"It is utterly scandalous for so many Christian scholars in [the] old Christendom to know so much about heretical movements in the second and third centuries, when so few of them know anything about Christian movements in areas of the younger churches."<sup>24</sup>

## **1.6 Aim of the research**

The aim of this study is to prepare an understanding of why Pentecostalism is found so attractive in Africa. And by this I also want to prepare for a better understanding of African Pentecostalism as a contextual theology which is important for us today, and of global Pentecostalism as a whole. I will say with Allan Anderson: "Africa has its own distinct contribution to make to the shape of global Pentecostalism."<sup>25</sup> We need to understand other theologies if we want to grasp an understanding of Christianity as a global multicultural religion, and we need to understand Pentecostal-types of Christianity.

I also want for the future to develop my research on African Pentecostalism as new questions arise. After this thesis, I want to work further with contextualizing theology in Africa.

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24 Quoted in Jenkins, 2007, p.5

25 Anderson, 2004, p.103



There has for a long time been urged for a more inculturated theology of Africa.<sup>26</sup> One question that already has popped into my mind: Can African Pentecostalism be seen as an expression of an inculturated theology?

This research also aims at providing for a better understanding of Pentecostalism among students. Way to often I read simplified and inaccurate descriptions of Pentecostalism, descriptions that do not take the global character of the movement into consideration. These perceptions seem to suffer from lack of knowledge about the extent and the varieties of Pentecostalism.

I hope that this research will participate in making contextual theology and missiology more acknowledged and attractive disciplines in theological seminars. It will for sure inspire me to keep working with African theology, and other contextual theologies in general.

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<sup>26</sup> Akrong, 2008

# CHAPTER TWO – APPROACHING PENTECOSTALISM

## 2.1 Introduction

Allan Anderson writes: "Any description of 'African Pentecostalism' depends very much on how 'Pentecostalism' is defined ..."<sup>27</sup>

In this chapter I will look at different ways to approach Pentecostalism. This is necessary in order to give a definition of the term on which I am researching. First I will give a historical outline of Pentecostalism and (1) identify its roots, (2) outline the early history of it. This is important in order to recognize the very identity and the characteristics of Pentecostalism, and find out from where they are inherited. Then I will overview the developments of Pentecostalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Here I will limit myself to those developments I find most important. Lastly I will categorize Pentecostalism. The aim of this chapter is to find a definition of Pentecostalism that takes the global element of it into consideration.

### 2.1.1 The challenge of drawing the Pentecostal pedigree

The traces of the origin of Pentecostalism are difficult to decide, especially when taking the global element of it into consideration. Hollenweger, for example, identifies five different roots of Pentecostalism, stressing the black, oral roots foremost.<sup>28</sup> Others emphasize movements within 19<sup>th</sup> century revival Christianity as being the main prelude to Pentecostalism. Both can be challenged. Still, I will in this chapter go for the latter. The very term 'Pentecostalism' was used to describe a charismatic and enthusiastic revival phenomenon in early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the US, and was a continuation of an emerging awareness of Spirit baptism associated with the outpouring of charisma on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

While the Azusa Street revival has been seen as the origin of the Pentecostal denominations in the west, many preceding revivals took place all around the world, exhibiting multiple Pentecostal features such as glossolalia, healing and prophecies. When considering African Initiated Churches, many of these are more related to independent revivals occurring as responses to Western missions, often prior to the Azusa Street revival. But they draw from the same origins as the

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<sup>27</sup> Anderson, 2012 a, p.28

<sup>28</sup> Hollenweger, 1997, chapters 3-11

Pentecostal movement that sprung out of Azusa Street, with a mix of their old religious spirituality. When we today categorize them as African Pentecostals, it is because they resemble other African Pentecostals in both spirituality and theology.

Pentecostalism had its preludes and forerunners. These played different roles in catalyzing the type of Christianity that was to be known as Pentecostalism. The pedigree of Pentecostalism contains a multiple of Christian features. I will write about those I find most important.

## **2. 1. 2      The challenge of categorizing Pentecostalism**

In many countries Pentecostals have organized themselves into denominations. Due to widespread mission, these denominations have often become transnational. The largest Pentecostal denomination in the world is the Assemblies of God, with some 65 million members and adherents. Still, the Assemblies of God is just one out of many Pentecostal denominations. And, more strikingly, many of the churches that represent the largest growth of Pentecostalism today are independent churches, or movements within traditional churches. This makes the categorizing of Pentecostalism rather challenging.

The last half century Pentecostalism has developed and branched out widely, challenging the doctrinal element as characteristic of this type of Christianity. Today it belongs to the old school claiming that the doctrine of speaking in tongues as initial evidence of the Spirit baptism is characteristic to Pentecostalism, especially when including AICs, Charismatic mainline churches and the neo-Pentecostal churches.<sup>29</sup> Spirit baptism was, as we shall see, the main focus of the early Pentecostal revivals, like the one in Azusa Street. It was the crucial issue. Some classical Pentecostal churches today have retained it, and emphasize it as a crucial doctrine. But globally the focus has certainly changed. And it has changed differently depending on which branches one belongs to. Giving a categorization of Pentecostalism based on theological doctrines can therefore lead to confusions, if not done carefully. Allan Anderson writes: "... diversity itself has become a primary defining characteristic of Pentecostal and Charismatic identity. It is now probably better to speak of a whole 'range of Pentecostals'."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> These terms I will explain later.

<sup>30</sup> Anderson, 2004, p.10

## 2. 2 *The roots of Pentecostalism*

### 2. 2. 1 Evangelicalism

The 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> century resurgence of evangelical revivalist Christianity was an important prelude to the mushrooming of Pentecostalism. This is where the foundations of Pentecostalism were laid.

Paul Knitter suggests four characteristics to describe Evangelicals:

1. "The Bible is the rock-bottom guide to all that a follower of Jesus does and claims." There are differences among Evangelicals on total or partial inerrancy.
2. Christian lives must "be rooted in and inspired by a personal experience of the saving power of the living Christ and his spirit." Cf. being 'born again', 'baptized with the Spirit', or 'making a choice for Jesus'.
3. Jesus is the only Savior. There is no other name by whom we can be saved.
4. Commitment to mission and evangelism.<sup>31</sup>

One of the main starting point for evangelical Christianity was the emergence of Pietism in Halle, Germany, in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>32</sup> "The Pietist movement in seventeenth and eighteenth century Lutheranism stressed the importance of a *personal experience of God or 'new birth' by the Holy Spirit*, over and above what they saw as mere head-knowledge."<sup>33</sup> They also emphasized the importance for a Christian to live *a pious and vigorous Christian life according to God's word; the Bible*. These emphases fueled the *missionary and Pietist zeal* of the Moravian revival in Herrnhut, eastern Germany, under the leadership of Nicolaus Zinzendorf (1700 – 1760) in 1727. Moravian missionaries went overseas with the gospel, to the West Indies, to the North American colonies and to Greenland.

Similarly, Methodism was formed in England, another evangelical movement emphasizing proper Christian living. Under the leadership of John Wesley (1703 – 1791) this movement had an enormous impact on religious life in Britain and North America. Wesley himself met Moravian missionaries on the boat from the North American colonies, and became heavily influenced by their Pious approach to Christian life. While Wesley more or less failed in North America, his fellow

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31 Knitter, 2002, p.22. Point 3 is rewritten and adapted to this research, still very much in line with Knitter's theories. Cf. p.27-28.

32 Pietism had of course itself its forerunners.

33 Anderson, 2004, p.25 (italics added)

Methodist and friend George Whitefield (1714 – 1770) contributed strongly to what is called the Great Awakening in American and British history.

The Great Awakenings swept over North America and Britain. The First Great Awakening was ignited by the puritan preacher Jonathan Edwards (1703 – 1758) in the 1730s. George Whitfield fueled it with a revival tour in all of the thirteen colonies.<sup>34</sup> The First Awakening laid the foundations of revival Christianity in North America. In 1801 the perhaps "most famous outbreak of enthusiastic, Pentecostal-like religion in American history occurred in the great Cane Ridge camp meeting in Kentucky".<sup>35</sup> The Second Great Awakening followed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the Third Awakening at the end of the century.

The Great Awakenings nurtured all kinds of churches with Evangelicalism; Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Puritans, Quakers etc. And preachers from all of these churches participated. And the emphases on Biblical authority and a personal conversion experience were engraved in their Evangelical identity.

## 2. 2. 2 The Holiness movement and the 'second blessing'

### *John Wesley and the sanctification*

John Wesley's theology was very important to the Holiness movement, and thus also important as being a root of Pentecostalism. His main contribution, maybe, was his emphasis on holiness as part of Christian life, and his doctrine of the 'second blessing'. Wesley believed that every Christian should experience *entire sanctification* during life.<sup>36</sup> This experience came after an *experience of justification*. His theology of sanctification was *influenced by Catholic and Anglican mystical traditions*,<sup>37</sup> while his theology of justification was *influenced by Martin Luther's preface to Romans*. Hollenweger writes: "While it is not clear just how far Wesley accepted the ideas of his Catholic mentors, he certainly accepted their plea for a second religious crisis experience subsequent to and different from conversion. This experience, in turn, played a major role in the nineteenth century American Holiness movement."<sup>38</sup>

Wesley developed the doctrine of sanctification as the 'second blessing'. Anderson states that

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34 With his emotional and dramatized way of preaching, he would almost certainly have reminded us of some present day Pentecostal crusade evangelists.

35 Synan, 1997, p.11

36 Wesley himself never had an sanctification experience. But he said that he knew someone who had.

37 See lists on Catholic and Anglican authors that influenced Wesley in Synan, 1997, p.2-3, and Hollenweger, 1997, p.146-149

38 Hollenweger, 1997, p.182

"this 'second blessing' doctrine ... had significant influence on Pentecostalism ... as this doctrine was transmitted and reinterpreted through the US American Holiness movement in the nineteenth century."<sup>39</sup> John Wesley's theology influenced the revivalist movements in both Britain and North America, and the 'second blessing' doctrine became the major focus in many of the 19<sup>th</sup> century revival movements.

### *The Holiness movement*

After John Wesley passed away in 1791, Methodists put less emphasis on the 'second blessing' as an instantaneous experience, and believed it to be a progressive experience that lasted a lifetime. But during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a further stress on Christian perfection was called for, and the 'second blessing' doctrine started to flourish among Evangelical Christians, mainly Methodists. "By 1840 perfectionism was becoming one of the central themes of American social, intellectual, and religious life."<sup>40</sup> This was the first wave of the Holiness movement. One of the most important proponents of holiness theology of this time was a woman named Phoebe Palmer (1807 – 1874). She held together with her husband numerous campaigns, addressed several camp meetings, and even published a periodical devoted to the doctrine of Christian perfection. She promoted exclusively that "sanctification was not something that took a lifetime of prayerful persistence to achieve but, rather, that the New Testament promised sanctification could be received in an instant ..."<sup>41</sup> An astonishing unity among Church denominations were also evident at this time. Baptist, Methodists and Presbyterians cooperated and held revivals together. Journals, campaigns and revival tours of prominent holiness promoters were thriving. This unity was carried on into the modern Holiness movement, which emerged in the 1860's.

During the 1860s the United States experienced a moral relapse. The Civil War (1861-1865) and the promotion of modernism and critical thoughts made it challenging for the idea of Christian perfectionism to adapt. Still, the doctrine of entire sanctification was not abandoned. Calls for a new promotion of holiness were made, especially in Methodist conferences, and new camp meetings were initiated. The first 'National Camp Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness', held at Vineland, New Jersey, July 17<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> 1867, can be seen as the initial start for the modern Holiness movement. From there on annual camp meetings were held in many locations, and Holiness Associations were created. The modern Holiness movement was more structured and organized than earlier movements emphasizing holiness, which turned out to be quite effective. It was nurtured by a flood of literature and a high number of camp meetings and conferences.

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39 Anderson, 2004, p.26

40 Synan, 1997, p.17

41 Stewart, 2012, p.118

In the 1880's and 1890's The Holiness movement experienced frictions with the formal leadership of the Methodist church, and a growing discontent with the leadership of the movement arose. Little by little the movement was silently dissolved into different holiness denominations at the end of the century. Many of these new denominations were to join the Pentecostal movement. One of the most important was the Church of God.

#### *Developments of the 'second blessing' doctrine*

The theology of the Holiness movement was built on the foundations of John Wesley; that it was possible for every Christian to experience entire sanctification. This entire sanctification was called the 'second blessing', and was seen as a 'second work of grace' following salvation as the 'first work of grace'. But the 'second blessing' doctrine developed, and was by others more and more interpreted as a work of the Holy Spirit. John Fletcher (1729 – 1785), a friend and contemporary of John Wesley, was one of the first to describe his sanctification experience as a 'baptism with the Holy Spirit'. In the early 1820's a young man named Charles G. Finney (1792 – 1875) was converted, and shortly after he experienced what he described as a 'baptism in the Holy Spirit'.

While the Holiness movement continued John Wesley's promotion of the 'second blessing' as the entire sanctification, other important movements developed the doctrine further. As we have seen, Charles Finney interpreted his 'second blessing' as a 'baptism in the Holy Spirit'. His theology also developed in a more reformed direction, as he put less emphasis on the 'second blessing' as the experience of an instant entire sanctification. He rather spoke of the 'second blessing' as a 'baptism of the Holy Spirit', and emphasized a person's free will towards salvation and the cultivation of 'right intentions' towards sanctification. "One of Finney's theological innovations was his increasing tendency to identify the 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' as the *means of entering into entire sanctification*."<sup>42</sup> Charles Finney was a major contributor to the Second Great Awakening, and influenced Evangelical Christianity widely.

The Keswick movement, named after its first convention in the English Lake District in 1875, was the English equivalent to the Holiness movement. It was very similar to the Holiness movement concerning the emphasis on a 'second work of grace' experience. While the Holiness movement referred to it as the 'second blessing' to entire sanctification, the Keswick movement identified it as 'baptism with the Spirit' to a 'higher Christian life'. Subsequently the theology of sanctification was detached from the Spirit baptism. The Spirit baptism was understood more in terms of 'empowering for service' than entering a state of sanctification. This view had an important influence on the Pentecostal theology of the 'second blessing'.

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42 Synan, 1997, p.15 (italics added)

In the 1890's the 'Pentecostal' element of the 'baptism with the Holy Spirit' was emphasized. Some of the new institutes even added the term 'Pentecostal' in their name, like the periodical initially started by the early Holiness promoter Phoebe Palmer; *Guide to Holiness*, added to its name: ... *and Pentecostal life*. Also many of the new holiness denominations and missions reflected the aspect of Pentecost in their name, like the Pentecostal Churches of America (formed in 1894) and the Pentecostal Mission (formed in 1898).

The doctrine of 'second blessing' and 'baptism with the Spirit' developed even further in the 1890's. Canadian holiness evangelist R. C. Horner published in 1891 a book called *'Pentecost'*, wherein he taught that the baptism in the Holy Spirit was a third work of grace subsequent to sanctification, which was the second work of grace. This doctrine became an important issue in the Pentecostal Revival that was yet to come. Another important movement started in Iowa in 1895, by Benjamin Hardin Irwin, called the Iowa Fire-Baptized Holiness Associations. It was expanded into a national organization as the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church in 1898. This movement emphasized Spirit baptism as an experience following second blessing sanctification. Synan writes: "In a social, doctrinal, and intellectual sense, the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church was a direct precursor of the modern Pentecostal movement in North-America."<sup>43</sup>

Anderson identifies three positions of Holiness adherents by the turn of the century:

"(1) the Wesleyan position, which said that 'entire sanctification' or 'perfect love' was the 'second blessing' or baptism with the Spirit; (2) the Keswick position, which held that the baptism with the Spirit was an endowment with power for service; and (3) the 'third blessing' position, which had both the 'second blessing' of sanctification and a 'third blessing' of 'baptism with fire' – again an endowment with power."<sup>44</sup>

### *The Full Gospel*

A restoration theology developed in the more radical wing of the Holiness movement. God was about to restore this church with all the power that had been absent since the days of the apostles. The coining of the term 'full gospel' was an expression of this belief, springing out from late 19<sup>th</sup> century Holiness movements. The full gospel pictures key elements of a Christian's life: (1) justification by faith for the forgiveness of sins as a first work of grace, (2) sanctification as a second work of grace, (3) physical healing for the body, (4) the impending premillennial return of

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43 Synan, 1997, p.59

44 Anderson, 2004, p.29



Jesus Christ. This was also called the fourfold gospel, or the foursquare gospel. The full gospel was adopted by the early Pentecostals.

### **2. 2. 3      The Healing movement**

The emergence of healing ministries in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was another important contributor to Pentecostalism. Healing had been present in earlier revivals also, and was an important claim in Evangelicalism. But the very focus on healing, and the forming of ministries devoted to it, was proliferating in the 1880's and 1890's. These movements emphasizing healing contributed to catalyzing Pentecostalism, and left a major contribution to Pentecostal practices and views on healing.

The North American healing ministries had in particular great impact on Pentecostalism. A. B. Simpson (1843 – 1919) started his healing ministry in 1884, and combined it with a global mission outreach. He never joined the Pentecostal movement, but influenced it with his emphasis on evangelism and healing. In 1887 he founded the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA), and a school training a lot of Pentecostal ministers. Maria Woodworth-Etter (1844 – 1924) started to pray for healing in 1885. She later joined the Pentecostal movement. Her meetings was early on characterized by features that would later be characterizing to Pentecostal spirituality.

#### *John Alexander Dowie (1847 – 1907) and Zionism*

The most remarkable character in the Healing movement was John Alexander Dowie. He had an important influence on the Pentecostal movement, and his mission outreach also contributed to the blooming of several African Independent Churches. Born Scottish, he started his healing ministry in Australia. In 1888 he moved his ministry to the US. As his ministry grew rapidly his ambitions followed, resulting in the building of a city some miles outside Chicago, a utopia called Zion. He traveled worldwide with his ministry, several times to Australia, to Britain and had representatives in South Africa, resulting in major revivals. The mission in South Africa was remarkable, resulting in the formation of several independent churches, today categorized as Zionist churches.<sup>45</sup> These are included in the big umbrella called Pentecostalism, even though they preceded the movement.

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<sup>45</sup> It is necessary to mention that Zion city went bankrupt. After Dowie was involved in several scandals – the biggest of them; proclaiming himself as the promised Elija of the end times – followed by other hopeless statements, his reputation was severely damaged, and his movement ended as a Christian sect. Sadly, Dowie ended his life in disgrace.

## 2. 2. 4 The Missionary movements

The religious climate following in the wake of Evangelicalism sparked an extraordinary mission activity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and engraved a missionary zeal on Evangelicalism as a whole. As mission activity was generally seen as pointless in 18<sup>th</sup> century England<sup>46</sup>, this changed with the influence of Evangelicalism.<sup>47</sup> The year 1792 is known for a milestone in mission history in this regard; William Carey (1761 – 1834) founded the first mission society together with some friends. This society is best known as Baptist Missionary Society.<sup>48</sup> This, in turn, inspired more missionary societies to emerge. In 1795 the famous London Missionary Society was founded.<sup>49</sup> This was an interdenominational society, and sent missionaries all over the world.<sup>50</sup>

The founding of missionary societies is seen as the start of the modern mission movement. It was through mission societies the gospel was carried out in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and is the way of mission we are familiar with today.

Pentecostalism strongly inherited the missionary zeal of the missionary movements. Early after the Pentecostal revival was ignited missionaries were sent to every corner of the world.

## 2. 3 The emergence of Pentecostalism

### 2. 3. 1 International revivals

Allan Anderson states that "... there were also revivals with charismatic phenomena in Asia, Africa and Latin America not directly related to the events in North America."<sup>51</sup> Some of these

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46 An interpretation of that time was that the Great Commission in Matthew 28, the evangelization of the "heathens", was a "personal privilege of the Apostles", and that they completed the work. The problem was that the "heathens" rejected it. The strict Calvinism of the time also prevented people to see the need of mission and evangelism; it was completely up to God to save the lost. William Carey was himself frequently confronted with anti-mission attitudes like these. See Drewery, Mary (1978). *William Carey. A biography of the Bible translator; orientalist, botanist and pioneer missionary to India*. London: Hodder and Stoughton. p.31; and Harrison, E. Myers (1945). *Heroes of Faith and Pioneer Trails*. Chicago: Moody Press. p.43

47 To nuance this a bit; Scandinavian Pietists started ground breaking mission activity already early in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Denmark/Norway sent Ziegenbalg and Plütschau to Tharangambadi (formerly Tranquebar), India, in 1705, and Hans Egede to Greenland in 1721.

48 Originally called the *Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Amongst the Heathen*. In 2000 it took the name BMS World Mission. Worth mentioning; Carey was inspired by the Moravian mission in Africa.

49 Originally called the *Missionary Society*.

50 Already early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century missionaries were sent to South Africa.

51 Anderson, 2004, p.35

revivals even preceded the Azusa Street revival. These revivals were important in at least two ways: (1) to the formation of Pentecostalism in their respective countries, and (2) they contributed to an expectation of a major 'Pentecostal' revival worldwide, as reports from them were brought to every corner of the evangelical world.

#### *The Welsh Revival (1904 – 1905)*

The Welsh revival was maybe the most important revival preceding the Azusa Street revival. Conducted by the young preacher Evan Roberts (1878 – 1951) the Welsh revival reached the ears of North American revivalist leaders, and fueled the expectations of a major revival outbreak with end time connotations. Especially when Roberts himself declared the revival to be the 'latter rain' promised by Old Testament prophets. Roberts emphasized a personal experience of Spirit baptism and believed it to be necessary for any revival to occur.

#### *The Mukti Revival*

In 1905 a revival started in Mukti, Eastern India. It spread to Gujarat in 1906. In these revivals a number of ecstatic Pentecostal phenomena were manifested, like speaking in tongues. As this revival happened exactly at the same time as that of Azusa Street, it did not influence its American counterpart noteworthy. But nor was it the other way around either. Still it inspired and triggered the outbreak of a major revival in Korea.

#### *The 'Korean Pentecost'*

The first one sprung out on the missionary field in Wonsan in 1903 and was conducted by Methodist missionaries. Following this an even bigger revival started at a convention in Pyongyang in 1907, after the news of the Welsh and Indian revivals was brought. This was called the 'Korean Pentecost' as it was compared to the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. The revival also fueled other revivals in Korea and the "features of the revival still characterize Protestant churches in Korea today ..."<sup>52</sup>

#### *African revivals*

The blooming of Evangelicalism in the 18<sup>th</sup> century sparked a comprehensive world wide mission activity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many of these missions generated charismatic revivals among Africans, from which AICs grew out of. Many of these are counted as Pentecostal churches today, even though their initial revivals preceded the Azusa Street revival.

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52 Anderson, 2004, p.37

### **2. 3. 2 Charles Fox Parham and the 'initial evidence'**

This famous scene took place in the newly started Bethel Bible College in the wonderful villa Stone's Folly in Topeka, Kansas, slightly before Christmas 1900: Before going on a three day preaching errand, Charles Parham (1873 – 1929) gave his students an assignment: What is the scriptural evidence for the reception of baptism with the Holy Spirit? It was an eye-opener for Parham when he came back and discovered that all the students unanimously had drawn the same conclusion; speaking with other tongues is the evidence for the reception of baptism with the Holy Spirit. Some days later, December 31, 1900, on New Years eve, Parham and his students conducted something like a prayer vigil. The next evening, on January 1, 1901, one of the students, thirty year old Agnes Ozman (1870 – 1937), requested Parham to lay hands on her and pray for the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Ozman became the first to receive the tongues as the evidence of being baptized with the Holy Spirit in Stone's Folly. Parham and the other students subsequently followed.

Many consider this event as being the birth of Pentecostalism. Parham's formulation of the doctrine of speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of Spirit baptism is indeed the birth of the doctrinal basis of the early Pentecostal movement. But the Pentecostal Revival *par excellence* was yet to be launched.

Parham closed his Bible College in 1901 and went on a four year lasting revival tour, in which he promoted his new views. He also moved to Houston, Texas, where he started "The Bible Training School". But the revival outbreak of his doctrines was long in coming.

Parham's doctrine of second and third blessing was in line with R. C. Horner and the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church. He believed the baptism with the Holy Spirit to be separate in time and nature from the sanctification. Still, his 'Pentecostal invention' was the 'initial evidence'. Speaking in tongues is the 'sign' of being baptized with the Holy Spirit.

### **2. 3. 3 William Joseph Seymour and the Azusa Street Revival**

William Joseph Seymour (1870 – 1922) was a son of two former slaves. He was reared in a Catholic home, but in his twenties he was acquainted with the Holiness movement, which he later joined. Seymour became an eager follower of John Wesley. In 1905 he found himself in Texas, entering Parham's Bible Training School. Because of the Jim Crow laws Seymour was not allowed

to attend classes together with white people. But Parham made a vague exception for Seymour, allowing him to sit in the hallway, outside the classroom door, listening to the lectures. Seymour became widely enthusiastic about this new doctrine. After being called to Los Angeles he brought Parham's doctrine with him there.<sup>53</sup>

It was Seymour that launched the great revival that was to be known as the initial start of the Pentecostal movement. The Pentecostal fire 'fell' after house meetings in a villa in 214 Bonnie Brae Street, downtown Los Angeles.<sup>54</sup> Many people was baptized in the Holy Spirit there as the initial evidence; the speaking in tongues, was manifested. The revival was initiated here, and the group of followers grew rapidly. Seymour was the leader of the revival. The need for greater capacity was evident, and the group purchased an old well-used African Methodist Episcopal church building in downtown Los Angeles, in the street that was to become associated with the birth of Pentecostalism; Azusa Street. The building was called *Apostolic Faith Mission* after Parham's periodical. And here, in this ramshackle, the Pentecostal revival was ignited.

One of the astonishing thing about the Azusa Street revival was that it was devoid of racial segregation. African Americans and European Americans were mixed, and non had privileges above the other. The only thing that mattered was to be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

#### *Theology of the early Pentecostals*

Seymour and the first Pentecostals adopted the doctrines of Parham and the Holiness movement. The initial evidence doctrine was the Pentecostal doctrine *per se*. Without speaking in tongues one was not considered baptized in the Spirit. Therefore the tongues were sought explicitly.

The Pentecostals also adopted the full gospel doctrine, the fourfold gospel, and also believed that through their movement God was about to restore the Church to its early days when the charisma flowered. But the Pentecostals added a new element to it, and renamed it the fivefold gospel. This was now the full gospel: (1) justification, (2) sanctification, (3) baptism in the Holy Spirit, (4) healing, (5) the imminent return of Christ. But this fivefold gospel was about to change due to early schisms.

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53 A group of women that had attended Parham's meetings in Texas had already brought the doctrine to LA. They were excluded from the Baptist Church because of their Holiness theology. The most important of them were Neely Terry, Lucy Farrow (who introduced Parham to Seymour), Mrs. Josephine Washburn and Mrs. Julie Hutchins (who served as pastor in the excommunicated group until Seymour came).

54 The home of a man called Richard Asbery.

## 2. 3. 4 William H. Durham

William H. Durham (1873 – 1912) was a baptist pastor in Chicago when the Azusa Street revival started. He joined the Holiness movement in the 1890's, and in 1901 he founded the North Avenue Full Gospel Mission. But he struggled with the second blessing doctrine. After hearing about the new revival, Durham came to Azusa Street in February 1907 to 'seek his Pentecost'. Shortly after he experienced the Spirit baptism, and became widely engaged in the mission. He preached in the Apostolic Faith Mission on several occasions.

Durham traveled back to Chicago in March 1907, and ignited the Pentecostal fire there. The North Avenue Full Gospel Mission was soon a major revival center in Chicago, and would soon exceed Azusa Street in influence.<sup>55</sup> But while the Azusa Street revival was an African American dominated movement, Durham's revival became heavily white dominated. And his methods were different from Seymour's. In Azusa Street everyone could preach and give testimonies, and the services were highly spontaneous and impulsive. In Durham's church people came mainly to listen to Durham's persuasive preaching. This made him doctrinally very influencing.

It was Durham's view on the sanctification that made him revolutionize early Pentecostalism. In 1910 he declared the doctrine to be wrong according to the scriptures. While Seymour and the Azusa Street embraced it in their fivefold gospel, Durham reduced the full gospel to a fourfold gospel, discarding the entire sanctification doctrine to the benefit of Spirit baptism. He thus believed in only two 'blessing experiences'; justification and Spirit baptism. Durham was much in line with the Keswick movement here, and also with Charles Finney.

Durham developed a 'Finished Work' doctrine that became a controversial issue in early Pentecostalism. He taught that sanctification was a progressive work, and that Christ had provided for it in his atonement. In 1911 he went to Los Angeles and preached it, even in the Apostolic Faith Mission. Since Seymour was out on a preaching tour at the east coast, Durham convinced many workers at Azusa Street. So, when Seymour came hurrying back to close the "finished work heresy" out of Azusa Street, Durham left with about two-thirds of Seymour's workers. He opened a church nearby which immediately exceeded the Apostolic Faith Mission in number of followers. This was the first and major schism of early Pentecostalism, a schism we see the consequences of today.<sup>56</sup>

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55 Anderson, 2004, p.45

56 The Assemblies of God (AoG), which is a transnational Pentecostal denomination – the biggest in the world, was founded in 1914 by Pentecostals in line with Durham, while the Church of God in Christ, the Church of God (Cleveland) and the Pentecostal Holiness Church kept the Holiness line. These are all major Pentecostal denominations in the USA. While AoG attracted mainly white people, the churches who followed Seymour's line attracted mainly black people.

### *Oneness Pentecostalism*

In 1916 another major schism occurred among 'Finished Work' Pentecostals. After years of successful progress the Assemblies of God (hereby called AG) Pentecostals were expecting new things from God, whom through them was restoring his Church.<sup>57</sup> And new things they got. In a camp meeting in Arroyo Seco, Los Angeles, in 1913, the Canadian evangelist Robert McAlister claimed that only the name of Jesus was used in baptisms by the apostles. This caused tremblings in the young movement, and was condemned by many leaders. But the idea fermented in the young soil, and developed into a debate. Durham's successor Frank Ewart (1876 – 1947) was one of the convinced, and in 1914 he held his first oneness sermon. Here he denied the doctrine of the trinity, claiming that Jesus Christ was the only personality in the Godhead. The 'Father' and the 'Holy Spirit' were mere titles describing different aspects and functions of Jesus Christ. In April the same year he and an earlier Azusa Street loyal, Glenn A. Cook (1867 – 1948), re-baptized each other in public. Thus followed an extensive re-baptism campaign aimed toward other Pentecostals. The official schism happened in 1916 when oneness ministers were barred from the AG. Many of the barred ministers had been close co-workers with Parham, Seymour and Durham, and they exercised great influence with their oneness beliefs. A lot of Pentecostal groups became oneness adherents. Today there are Oneness Pentecostals all over the world.<sup>58</sup>

By 1916 we can identify three Pentecostal groups:

- (1) Holiness Pentecostals, who were in line with the Holiness tradition and Seymour. They subscribed to the fivefold gospel which included both the second blessing and the third blessing.
- (2) Finished Work Pentecostals, who were in line with Durham and the Keswick movement. They subscribed to the 'foursquare' gospel, but with Spirit baptism replacing sanctification as the second blessing.
- (3) Oneness Pentecostals, who were in line with the finished work Pentecostals, but with the denial of the trinity and the focus on Jesus' name.<sup>59</sup>

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57 Anderson, 2004, p.47-48

58 See Anderson, 2004, p.49

59 See Anderson, 2004, p.50

## **2. 4 Important developments of Pentecostalism**

### **2. 4. 1 The global expansion of early Pentecostalism**

The focus of speaking in tongues made the first Pentecostals believe that they were really speaking other languages, and thus empowered for world evangelization.<sup>60</sup> This belief sparked an extensive mission outreach. Missionaries were sent to every part of the world. In 1907 Pentecostal missionaries went to Calcutta, India, after having received what they assumed as being Bengali tongues. The same year one of the initiators of the Azusa Street revival, Lucy Farrow, went to Liberia, Africa, while some others went to Angola. John G. Lake (1870 – 1935), who also had a background from Zion City, was sent to South Africa from Azusa Street in 1908. Bahamas received Pentecostal missionaries in 1909, the same did China and South America. In 1911 Swedish missionaries founded Apostolic Faith Mission in Brazil. In 1918 it was called Assembleia de Deus, i. e. the Assemblies of God, and has become the largest non-Catholic denomination in Latin America.<sup>61</sup>

Europe received the Pentecostal movement already months after Azusa Street, due to the conversion of the British-Norwegian Methodist pastor Thomas Ball Barratt. He never visited Azusa Street, but heard of it when he was in New York. He was baptized in the Spirit in New York and brought the revival to Oslo, Norway already in December 1906. From Oslo the Pentecostal revival spread to other European countries, and "by 1910, Norwegian Pentecostal missionaries had already gone to India, China, South Africa and South America."<sup>62</sup>

### **2. 4. 2 The Charismatic movement**

Speaking in tongues, and further focus on charisma, was for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomena associated with Pentecostalism. The historical traditional churches<sup>63</sup> held that the charismatic gifts, such as speaking in tongues, were only available to the first Christians, as a kick-

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60 The distinction between *glossolalia* (speaking in a otherwordly/sacred language) and *xenoglossy* (speaking in a foreign language not acquired by natural means).

61 See Anderson, 2004, p.58

62 Anderson 2004,p.85

63 By historical traditional churches I mean the Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and Lutheran churches. Reformed, Presbyterian and Methodist churches were more open to charisma.



off for the Church. Then they ceased.<sup>64</sup> Now God gifts were only given to humans through sacraments, and was thus administered by the church(es). This was their official view. Vinson Synan writes:

"For over fifty years, there were untold hundreds of ministers and thousands of lay persons in the traditional churches who received the Pentecostal experience and spoke in tongues. During this time these new Pentecostals had only two options: keep quiet about their experience, or be expelled from their churches."<sup>65</sup>

In the 1960's this was about to change. It started in the Episcopalian Church in the US<sup>66</sup>, when several clergies received the Pentecostal experience and spoke with tongues. Dennis Bennett (1917 – 1991) was the first, in 1960. While he was forced to resign, other outbursts of tongues led the church to acknowledge the legitimacy of Spirit baptism. This charismatic movement also spread to other Protestant churches.

One of the most important events taking place in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the Second Vatican Council (1962 – 1965), *Vatican II*, which opened the Catholic Church radically to ecumenical relationships. In 1967 a group of Catholic intellectuals received the Spirit baptism on a retreat. This initiated a charismatic movement in the Catholic Church, which by 1976 included 300,000 Catholics.<sup>67</sup> The Catholic Charismatic movement spread rapidly into other parts of the world, and is today a major force in the Catholic Church, with an estimated 120 million adherents. Also theologically, the Catholic Church took this movement seriously, acknowledging its place in the Catholic tradition.<sup>68</sup>

### **2. 4. 3 Neo-Pentecostalism**

"As the Charismatic movement in the older churches began to decline in the late 1970s, a new 'nondenominational' Pentecostal and Charismatic movement with much weaker links with older churches began to emerge, emphasizing house groups and 'radical' discipleship, and also known as the 'restoration' movement."<sup>69</sup>

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64 This view is called cessationism.

65 Synan, 1997, p.226

66 An Anglican denomination

67 Anderson, 2004, p.151

68 See Anderson, 2004, p.150-152; Hollenweger, 1997, p.153-154; Synan, 1997, chapter 12.

69 Anderson, 2004, p.155

Independent healing ministries started to emerge already in the 1940s. These ministries put less emphasis on the initial evidence doctrine and more emphasis on healing. These were not new innovations. Independent ministries were established already in the Holiness movement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. John Alexander Dowie was for example an independent healing minister. Anyway, William Branham (1909 – 1965) was one of the first, having established his ministry in the first half of the 1940s. Oral Roberts (1918 – 2009) started his healing ministry in 1947. He became one of the most influential Christian people of his time due to his broad appeal through his television show *The Abundant Life*, starting in 1954. Roberts often appealed to the rich and wealthy. So did the *Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International* (FGBMFI), starting in 1951, an organization precisely aimed at the wealthy. This organization also used the television to proclaim *Good News for America*.<sup>70</sup> These non-denominational movements, organizations and ministries paved the way for the resurgence of independent churches and ministries in the 1970s and 1980s.

An important type of neo-Pentecostalism that emerged in these decades were to be known as the 'Third Wave', as it being the third wave after first; the initial Pentecostal revival, and second; the Charismatic movement in the older churches. The Third Wave was a charismatic renewal wind that swept through evangelical circles in the 1980's, emphasizing a radical Spirit filled life with the aim of evangelizing the world. The Third Wavers saw Spirit baptism as included in conversion, and speaking in tongues only as a possible gift to receive, not a necessary one. The Vineyard movement is counted as an outspring of the Third Wave.

Another important movement that arose in the 80's was the 'Word of Faith' movement. Kenneth Hagin (1917 – 2003) and Kenneth Copeland (b. 1936) were the most prominent leading figures here. This movement grew out of the charismatic landscape that was established by Pentecostalism, the Charismatic movement and all the independent healing ministries and televangelists, especially Oral Roberts. Their theological emphasis was on the privileged possibility for Christian's to acquire things by exercising faith, for example through an outspoken 'positive confession' of faith. This theology was foreshadowed by baptist pastor E. W. Kenyon (1867 – 1948). The Word of Faith movement has spread rapidly, most in the South. Africa seems to be very attracted to Word of Faith types of Pentecostalism.

With these movements, the phenomenon of mega-churches emerged, and the largest churches in the world today are neo-Pentecostal churches. One of the characteristics with these churches is that they very often are built around the visions and ambitions of one strong leader, whom is often referred to as being anointed. The largest church in the world today is Yoido Full

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<sup>70</sup> The name of one of their shows, airing in the 1970s.

Gospel, which is found in Seoul, South Korea, with about 800 000 members. This church is founded and led by David Yonggi Cho, and is inextricably associated with him. The church is built around his visions, and around his theology, which is a moderated 'Word of Faith'-type theology.

## **2. 5 Categorization of Global Pentecostalism today**

In this chapter I have so far used several terms, like *the Pentecostal movement*, *the Charismatic movement*, *classical Pentecostals* etc. I will include all of these in the term *Pentecostalism*. They are not necessarily all *Pentecostal*. There are differences between *Charismatic* and *Pentecostal* churches, as I will now explain.<sup>71</sup>

### **(1) Classical Pentecostals**

Classical Pentecostals are directly linked to the Azusa Street revival, and are most typically organized in Pentecostal denominations, like the Assemblies of God, Church of God etc. Most of them still emphasize the initial evidence doctrine, still not as much as their initiators did. We can under-categorize classical Pentecostals like this:

#### *(a) Holiness Pentecostals*

These believe in the three works of grace and the fivefold gospel.

#### *(b) Finished Work Pentecostals*

These believe in the foursquare gospel, and that sanctification is a progressive work.

#### *(c) Oneness Pentecostals*

These reject the doctrine of the Trinity.

### **(2) Older Independent and Spirit churches**

These churches are mostly found in sub-Saharan Africa, in India, and in China. Their origins can not that easily be traced to the Azusa Street revival, but rather to independent revivals. They are today included in the term 'Pentecostalism' because of their emphasis on the Holy Spirit, charisma and theologies of signs. Some AICs belong to this group of Pentecostalism. The initial evidence doctrine is not promoted by these churches. But the work of the Holy Spirit is highly promoted, and healing, speaking in tongues, exorcism (which is often called deliverance) are all practiced, though with more traditional elements, which has often led them to be demonized by other Christians.

It is not easy to under-categorize these churches, as they are very diverse, and very

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<sup>71</sup> I draw upon the categorization offered by Anderson, 2010

contextual.

### **(3) Charismatics**

These are also included in the big umbrella that is called *Pentecostalism*, even though they belong to traditional mainline churches. This is because of their absorbing of Pentecostal spirituality and theology. They do not subscribe to the initial evidence doctrine, but believe in the charismatic gifts. The term 'Spirit baptism' is often avoided, and rather replaced with being 'filled with the Spirit'.

Catholic Charismatics have had the steepest rate of growth the last fifty years, as they today sum up almost 20% of all Catholics.

### **(4) Neo-Pentecostals**

This is the type of Pentecostalism that has been growing most in the world the last years. It is hard to categorize because of its multiple of independent churches, ministries and organizations. It can be categorized like this:

#### *(a) The Faith movement*

These churches emphasize the privilege and ability of Christians to receive healing, Spirit baptism, power for spiritual warfare, and even material prosperity, through exercising faith. They promote prosperity theology, which we will take a look at in chapter three. Kenneth Hagin has been characterized as the 'father' of this movement. Today it is widespread, and the Southern hemisphere is its main catchment area. Benny Hinn is maybe the most prominent minister from this movement today. Africa has several promoters of Faith movement theology, especially in the West African countries like Ghana and Nigeria.

#### *(b) Third Wave churches*

These churches conflate Spirit baptism with conversion, and emphasize the importance of living a radical and Spirit empowered Christian life.

#### *(c) other independent churches*

Here we can put all the other churches that has emerged the past three decades that can not be labeled with any of the categories I have now listed up. And these can be very different from each other. Some churches can have features from the charismatic movement, and be in various grades oriented toward traditional or contemplative spirituality. Other can have elements of prosperity, or emphasize healing.

It is really not easy to categorize Pentecostalism, especially when considering (1) the

globalness of the movement, and (2) all the independent churches that has emerged during the last decades. Some of the churches correlate in spirituality or theology. Some have their own characteristics. Especially those in the 4c category are characterizational diffuse. It is also important to make clear that many of the lines between these categories can be very diffuse.

# CHAPTER THREE – KALU WALKTHROUGH

## 3. 1 *Introduction*

In this chapter I will outline theories from Kalu's book. It is a comprehensive book that contains many different elements of African Pentecostalism. I will focus mainly on two of Kalu's theories. First; his historical approach on Pentecostalism and what he calls the 'trail of ferment' in African Christianity. Second; his theory of a resonance between African Pentecostalism and African maps of the universe.

### 3. 1. 1 **About the book**

Ogbu Kalu's book *African Pentecostalism* is a milestone in research on African Pentecostalism. It is the first book by an African scholar to comprehend Pentecostalism on the whole continent of Africa. While other books, like J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu's *African Charismatics*, also deal with a general view on African Pentecostalism, they are still more focused on a specific area. In Asamoah-Gyadu's respect, he mostly deals with Ghana.<sup>72</sup>

*African Pentecostalism* was published in 2008, and was the last book Kalu wrote before his untimely death in January 2009. Kalu wrote and edited several books, and wrote a multiple of articles in books and journals. It is evident that his concern has been the very identity of African Christianity and the discourse between the Western and the African constitutional elements in the shaping of African Christianity, with African Pentecostalism in particular. This concern is comprehended in *African Pentecostalism*.

The book is divided into four parts. (1) Precedents in Early Charismatic Movements, 1900 – 1960s; (2) The Modern Pentecostal Movement, 1970s – 1990s; (3) Pentecostalism in the African Public Space; and (4) Pentecostal Words and Worlds. While the three first parts have four chapters, the last part has only two. Most of the chapters are headlined with a word from African idioms.

### 3. 1. 2 **Kalu's objective**

Kalu wants to reconstruct what he calls the historiography of global Pentecostalism in at

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<sup>72</sup> As the subtitle of his book implies.

least two ways.<sup>73</sup> Firstly; while he acknowledges the importance of the Azusa Street revival and the emergence of North American Pentecostalism, he rejects that all Pentecostal and Charismatic movements in the world can trace their origins to it. Many of the revivals and movements preceding the Azusa Street revival also catalyzed Pentecostal movements. "Thus, the scholar exploring the genealogy of Pentecostalism must be attentive to the historical dimensions, especially the preceding revivals."<sup>74</sup> These revivals often deserve more attention in catalyzing Pentecostalism in their respective areas. Secondly; Pentecostalism would not be that successfully rooted in Africa if it didn't appeal to the cultural context wherein Africans reside. The faith comes from the Bible, which was imported from the West. But the way in which the faith is interpreted and understood, and then practiced, comes from the culture. Therefore, in Kalu's words, "the cultural or interior dimensions of the context are crucial in appreciating the pattern of convergences."<sup>75</sup> When drawing up the Pentecostal pedigree, the Azusa Street revival is only one of many contributors. When considering many of the AICs the Azusa Street is only of minor importance. After all, some of them even preceded it. This view breaks with the general understanding that the Azusa Street revival is the starting point of Pentecostalism, as is understood by most Christians in the West.

As far as African Pentecostalism is concerned, Kalu writes that "Africans have lost their own story and absorbed another people's story."<sup>76</sup> African Pentecostalism is of course shaped by Western Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism. After all, it was mainly from the West missionaries came to Africa. But Kalu stresses the Africanness of African Pentecostalism, and the continuity with African 'maps of the universe' it both represents and provides. Therefore, in addition to all the roots of Pentecostalism we have identified in chapter one, Kalu stresses another important root to African Pentecostalism; the traditional religion and indigenous maps of the universe.

### **3.2 Kalu's first thesis: The 'trail of ferment' in African Christianity**

Kalu uses two out of four parts, that is eight out of fourteen chapters, to outline his first theory. And his theory is concerned with the history of Pentecostalism in Africa.

According to Kalu, traditional mission failed to transmit Christianity to the African people. Christianity was too Western and did not answer questions "raised in the interiors of the worldviews."<sup>77</sup> It was not until Africans themselves responded to the gospel that it became relevant

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73 Kalu, 2008, p.13

74 Ibid. p.15

75 Ibid. p.15

76 Ibid. p.4

77 Ibid. p.26

for Africans. "Africans wanted the new religion to better perform the tasks of the old religion."<sup>78</sup>

When Africans responded to the gospel, their response often caused opposition from the Western missionaries. Their degrading view on African culture often made them demonize African Traditional Religions, making them think that any trace of Africanness in Christianity had to be transformed. Western civilization was seen as the most Christian civilization on earth – the most 'transformed by the gospel'. African culture was seen as the most primal culture, and the culture farthest away from being a civilized culture, and thus also a Christian culture.

Kalu identifies three historical African responses to the gospel. He calls these responses a 'trail of ferment in African Christianity.' The first response came at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the second emerged at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. The third response emerged in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. These responses were all initiated by Africans, and communicated the gospel more effectively than Western missionaries.

### **3. 2. 1 First response: Ethiopianism**

Ethiopianism started in South Africa and has nothing to do with the country of Ethiopia.<sup>79</sup> It was an indigenous protest movement that emerged from the Anglican and Methodist missions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although it was an organized response, Ethiopianism is not easy to understand. Kalu writes:

"The Ethiopianism movement should be reimagined as an early expression of the interior of African spirituality. It operated within the church to promote Christianity, but of a different kind: one that was sensitive to the African environment and the dignity of people. Its concern was the *modus* in which the faith was communicated."<sup>80</sup>

In the preface of his book, he writes:

"... the Ethiopian movement believed that Africa could be redeemed through Christianity. It carried within it the seeds of the early African American evangelization of Africa who arrived in West Africa in 1792 with a charismatic spirituality, a spirit of

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78 Ibid. p.26

79 It is named after a passage in Psalms 68:31: "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." (KJV)

80 Kalu, 2008, p.33



antistructure, resistance to colonial Christianity, and a vibrant black nationalism. This stamped African Christianity with recurring themes that would engage and energize African Pentecostalism in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries."<sup>81</sup>

Kalu gives no attention to the Methodist and Anglican background of Ethiopianism. This was not an important part of it. The important factor with Ethiopianism was the indigenous factor, the African initiative. Kalu identifies it as the first African response to the gospel.

The Ethiopianism movement advocated that African churches should be under control of African people. Ethiopianism spread all over Africa and was fueled by African American missionaries, who wanted to evangelize their forefather's lands.

### **3. 2. 2 Second response: The African Initiated Churches (AICs)**

The AICs emerged in the wake of indigenous initiatives. Often widespread charismatic revivals. These churches were independent from the mainline churches, and relied more on traditional spiritualities and traditions. While Ethiopianism was a more political initiated movement, the AICs benefited from Ethiopianism, "but went beyond it to tap the pneumatic emphasis in the Bible story."<sup>82</sup>

Indigenous movements arose in many parts of Africa, especially in the wake of different revivals that swept the lands. "Dubbed *Zionists* in southern Africa, *Abaroho* in eastern Africa, and *Aladura* in West Africa, they all privileged prayer, miraculous healing, indigenous symbolism and liturgy, and African agency in Christian matters."<sup>83</sup> One of the best examples of indigenous initiated revivals that inspired formation of AICs was the revivals that was ignited during the fascinating ministry of Liberian evangelist William Wadé Harris (c. 1860 – 1929). During the 1910s he initiated numerous revivals on the African West coast, some of them resulting in Harris churches.

Kalu states that "AICs are the earliest version of African Pentecostalism" and "the historical roots of modern Pentecostalism in *Aladura* spiritualities." Kalu uses the word 'Aladura', a Yoruba word meaning 'praying people', on AICs. Still, there are discussions on whether to include the AICs under the Pentecostal umbrella. I will write more about the relationship between Pentecostalism and AICs in chapter 3.3.

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81 Kalu, 2008, Preface viii

82 Ibid. p.69

83 Ibid. p.24

### 3. 2. 3 Third response: African Pentecostalism

Kalu differentiates between two periods in which Pentecostalism entered Africa. The first was the early classical Pentecostal mission activity from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the 1960s.<sup>84</sup> In this period the real African response to the gospel was the emerging AICs, and classical Pentecostal mission often triggered these. Earlier research suggests the AICs as the African version of Pentecostalism. Allan Anderson was one of those promoting this. Classical Pentecostalism did not root as well as the more indigenous expression of Pentecostalism. Not until the 1980s Pentecostalism started to sweep Africa rapidly.

The second period in which Pentecostalism entered Africa was the resurgence of what is today called neo-Pentecostalism. This is the type of Pentecostalism that grows most in Africa today, and is the main *third response* in Kalu's trail of ferment, as it is almost inundated with Africanness.

When Kalu outlines the beginnings of Pentecostalism, he does not start with Western influence. Often he starts with indigenous revivals that "softened the grounds" for the later Pentecostal missionaries and movements deriving from the West.<sup>85</sup> And when he outlines the start of the modern Pentecostal movement, the movement which was to be characteristic of African Pentecostalism, he start with some radical indigenous young preachers called *Aliliki* suddenly igniting Pentecostal revivals in Malawi. And he writes: "Most parts of Africa witnessed the sudden surge of young puritan preachers in the 1970s ..."<sup>86</sup> I will write about the modern Pentecostal movement in chapter 3.4.

### 3. 3 AICs and Pentecostal churches

When examining African Pentecostalism today, it can be confusing to differentiate between some Pentecostal churches and AICs. In his fourth chapter Kalu discusses the relation between Pentecostalism and AICs. And he is asking: can we include the AICs in the growing Pentecostal movement? He identifies two strands; "those who lay emphasis on the shared worldview tend to emphasize the elements of continuity, and those who deploy the Pentecostal covenant theology emphasized the elements of discontinuity."<sup>87</sup> He writes:

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84 "... the trail of ferment in African Christianity in this period includes the emergence of Pentecostal spirituality from external sources in the period between the years 1901 and 1960."

85 Kalu, 2008, p.55

86 Ibid. p.88

87 Ibid. p.67

"... unlike the *first* challenge posed by Ethiopians, who were promoted cultural nationalism in a religious stroke, the AICs confronted the muted pneumatic elements in missionary theology and practice. As the *third* challenge, the Pentecostals have equally laid emphasis on the pneumatic dimensions; that is, both the Pentecostals and AICs are operating in the same spiritual frequency ... <sup>88</sup>

Thus, we often find a thin line between AICs and Pentecostal churches. This is often a problem we encounter when characterizing and categorizing global Pentecostalism. The lines between churches can be very blurry, for example between types of neo-Pentecostal churches. Also many classical Pentecostal churches have been influenced by neo-Pentecostal churches and even movements in mainline churches, making their characteristics less recognizable.

In the 1950s the World Council of Churches (WCC) discussed widely whether AICs were African forms of Christianity or a return to the promotion of pagan spirits. Although the term 'African Independent Churches' was coined early, it was a tendency among scholars to view the AICs as the African version of Pentecostalism. In the 1950s the AICs were bigger than classical Pentecostals. "... the image of the AICs as the African version of Pentecostalism became significant and set the tone for younger scholars such as Rosalind Hackett, Allan Anderson, and Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu."<sup>89</sup> But later research rather suggested that AICs and Pentecostalism have to be viewed as two different types of Charismatic Christianities.

In theology and doctrinal emphasis the AICs and Pentecostalism can be very similar, but there are differences in for example spirituality. There are also differences between different AICs, as these churches are as diverse as Pentecostalism is. Some AICs were also heavily influenced by, and even initiated by Pentecostal missionaries. Also, some of the founders of the contemporary Pentecostal megachurches had backgrounds from AICs. In other words, these two movements are conflating in many areas. Kalu himself refers to them as bedfellows. "At the cultural interface, both drink from the same wellspring of African primal worldview." But he continues: "Perhaps this is the rub: different approaches in appropriating the text."<sup>90</sup> While Allan Anderson tend to include the AICs in his typological approach to global Pentecostalism, as also I suggested in my own approach which relies much on Allan Anderson, others, like Andrew Walls, "comments on the sharp conflict between the old type Independent churches, the spirituals, and the new type, the Pentecostal and charismatic radicals."<sup>91</sup> After all, many Pentecostals demonize the AICs because of their use of

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88 Ibid. p.67

89 Ibid. p.69

90 Ibid. p.67

91 Ibid. p.74

traditional concepts.

### **3.4 The modern Pentecostal movement**

Kalu uses part two of his book on the modern Pentecostal movement. This movement emerged between the 1970s and the 1990s. Today it is the most prominent type of Pentecostalism, as it is being promoted through media such as radio, television, internet, printed media etc. It is also infiltrating traditional mainline churches to such an extent that some talks of a paradigm change in African Christianity. "The presence of the new Pentecostal/charismatic movements has literally transformed the religious culture of Christianity in Africa, leading to what may be referred to as a pentecostalization or charismatization of African Christianity."<sup>92</sup>

This modern Pentecostalism in Africa has clearly much to do with neo-Pentecostalism. They both emerged at the same time, and they draw similarities to each other in theology, spirituality and practice. Generally, when we talk of African Pentecostalism, we do not talk of a Pentecostalism that belong to the classical Pentecostal tradition.

"While a few groups teach total sanctification, the majority define sanctification as a process that yields more and more fruits of the Spirit. The debate about tongues as an initial sign of the Spirit exists, but does not rage as fiercely as it does in the western world."<sup>93</sup>

Rather African Pentecostals have more in common with neo-Pentecostals than classical Pentecostals. So, when we in the West use the label 'Pentecostals', we refer to classical Pentecostals. When we refer to neo-Pentecostals, we often use the label 'faith movement'. But when Africans use the label 'Pentecostals', they refer to a more neo-Pentecostal Pentecostalism. One can easily be confused.

Kalu evidently recognizes the US origin of many of the features of neo-Pentecostalism, especially when it comes to four features; healing ministries, prosperity gospel, commercialization of religion, and the focus on what he calls the 'big man of the big God.' Still he finds them to fit into African maps of the universe. I will explain more about these features later.

Kalu starts, as we have seen, with the *Aliliki* movement in Malawi. *Aliliki* means preacher. These were young men who suddenly called for repentance and endeavor for Spirit baptism. Kalu

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<sup>92</sup> Kalu quotes Asamoah-Gyadu, p.111

<sup>93</sup> Kalu, 2008, p.260

asserts that these young men catalyzed the modern Pentecostal movement in Africa. Other parts of Africa also witnessed the emergence of charismatic movements. In Kenya they were known as guerrillas of Christ. Also Nigeria witnessed a '1970 phenomenon'. But West Africa experiences the emergence of charismatic movements already from the 1960s. These new movements were mainly a reawakening of Pentecostal revival flares. But this new resurgence of Pentecostalism transformed during the 1980s and 1990s.

One of the most important Pentecostals in Africa is Benson Idahosa (1938 – 1998). He was converted in the early 1960s in Benin City, Nigeria, by an AoG leader. He built up a vibrant ministry, and one of the first mega-churches. Kalu writes:

"Within a decade Benson Idahosa reshaped African Pentecostalism in five ways. He brought the prosperity gospel, the episcopal polity, televangelism, megachurch with mega projects, and theological education that sponsored a large group of African students who spread the faith and deliverance theology throughout the continent. The watershed was the Fire Convention organized by Reinhard Bonnke in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1984 under the banner 'Africa shall be saved.'"<sup>94</sup>

And he continues:

"... from the late 1990s there were six significant shifts:

1. a criticism of prosperity theology;
2. a return to holiness ethic;
3. the blossoming of intercession ministry;
4. an intensified evangelism;
5. engagement of the political space; and
6. a massive charismatization of the mainline churches."<sup>95</sup>

Kalu argues that the growth of Pentecostalism intensified in the 1990s, and Pentecostalism became the complex movement it is during this decade. This was because of an intensified focus on evangelization. After all, as Kalu states: "With the understanding that the mainline churches have practiced powerless Christianity, which has left the spirits that govern the gates of communities unconquered, there is a process of reevangelization of the entire continent."<sup>96</sup> One mission strategy have to be pointed out as significant for Pentecostalism in Africa, even though it originates from

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94 Ibid. p.19

95 Ibid. p.19

96 Ibid. p.126

U.S. evangelicals. Kalu states: "The outstanding strategy is the crusade." And in the 1990 we are witnessing "the enlargement of the crusades begun by the Evangelicals in the 1950s – 1960s." In Africa the crusades are arranged mostly during Easter and Christmas times, "to counteract materialism and commercialization of the yuletide and contest the indigenous rituals."<sup>97</sup>

In the 1990s we also see a change in leadership in two ways. First, leaders started to re-imagine themselves as prophets and apostles, and they "encouraged members to refer to the leader either as 'father/mother in the Lord' or as 'daddy/mummy' – warm images of intimacy drawn from the family setting used to encrust patriarchal and gerontocratic authority patterns." Also this new type of Pentecostalism fueled the belief in the direct leadership of the Holy Spirit, which "created conditions in which people could declare that the Spirit called and gave them visions." This resulted in the mushrooming of Pentecostal churches and ministries all over Africa, in the most rural areas. Kalu states: "In the 1990s new forms of ministries sprung up all over the continent."<sup>98</sup> And behind these ministries were the big men of the big God.<sup>99</sup> Here the theology of anointing is important. The leaders saw themselves as anointed for serving a special task given by the Almighty himself, often direct, through an experience with the Holy Spirit.

The second change in leadership, which came slightly later, was the re-introduction of episcopacy. Kalu summarizes these shifts of leadership like this: "In the 1970s, the youthful charismatic movement deployed the concept of the priesthood of all believers ... Within the next two decades, 1980 – 2000, a major shift in ecclesiology started." First, Kalu states, "they exploited the iconic images of prophets and apostles ... They mined the indigenous polities for images of leadership and family institutions for warm images, just as the AICs had done." Then, "By the 2000s Pentecostal practice shifted further to full-blown episcopacy."<sup>100</sup>

In the next subchapter I will take a look at some of the elements of African Pentecostalism – which is to be identified as this modern one – that resonates with African maps of the universe.

### **3.5 *Kalu's second theory: The resonance***

Kalu's theory of a resonance between African Pentecostalism and African maps of the universe is not invented by himself. He refers to a lot of scholars who have asserted the same. Both Allan Anderson and Walter Hollenweger have commented on it, and Andrew Walls urged early on

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97 Ibid. p.134

98 Ibid. p.124

99 Chapter 6 in Kalu's book is called 'The Big Man of the Big God'

100Kalu, 2008, p.137-138

for the attention on continuing worldviews between African traditional maps of the universe and Pentecostalism.<sup>101</sup>

Kalu is not presenting this theory as he did with his trail of ferment theory, which was a theory both formulated and coined by him. When it comes to elaborating on the continuation of worldviews in the African traditional past and Pentecostal present, Kalu is using well known terminology. This is thus not *his* theory. But he provides this theory with arguments, and develops it. Kalu asserts that African Pentecostalism is part of an African initiated response to the gospel. Thus is African Pentecostalism an African formed type of Christianity. And it has direct link to the traditional culture since it operates with the same maps of the universe.

### 3. 5. 1 Pentecostalism and the African maps of the universe

Chapter nine is the chapter where Kalu really elaborates on Pentecostalism's convergence with African traditional worldviews. He asserts that Pentecostalism engages more in African traditional worldviews than traditional mainline mission did and does. He calls it a *resonance* between Pentecostalism and African maps of the universe. This resonance reflects both practice in spiritualities and theologies.

#### *Definition*

A clear definition of the term 'maps of the universe' is not provided. It is another way of writing 'worldviews'. African maps of the universe simply mirrors African worldviews. Kalu quotes Charles H. Kraft's definition on it:

"At the core of culture and, therefore, at the very heart of all human life, lies the structuring of the basic assumptions, values, and allegiances in terms of which people interpret and behave. These assumptions, values and allegiances we call worldview."<sup>102</sup>

Kalu continues: "Worldview is a picture that points to the deep-level assumptions and values on the basis of which people generate surface-level behavior." But "worldviews are not static but could be reshaped by culture wars."<sup>103</sup>

Kalu variates between using the plural form and the singular form. Sometimes it's

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101Ibid. p.74

102Ibid. p.175 (Kalu quotes from Kraft, Charles H., *Anthropology for Christian Witness*. Maryknoll: Orbis. p.10)

103Ibid. p.175

'worldviews' and sometime it's 'worldview'. Sometimes it's African 'maps' of the universe, and sometimes it is the African 'map' of the universe. I think Kalu wants to signalize that there are diverse cultural conceptions in Africa, and that there are different maps of the universe. There are different worldviews. But when he still often uses the singular form, he wants to signalize that while there are differences between African maps of the universe, there are also similarities.

Chapter nine is headlined *Sankofa*. In Ghana *sankofa* is a bird that always turns its head back from where it came. With this picture Kalu wants to show that African Pentecostalism is rooted in Africa's cultural past. Pentecostal maps of the universe resonates with African maps of the universe. Their worldviews match.

#### *African worldview anatomy*

In the African worldviews there are three dimension of space: (1) the sky, (2) the earth (the land and the water), and (3) the ancestral or spirit world. In the sky we find all the major divinities, except from the creator, the Supreme Being, who inhabits the universe. The Earth deity lives on the earth, and is responsible for life and fertility. Other deities inhabits big rock, trees, rivers etc. These deities are not personal known to men, and you can only make sure of them having goodwill towards you. This means that in all of our surroundings there are presences of deities. Thus is there no distinction between the sacred and the profane in human life.

In addition to all the deities we find the spirits. "... each human being has a guardian spirit who determines his or her fate in the passage through life."<sup>104</sup> Some spirits also inhabit trees and rivers etc., while others wander around. In the ocean there are marine spirits. Some spirits are good, while others are wicked. And they are able to possess human beings. Also with the spirits one have to be on the right side of the goodwill. If you offend a spirit, something bad will happen to you. There are also ancestral spirits. They usually inhabits the underworld. In addition to all these there are spiritual forces. Human beings can acquire these through rituals. They are non-personal which can be used for good and for evil. The use of spiritual forces for evil is called sorcery. Kalu explains:

"Witchcraft is the use of human psychic powers to do evil, unlike sorcery, which employs magical incantations, implements, objects, medicine, and other paraphernalia. With either method, curses could be put on individuals and families by the envious or wicked people. Evil forces are without bodily forms, so they embody people, animals, and physical objects, and manipulate them to harm people. The vision of existence is a precarious one as evil forces, which invest the human world as a siege, endeavor to ruin

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104Ibid. p.176



the capacity of individuals, families, and communities from living a prosperous life."<sup>105</sup>

The struggle against evil powers is an important part of African maps of the universe. I will write more on the notion of evil in the next subchapter.

*Pentecostal reconstruction of the African worldview*

Kalu calls the African worldview a charismatic worldview because of its coping with spirits in the overworld interfering in people's lives. "Going through life is like a spiritual warfare."<sup>106</sup> He argues that Pentecostals reconstruct the primal worldview.

"They deploy four strategies: adopt a posture of spiritual warfare, use the covenant imagery to describe the relationship between human beings and the gods, explore swaths of resonance between the Bible and African indigenous worldviews, and reinvent a theology that reclaims God's rule over the whole inhabited earth."

And he continues:

"Contrary to the early missionary attitude that urged rejecting indigenous African culture, Pentecostals take the African map of the universe seriously, acknowledging that culture is both a redemptive gift as well as one capable of being hijacked. Pentecostals perceive a kindred atmosphere and resonance between the Bible and African indigenous religions. Pentecostals, therefore, explore the lines of congruence that go beyond destruction of the old to a new construction of reality."<sup>107</sup>

Kalu then refers to a discussion between those who see Pentecostalism as a continuation and intensification of the Protestant mission attitude toward the African maps of the universe, and those who see it as a completely new attitude. Birgit Meyer belongs to those who asserts the first. After all; "Pentecostals essay to destroy the past." Meyer even states that Pentecostals "celebrate the notion of rupture much more than nineteenth and early twentieth-century Protestant missionaries."<sup>108</sup> Her research on the Pietist mission efforts among the Ewe people in Ghana resulted in a theory that disproved the old modernist theory formulated by Max Weber; that the

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105Ibid. p.177

106Ibid. p.178

107Ibid. p.178-179

108Ibid. p.171

introduction of Christianity leads to a disenchantment of traditional worldviews. Meyer's research asserts that Pentecostals inherited the Pietist mission attitude toward African traditional culture. Kalu still seems to see Pentecostalism as something new, concerning the "large areas of resonance between Pentecostalism and African maps of the universe."<sup>109</sup> These resonances are exclusively found in Pentecostalism and the AICs. Pentecostals engage in the traditional worldviews in a completely different way than Pietists and other Protestant missions. Their emphasis on charisma makes them engage in the African maps of the universe in a completely different way than traditional missions. Still, their engagement in traditional worldviews does not mean that they approve traditional religious practices. In fact they diabolize them. Kalu writes: "Pentecostals take the African map of the universe very seriously. The spirits are real just as Christ is real."<sup>110</sup> Pentecostals also critique the missionary churches for not engaging in the spiritual reality of the African maps of the universe.

### **3. 5. 2      Demons and witchcraft**

Here we find one of the clearest resonances; in the way in which African and Pentecostal worldviews deal with the menace of evils. Kalu refers to scholar David Maxwell, who by using data from Zimbabwe, illustrates "the resonance between Pentecostalism and the spirit possession cults and traditional witchcraft-cleansing mechanisms. ... they share a common appeal, seek empowerment to combat evil, and share the egalitarian idiom."<sup>111</sup>

One of the reasons of this resonance, says Kalu, is found in the way in which Pentecostals interpret the Bible. This way of interpreting can be identified as Biblical literalism. God's word has to be taken seriously. If the New Testament reports numerous encounters Jesus had with demons, it means that demons really exist. And when these encounters occur pretty often in the New Testament, Pentecostals see these reports as confirming their traditional worldviews, which also included the existence of wicked spirits. In this way Kalu identifies a resonance between the Biblical worldview and the African one. He writes:

"The biblical worldview images the Christian life to be just as precarious as the traditional African imagines. The enemy is arranged in a military formation as principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, wickedness in high places, and demons. The

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109Ibid. p.171

110Ibid. p.80

111Ibid. p.171

Pentecostal goes through life keenly aware of the presence of evil forces just as the African does. Life is secured through a good relationship with the supernatural."<sup>112</sup>

In African Traditional Religion one have to counteract evil all the time. There are curses lurking in the dark everywhere. There are ancestral curses, curses from witches, sorcerers and evil medicine men. One can also be cursed by offending spirits and deities, or ignoring them. Therefore one has to be on the good side all the time.

Traditional African perceptions and Pentecostals also promote and offer 'steps' through which individuals can counteract possible attacks from evil forces. As Kalu writes, "both worldviews, traditional African and Pentecostal, are attentive to the power of words and names."<sup>113</sup> Also the use of symbols and props is evident in both Pentecostal and traditional worldviews in Africa. This link is especially evident in the AICs, which apply more traditional symbols and equipments in their spirituality than modern Pentecostals. But there are also differences between Pentecostal and African maps of the universe. A resonance between two worldviews does not mean that the worldviews are congruent in perceptions and conceptions. But in stead of rejecting the maps, Pentecostalism redefines them. This is evident in the way in which Pentecostalism deals with the notion of evil. Kalu writes:

"The Pentecostals do not ignore but engage the primal contexts and renew the social system by critiquing and redefining possession: They brand all cults (central and peripheral) as satanic, exorcise all, and breed skepticism. But they do not end there. They provide an alternative – "white," clean possession by the Holy Spirit (*Mzimu Woyera*) that is safer and less expensive."<sup>114</sup>

And he continues:

"This explains why Pentecostals would speak about deliverance rather than exorcism. They do not just expel the demonic force but refill the person with a healthier, clean spirit to that the person can become truly human and achieve the vaunted life goals of a community."<sup>115</sup>

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112Ibid. p.179

113Ibid. p.180

114Ibid. p.172

115Ibid. p.172

When converting to Pentecostalism, an African does not change his maps of the universe. He just colors it differently. The evil arsenal is still there. But the means of combating evil forces has changed. The new element Pentecostals bring into the battle is the blood of Jesus Christ.

### **3. 5. 3 Prosperity theology**

Kalu dates the first emergence of prosperity theology in second-century Gnosticism, and has, with Kalu's words, "bobbed up throughout church history ever since."<sup>116</sup> The modern version of prosperity theology emerged in the post-war healing ministries and televangelists in the US. It spread to Africa through crusades, media, and through sending African church leaders to Bible schools in the US. Kalu also remind us that ministries from Southeast Asia, the West Indies and the United Kingdom also contributed to the spreading of prosperity theology in Africa.

Prosperity theology holds that it is Gods will that Christians shall prosper materially in this life. Kalu links it with the blessing of Abraham;

"Prosperity theology emphasizes that God's promised generosity, as demonstrated with Abraham, is available for every believing Christian on earth today. As the covenant was a legal contract, so is the promise part of a spiritual contract. Each believer has the ability to access it, claim it, and possess it."<sup>117</sup>

Prosperity gospel has also been called the 'name-and-claim-it gospel'. God will bless his children abundantly, each according to their desires. Kalu writes: "...Pentecostals prefer the prayer of Jabez, who asked God to rescue him from poverty, and ignore the prayer of Jesus that pointed to the obligation to respond to the needs of the wider society."<sup>118</sup>

Prosperity theology also stresses faith differently: "True faith is defined beyond mere belief; it is acting on the word, speaking into reality that does not exist, and dreaming and envisioning the desired goals."<sup>119</sup> This is why the proponents of prosperity theology and their rapid spreading of prosperity gospel has been called the 'word of faith' movement. Faith is the most important weapon for a Christian.

In Africa the most prominent promoters of prosperity gospel comes from West Africa,

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<sup>116</sup>Ibid. p.256

<sup>117</sup>Ibid. p.255

<sup>118</sup>Ibid. p.135

<sup>119</sup>Ibid. p.255

mostly from Ghana and Nigeria. Benson Idahosa subscribed to prosperity theology during the 1980, and his ministry was centered in Nigeria. Ghanaian pastor Mensa Otabil is another important promoter of prosperity theology. His teachings states that "People do not need to be poor because they are Christians, but should develop all their God-given resources and should strive to succeed in life. A vital relationship with Christ must result in an abundant and improved quality of life."<sup>120</sup>

There are convergences between the prosperity gospel, healing and the notion of evil. African Pentecostals see prosperity and a good health as a blessing from God. Likewise they see poverty, lack of prosperity and sickness as a curse from the devil. Therefore spiritual warfare is applied broadly in the paradigm of prosperity theology.

Kalu asks if there "are intrinsic Pentecostal values that encourage capitalist ethics and attitude toward money."<sup>121</sup> He concludes: "Money may be connected to salvation precisely because wealth is a component of the divine economy."<sup>122</sup> With this he refers to the miracles Jesus did that benefited the material needs of people. He fed people, gave them wine, and he healed them. Why would Jesus only heal our bodily sufferings? Why would he not heal our material needs to?

Prosperity gospel also holds it that material blessings can be given from God, regardless of your work, your efforts in business etc. Sometimes God just fix it. This means that wealthy pastors and ministers can develop a view on themselves as blessed people. And their prosperity is a proof of being anointed by God. God has really blessed them and elected them for a special task; bringing the gospel further out. As we can see, prosperity can be a sign of your exalted position in Gods kingdom on earth. This also resonates with African maps. Kalu writes: "The ability to return to the village with a personal car instead of depending on the chaotic public transportation system is a major goal for everyone, a veritable sign of success and a pride for the community. A car is a symbol rather than a mere means of transportation."<sup>123</sup>

### **3. 5. 4      Healing**

Kalu writes:

"The issue of health and healing is a very important aspect of religious life in Africa, and the explanation of the growth of both AICs and Pentecostalism in the continent.

Healing is the heartbeat of the liturgy and the entire religious life."<sup>124</sup>

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120Ibid. p.127-128

121Ibid. p.145

122Ibid. p.145

123Ibid. p.134

124Ibid. p.263

And he continues: "Healing is about liberation from all that dehumanizes; it is the restoration of life."<sup>125</sup>

Pentecostals teach that healing, as with prosperity, is available for all Christians, and can be acquired by faith. Kalu writes: "Pentecostal theology is constructed on the grounds that healing is the sign and witness of the presence of God's reign among God's people; that God's healing power is as easily available to believers as the parental obligation to put bread on the children's table."<sup>126</sup>

In Africa, and in fact also many other continents, being healthy is a sign of being blessed. Being sick and ill, on the other hand, is a sign of being in lack of blessings, even cursed. Therefore Africans put a lot of efforts in keeping healthy, and the belief of being healed and delivered from sickness and disease is evident.

There are correlations between healing and deliverance from evil spirits, much more in Africa than in the West. In traditional perceptions, being sick is not only a bodily condition, but is also seen as a spiritual condition. There is something dwelling upon you making your body sick, either a curse or a wicked spirit. This can be dealt with through rituals. So, praying for healing is also a part of a spiritual warfare. Kalu quotes Laurento Magesa: "... lack of physical health is often understood to be symptomatic of a lack of spiritual, emotional or moral health ...". Kalu continues: "With this perception, sickness could be physical, psychological, socioeconomic, or political."<sup>127</sup>

### **3. 5. 5 Summarizing African Pentecostalism**

African Pentecostalism is characterized by its focus on the supernatural. The beliefs in the supernatural are not degraded by modernism and natural science.

African Pentecostalism is embedded in African maps of the universe. Pentecostals do not reject the spiritual forces perceived in traditional African religions. They rather redefine them, and engage in the struggle against them.

African Pentecostals take the Bible very seriously. While Western Christians today tend to reject and redefine the Biblical perceptions of reality, African Pentecostals take them for granted.

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125Ibid. p.265

126Ibid. p.265-266

127Ibid. p.265

# CHAPTER FOUR – OTHER AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES

## 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will take a look at different approaches to my research problem. Ogbu Kalu himself has a theological and a historical approach. But the approach that really characterizes Kalu is the African approach. Kalu knows the African maps of the universe, and he tries to examine "the Africanness of the phenomenon [African Pentecostalism] and its place within African maps of the universe."<sup>128</sup> Other African scholars have also been concerned with African Pentecostalism. In this chapter I will take them into consideration.

### 4. 1. 1 Pentecostal attitude towards non-Christian religions

This is important to identify. Theologies of religion is an important field of study, and it shows that all the denominations have different attitudes towards other religions. In this study it is important to look at Pentecostal attitude towards African Traditional Religion.

#### *Models of theologies of religion*

Traditionally we have had three models of different theological attitudes towards other religions. These have been the *exclusive*, *inclusive*, and *pluralistic* models. Paul Knitter has identified four models which are more elaborative than the classical models.<sup>129</sup> I will go through the different models and identify the model in which Pentecostals mostly find themselves. The reason for this is to be able to compare the models.

#### 1. The replacement model

This model is the exclusive one. Most Christians embrace this model. It holds that Jesus is the only way to salvation, and that one can not find salvation in any other religion. This model has a critical view on the concept of religion, even Christianity. But Christianity is the only religion to which God's salvation, Jesus Christ, is revealed. Other religions must therefore be replaced by Jesus.

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<sup>128</sup>Ibid. p.170 [my brackets]

<sup>129</sup>Knitter, 2002

## 2. Fulfillment model

This model is more identified as an inclusive model. It emphasizes that God is love, and that we can not preclude that salvation is to be found in other religions. God reveal himself in other religions as well as Christianity. Still Christianity is seen as the only religion initiated by God himself. Jesus works as a fulfilling element in other religions.

## 3. Mutuality model

This is one of the pluralistic models. Here it is believed that there is an underground river that flows through all religions. There are indeed also both revelation and salvation in other religions. This model looks for the similarities in religions. All religions aspire for God, and all religions see God from different perspectives. Jesus is not necessarily needed for salvation.

## 4. Acceptance model

This is a second model that can be identified as a pluralistic model. This model looks for the differences between religions, and celebrates them. Some acceptance model adherents believe that one can not know whether God reveal himself or saves in other religions. Others believe that if there are different religions, there are also different salvations.

### *Categorization*

The last two models are maybe those most non-tangible. The fourth and last, the acceptance model, is mostly a child of postmodernism and relativism. The third, the mutuality model, comes from a positive view on other religions, mostly achieved in academical circles, and derives from a historical critical hermeneutics of the Bible, resulting in demotion of the Bible's strict monopoly on authority. Many mainline Christians in the West will favor one of these models.

The second Vatican Council, hereby called Vaticanum II, serve as the example of the fulfillment model. Karl Rahner is credited as the main architect behind the reformed theology that came out of this groundbreaking council. The inclusive element in this model is for example expressed in the term 'anonymous Christians', a term that denotes that people can experience God's grace in other religions to, and that God can save people through Christ in ways that we can not comprehend.

Pentecostals clearly belong to the first model, along side with Evangelicals, Pietists and conservative Protestants. They see other religions as false religions, not containing any salvation. Knitter divided the replacement model into two sub-models; (1) total replacement model, which holds it that Christianity is the only religion in which any form of divine revelation is found, and (2)



partial replacement model, which holds it that we can find traces of divine revelation in other religions. Pentecostals can be found in both sub-models, although I believe that total replacement is the model most Pentecostals associate themselves with.<sup>130</sup>

### *Pentecostal attitude towards African Traditional Religion*

Given the theology of religions that is characterizing Pentecostalism, we can state that Pentecostals think of African Traditional Religion as a false religion. All the elements of it are perceived as false. Pentecostals even tend to perceive African Traditional Religion as demonic, especially all the spiritual elements of it; the offices of healing and deliverance and the practices of offering and sacrificing.

### *The mission of Pentecostals*

Pentecostals want to convert people into Christianity. And of course they believe that they themselves belong to the most 'correct' version of Christianity, the one that is most empowered and most able to evangelize the world. In other religions there is no salvation. To become a Christian one must renounce all other divine concepts than those found in the Bible and confess Jesus Christ as savior. The former religious beliefs must be replaced by Christian beliefs. The former religion must be replaced by Christianity, or, as most Pentecostals would say it; ... must be replaced by Jesus.

Jesus is the only way to heaven. Therefore it is important for Pentecostals to evangelize the world. They want to bring as many people as possible to Jesus. Other religions reject Jesus as Lord God and savior, and thus the way to heaven. They are therefore seen as false religions that have to be replaced by Jesus.

Pentecostals accept that there is salvation in other Christian denominations, as long as they confess Jesus Christ as savior. But for Pentecostals Spirit baptism is important. Through Spirit baptism the Christian gets empowered. They consider other denominations to lack this empowerment, and are thus unable to do progress in the evangelization of the world. Therefore Pentecostals also have a mission agenda towards other Christians. They want to empower them, and see them being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

### *Pentecostalism's charismatized worldview*

Knitter aside, there are differences between Pentecostals and other conservative Protestants in the replacement model. As both see other religions as false, Pentecostals will to a larger degree

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<sup>130</sup>It is worth mentioning that Knitter also divided the other models into sub-models, making them more elaborative.

tend to demonize other religions. Traditional religions, like traditional African religion, are particularly on the radar for demons. Pentecostals have this view due to their charismatized worldviews, which are more enchanted than those of conservative Protestants such as Pietists. As far as non-charismatic conservative Protestants are concerned, their concepts holds it that the evil powers are much more static. The crucial issue is that each individual chooses Jesus. In charismatic and Pentecostal types of Christianity the evil forces are seen as more active, and more focus is put on spiritual warfare. Therefore, when meeting other religions, Pentecostals can be very skeptical to their religious practices and spiritualities, suspecting that there are demons involved.

## **4. 2 An outline of African Traditional Religion**

For outsiders it can be daunting to comprehend the different elements of traditional African religion. There are so many concepts that seem to overshadow each other. There are medicine men, witches, witchdoctors, sorcerers and diviners. There are gods, ancestral spirits, human spirits and nature spirits. African Traditional Religion is not an organized religion. There are different expressions of it, and it takes different forms in different African cultures. We must also notice that most Africans have stronger racial identities, as being of different ethnic groups and clans. In countries like Tanzania there are over 140 different ethnic groups. Here they openly calls these groups 'tribes', which is a word that brings negative associations in many other countries. In Ghana there are over fifty, in Kenya some forty, while Nigeria has more than 250 ethnic groups. And these groups have their own distinctive practices and concepts. Still there are similarities, and we can sort out what is characteristic about African religions.

John Mbiti has written an interesting book called *Introduction to African Religion*.<sup>131 132</sup> Here he explains the different elements of African Traditional Religion. I will now outline some of the concepts found in African Traditional Religion. This is important so that we can identify the religious beliefs that is constituting the African worldviews.

### **4. 2. 1 God**

God is the creator and the sustainer of the universe. Some African groups believe that God

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131Mbiti, 1991

132Mbiti coined the term 'African Religion' to denote African Traditional Religion.

also had helpers. Still most Africans groups believe that God created everything all alone. God is also seen as a sustainer who provides the earth with life. Therefore Africans pray to God to provide them with what they need.

Mbiti attributes to the traditional image of God perceptions that resonates with the Christian image of God. He says that African believe that God is merciful, he has no fault or failure, he knows all things, he never changes, his presence can be found anywhere at any time, and that nobody has seen God.

Africans can pray to God anytime and in any place. They praise him, asks him for protection and blessings, and they give sacrifices and offerings to please God and to draw his attention towards their needs. While sacrifices involve blood, offerings do not.

## **4. 2. 2 Spirits**

(1) Nature spirits. Mbiti explains: "Nature spirits are those which people associate specifically with natural objects and forces. Some are thought to have been created by God initially as spirits; others are said to have been human beings of the distant past." And then he explains something interesting: "The spirits propagate among themselves, and their population is on the increase."<sup>133</sup> There are two types of nature spirits.

(a) Nature spirits of the sky: Some African religions believe that there are some nature spirits that dwell in the sky. Those are considered major spirits and may be in charge of the stronger forces up there. Sometimes these spirits are referred to as divinities or deities.

(b) Nature spirits of the earth. These spirits are smaller than those of the sky, and they inhabit mountains, rocks, rivers, trees etc. Not all African religions believe in earth spirits either. Still most do. Mbiti writes: "the idea of earth spirits provides people with a means of explaining many things that puzzle them in the world around."<sup>134</sup> These spirits can be both pleased and offended. Therefore one must be careful in order to be on the right side with them.

(2) Human spirits. When human beings die, they turn into spirits. Also with human spirits we can find two categories.

(a) Spirits of those who died a long time ago. Mbiti explains: "There are countless numbers of these. Most of them are no longer remembered in their human form by anybody. People still believe that

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<sup>133</sup>Ibid. p.71

<sup>134</sup>Ibid. p.75

such spirits must exist in the visible world."<sup>135</sup> These are the most feared spirit, as they often are presented in exaggerated human forms. They are also not known to men, thus also erratic. Mbiti refer to them as ghosts. They wander the earth or the underworld. Some has vanished or disappeared into the unknown.

(b) Spirits of those who died recently. Mbiti calls these spirits the living dead. They are still part of their families, and they are so as long as they are remembered. They stay close to the hose in which they inhabited while living, and they can visit their family members in dreams and visions.

Human spirits can do both good and evil to people. They can appear in physical bodies and things. They can also possess humans. Spirits carry with them a lot of wisdom from their lives on earth. Medicine men and diviner often strive to being possessed by those in order to gain this wisdom.

### **4. 2. 3 Offices of healing, curses and transcendental mediation**

There are different offices that are central in African cultures. For Westerners these offices can be difficult to understand, and often mixed. Mbiti explains further:

(1) Medicine men. These are found in all African societies, and can be both men and women. Mbiti explains: "... medicine men are considered to be extremely important. They are the ones who come to the rescue of the individuals in matters of health and general welfare. Every homestead is, therefore, within reach of at least one and often several medicine men."<sup>136</sup> Medicine men are often called to their task. Then the calling often comes from a living dead. This can happen at any age. Medicine men can also inherit the skills from their forefathers. They are believed to carry old wisdom.

People consult a medicine man if they are either in trouble because of misfortune, or because they are under a curse, or if they are sick. Remember, these things are not separated. Sickness and death are always connected with something spiritual. For minor illness the medicine man uses herbs and plants. For major illnesses and troubles the medicine man diagnose it and gives the human being a cure. This can be either in the form of herbs or in the form of rituals. He also offers steps the human being can take in order to prevent a major illness and trouble again. People can also consult the medicine man to get protection from harm in the future.

While most medicine men are for the benefit of the society, there are also bad medicine men.

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135Ibid. p.75

136Ibid. p.153

Mbiti writes: "The office of the medicine man is a very necessary and important one. Like other public offices, it can also be abused. Some medicine men use their knowledge and skills for the harm of society."<sup>137</sup> Why do they do this? Well, they do not without reason want to harm society. But other people want to harm somebody, either because of jealousy, envy or hatred. The medicine man can receive lots of amounts of money to make a harmful curse that can be released by the purchaser. Now we enters the field of African worldviews that is about magic.

(2) Witches, sorcerers and evil magicians. Mbiti points out that these are the most hated and the most feared persons in African communities. To understand what they are we must first understand what magic and witchcraft is. It is believed that the universe contains invisible mystical forces and powers. Mbiti explains: "Magic is believed to be these forces in the hands of certain individuals. They may use magic for harmful ends, and then people experience it as bad or evil magic. Or they may use it for ends which are helpful to society, and then it is considered as good magic or 'medicine'." He continues: "Witchcraft is a manifestation of these mystical forces which may be inborn in a person, inherited, or acquired in various ways. For some people it is said to function without their being aware of it, or having control of it." These persons are known as witches or magicians. Mbiti do not distinct between these to, and says that there are no distinction between them in the villages. About sorcery Mbiti explains: "Sorcery generally takes on the form of spells, poisoning, or other physical injury done secretly by someone to someone else or his crops and animals."<sup>138</sup> So we have these three; witches, magicians and sorcerers, which perform witchcraft, magic and sorcery. It is important to notice that the concepts of these variates depending on where in Africa you are. Opoku Onyinah holds it that witchcraft is "an inherent quality and a physic art. The witch performs no rites, utters no spells, and possesses no medicine." Sorcery, on the other hand, is "the deliberate employment of magical rites, and the use of spells or mechanical aids in the attempt to bring a result."<sup>139</sup> Also he notes that there has been amalgamations of the terms witchcraft and sorcery into one term; wizardry.

(3) Diviners, mediums and seers. Mbiti explains: "Often this group of people works with the medicine men ... The main function of [these] is to find out hidden secrets or knowledge and pass them to other people."<sup>140</sup> Diviners mainly diagnose things that have gone wrong. They can also expose people who have worked with evil magic, witchcraft and sorcery. Mediums, on the other hand, are those who get in touch with the spirit world through being possessed. They are often women, and they are attached to either the medicine man or the diviner. They can also offer

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137Ibid. p.157

138Ibid. p.167-168

139Onyinah, 2004, p.331

140Mbiti, 1991, p.157

diagnosis to either sick or bewitched people. Like diviners they are specialists, and must be trained. Seers are people who simply just have natural powers to see unseen things, like things that is about to take place, visions and dreams. They are also believed to have special insight in certain things.

(4) Ritual elders, rain-makers and priests. These can all be both men and womem. Ritual elders are not specialist, but gain their position because of their age. They take charge of performing rituals. Rain-makers are those who pray for rain. They are specialists, and it requires a lot of training to become one. They observe changes in the sky, the nature, at insects, birds and animals. This is connected to the weather. Rain-makers are deep religious people who use a lot of their time praying. Priests are found mostly in West and East Africa. Their job is to search for temples and religious places in order to pray, perform rituals and ceremonies and receive presents. They mediate between the gods / spirits and the society. Priest can often also be seers or diviners.

These perspectives from Mbiti can work as good introduction to African Traditional Religion, but they do not comprise all Africans. Africa is a huge continent, with many different cultures. And traditional religion is exercised differently all over. For example, the Maasai people of Kenya and Tanzania exercise their religion differently than the Akan people of Ghana and Ivory Coast, or the Igbo people of Nigeria. In West Africa we have the religion Vodun, which has, after being mixed with Catholicism, later been known as Voodoo. This is also a different religion that any other else. It is important to know that among traditional religions there are no efforts made to do mission.

There are still similarities in all the expressions of African Traditional Religion. A good example of this is found in the notion of healing and the notion of evil. Kyomo writes about the African concept of healing, that "God is the source of life. His life flows to our physical world through good ancestors. This life has to be maintained and enhanced by the living to the next generation."<sup>141</sup> Marriage is therefore important in Africa, because it passes on this life force. But in the African worldview, as we know, there are also powers hostile to life. When people get ill, or experience misfortune, they seek help from the offices of healing. Kyomo offers another explanation for the terms.

- (1) Divination is prognosis in order to right wrongs.
- (2) Sorcery diminishes the life force by use of medicine.
- (3) Herbalism uses medicine to protect or restore life.

Both Kyomo, who is Tanzanian, and Ghanaian Cephas N. Omenyo confirms that the traditional offices of healing are very important in African cultures. "For the traditional ... African, nothing

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141Kyomo, 2003, p.147

happens by chance."<sup>142</sup>

### **4. 3 Elements of African Pentecostalism**

#### **4. 3. 1 Healing**

Healing is not something new in Africa. Andrew A. Kyomo states: "Before foreigners – the missionaries and the colonialists – introduced modern medical practice (scientific medicine) to Africa, traditional healing was as active as from time immemorial."<sup>143</sup> Africans know what healing is, and the traditional offices of healing have been responsible for it. When mainline Christianity was introduced in Africa, the traditional healers were rejected. The AICs were the first Christian churches to reshape the concept of healing, then often with the combination of traditional medicines and equipments. The later boost of Pentecostalism enhanced the focus on healing.

In Christianity healing was important in the very beginning. In Jesus' ministry healing was central. Also in the acts of the apostles healing is evident. Since then the notion of it has decreased. In revival Christianity, healing was revived as well. Heather D. Curtis identifies the origin of the healing movement to the Holiness movement and Keswick movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with a conference in London in 1885 as a turning point. Important promoters of divine healing was William Boardman and A.B. Simpson.<sup>144</sup> The healing movement was an important root to Pentecostalism, as I also stated in chapter two. Pentecostalism adapted the focus on healing. Especially in some neo-Pentecostal movements, healing is central.

The notion on healing in Pentecostalism was an important factor when Pentecostalism was appropriated in Africa. Healing is central to African spirituality. Cephas N. Omenyo states:

"[In Africa] healing is understood as liberation from conditions that inhibit people's attainment of full humanity and the restoration of life. Furthermore, Africans view health as wholeness, the unity of the natural and the supernatural."<sup>145</sup>

Omenyo points out that one of the major reason why Africans join the AICs and Pentecostal churches is the search for divine healing. "Pentecostals churches in Africa have replicated the

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142Omenyo, 2011, p.234

143Kyomo, 2003, p.147

144Curtis, 2011, p.29-38

145Omenyo, 2011, p.236

traditional African religious practice of seeking healing through religious means."<sup>146</sup> This is important to bear in mind. The African worldview is much more charismatic than a Western worldview. And as Omenyo points out:

"When Africans convert to Christianity, they do not abandon their traditional worldview. This worldview is ever present, but African Christians seek to appropriate biblical resources to respond to the problems their worldview raises."<sup>147</sup>

I will later write about how the African worldview can be integrated in Christianity and vice versa, in the chapter about contextualization.

#### **4. 3. 2 Witchdemonology**

The introduction of Christianity, and then the Pentecostalization of it, resulted in what Onyinah calls 'witchdemonology'. Onyinah states that the belief in witchcraft and sorcery was strengthened with the missionary encounter, even though the missionaries taught that it was superstition. Yet they introduced to the African the concept of a "personalized devil and the association of the gods with demons."<sup>148</sup> He also observes that the Pentecostalization of Christianity in Africa also entails an enhanced focus on deliverance. This focus was first initiated by the AICs in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Now, he asserts, "the concepts of witchcraft and sorcery have changed in Africa ... the deliverance ministry has replaced the anti-witchcraft shrines and the exorcistic activities of the early AICs."<sup>149</sup> It is important to note that Onyinah speaks of the Pentecostalism that was known to the West as neo-Pentecostalism, or as Onyinah himself calls it; the latter rain movement.<sup>150</sup> Onyinah also identifies two trends that developed within African Christianity during the 1970s and 1980s. Both of these trends were exported from the US to Africa through books, audio cassettes and video cassettes. The first put an emphasis on prosperity gospel and faith healing. Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Reinhard Bonnke and Benny Hinn are mentioned as central preachers of this trend. The second trend put an emphasis on the awareness of demons. Derek Prince is mentioned as a central preacher in this trend. He asserted that even Christians could be possessed by a demon, despite being baptized in the Holy Spirit. He even spoke of ancestral

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146Ibid. p.237

147Ibid. p.235-236

148Onyinah, 2004, p.333

149Ibid. p.332-333

150The latter rain movement can indeed be identified as neo-Pentecostalism.



curses and other curses, and supported this with Bible verses from the Old Testament.<sup>151</sup> Here, Onyinah's assertions match those of Paul Gifford. They agree that African Pentecostalism bears many elements that are exported from the US. But Onyinah is also aware of the resonance between neo-Pentecostalism and African worldviews when he states that "Prince's theories appeals to the African worldview."<sup>152</sup> And it is on the basis of the African appropriation of these assumptions, and the further contextualization of this by African scholars and ministers, the emergence of what Onyinah calls 'witchdemonology' has taken place.

The very idea behind the term witchdemonology is that it draws upon both the words witchcraft and demonology. Some of the latter rain preachers mentioned above taught that in Africa all demons originated from witchcraft. In fact, as Gifford has observed, some Pentecostals categorize most of African culture as witchcraft. Also, Africans have identified the Western concept of demons, and they "reformulate it within their concept of witchcraft in a new way that is a combination of the terms witchcraft and demonology."<sup>153</sup>

Onyinah writes:

"Based on some of the writings of Pentecostals ... the origin of demons is linked with the fallen angels. It is held that these beings (fallen angels) with disembodied spirits, found themselves in rivers, seas, mountains, rocks, trees and in humans, and that these spirits have become the gods of the Africans. All Africans are therefore under a curse because their ancestors worshipped the gods."

And he draws from this that the ancestral curse "is a new 'doctrine' that has emerged with 'witchdemonology'."<sup>154</sup> This focus on demons and curses have culminated in the belief that spiritual warfare is the solution to break free the African continent.

This enhanced focus on witchdemonology has put fear back on the spiritual agenda, and the need to take steps in order to prevent being attacked or possessed by evil powers. A popular term in some Pentecostal theologies is now 'demonic doorways' through which demons can enter the life of a human being. These 'doorways' can be idolatry, sinful deeds, involvement in other religions, emotional traumas etc. Onyinah writes:

"It is assumed that all evil acts have their demonic counterparts. For example, a demon

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151See Onyinah, 2004, p.334

152Ibid. p.334

153Ibid. p.336

154Ibid. p.336

of fornication enters the one who fornicates while the demon of lust enters the person who views pornographic videos or pictures. While the Bible reveal the seriousness of sin and the need to get over it through Christ (e.g. Eph. 4:25-32), this theology claims that all evil acts and experiences come from demons and open doors for them."

This theology indicates therefore that

"... everybody, including Christians, could be a witch, demon possessed or could inherit ancestral curses. It is, therefore, purported that in addition to salvation, every African Christian needs deliverance from witchcraft, demons, ancestral curses or diseases, before they will be set free."<sup>155</sup>

Deliverance is therefore an important feature in Pentecostal spiritualities. There are praying centers, ministries devoted to deliverance, vigils, crusades, and all have deliverance as central features.

Onyinah suggests that witchdemonology "represents a remarkable contribution to a paradigm shift in Christianity in Africa."<sup>156</sup> It is a contextualizing factor, and helps Africans understand Christianity in their own idioms.

### **4. 3. 3 Gifting as a step of preventing evil**

African Pentecostalism has replaced the medicines from the medicine man and the counter-witchcraft with the name of Jesus.<sup>157</sup> While "evil is seen as that which prevents people from living whole lives", Jesus, on the other hand, is "the changer of evil destinies."<sup>158</sup>

In African Traditional Religion the elements of sacrifices and offerings were important. They were seen as 'vehicles of sacred power', and they were believed to have force over the supernatural. In African Pentecostalism this belief carried on into an enhanced faith on tithing and offerings. As Asamoah-Gyadu has observed: "One of the cardinal teachings of Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity is that if people want to prosper, they must give 'tithes and offerings' to God."<sup>159</sup> He continues: "There are regular offerings pledges from people who ... give money to 'test the faithfulness of the Lord' ..." and that "a person's ability to deal with evil is directly linked to

<sup>155</sup>Ibid. p.338

<sup>156</sup>Ibid. p.345

<sup>157</sup>With some exceptions in some of the older AICs, that only add Jesus as a fulfilling element to traditional medicines.

<sup>158</sup>Asamoah-Gyadu, 2008, p.87

<sup>159</sup>Ibid. p.96

financial generosity." He concludes:

"In making offerings part of their spirituality, it is the understanding of African Christians that the favors they seek from divine powers are not secured by words only. It is understood that supplications should be backed by sensible tokens of appreciation to the divine powers in order to keep evil at bay. This is because offerings are believed to have a special ability not only to cleanse a person from evil but, particularly in the Christian context, to quicken divine favor as well."<sup>160</sup>

#### **4. 3. 4 Pentecostalization of the mainline churches**

Today Pentecostal-type spirituality and theology is found also within mainline churches. Omenyo writes:

"In the past, the African Independent/Instituted Churches and, later, Pentecostal and neo-pentecostal churches were noted for emphasizing the charismata, which invariably had divine healing as a major thrust. Currently, the phenomenon has found its way into the mainline churches, thus blurring the sharp distinction between mainline churches and pentecostals."<sup>161</sup>

About Ghana he states: "Invariably, healing features prominently in the major teachings and practices of all the Charismatic renewal movements in mainline churches in Ghana."<sup>162</sup> This can be taken into consideration for mainline churches almost everywhere in Africa. Congolese scholar Ngoy Leita Mwakilima has identified numerous deliverance ministries in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, which clearly derives from Pentecostal theology and spirituality.<sup>163</sup>

#### **4. 4 Causes of the Pentecostal growth – a Tanzanian perspective**

In her study on the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, Faith J. Lugazia mentions

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<sup>160</sup>Ibid. p.97

<sup>161</sup>Omenyo 2011, p.232

<sup>162</sup>Ibid. p.241

<sup>163</sup>Mwakilima, 2011

three causes of the growth of which she calls the new charismatic movements. First she goes through the history of the post-colonial Tanzania<sup>164</sup>, and identifies *economical recession* to be a reason for Charismatic movements to grow. In the 1970s there were three major causes for economical recession: First, the oil crisis in the oil countries. Second, the Uganda-Tanzania war in 1978-1979. Third, the decreased coffee exports. Lugazia writes:

"During this crisis people of Tanzania wanted help; they wanted a prophetic voice to announce freedom from the reality of poverty and hunger. They wanted a prophetic voice that could assure them of the present Kingdom of God. It was under this situation that the New Charismatic came in and offered the Good News that assured them about the changes in their lives."<sup>165</sup>

Abednego Keshomshahara also confirms that Pentecostalism in Tanzania started to grow in times of economic hardships. He adds president Julius Nyerere's failing attempt to introduce socialism to Tanzania as a major factor of this economical recession. When politics failed, Pentecostals took the opportunity and promised a better life for those who believed.<sup>166</sup>

The second cause Lugazia identifies is the *social changes* that took place in the 1980s. These changes came after the implementation of the Ujamaa policy, which was an attempt by president Julius Nyerere to make Tanzania self-sufficient. People were required to form village communities and start farming. This worked as an advantage for the new Charismatic movements, which was more flexible and not established with structures and ownership of huge buildings.

The third factor of growth mentioned is the *spiritual hunger* that is not satisfied in the mainline churches. Lugazia writes:

"Christians feel that in the mainline churches there is no room for people to express their faith freely. The New Charismatic Movements use methods that are different from missionaries' methods still used in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. They go to the people where they are."

She also emphasizes the elements of personal expression of faith exercised in the Charismatic movements and the expression of a more simple theology without many complicated theological

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164Tanzania first belonged to German East Africa. Then in 1916, during world war one, it was taken over by Britain. In 1961 Tanzania became independent.

165Lugazia, 2003, p.47

166See Keshomshahara, 2010, p.95-96

terms. All and all the new Charismatic movements appeal more to the grassroots, and proclaim a more understandable religion to non-educated people. As Lugazia writes: "They want the Gospel to be understood in this generation." This is reflected in the style of worship exercised in these churches. They are not confined to written liturgy, and are much more open to spontaneous expressions of faith. Also the music is both rooted in African tradition and Western modernity, with African drums and dancings, and Western keyboards and guitars.

Lugazia also notices that an emphasis on healing and deliverance is much more in line with African traditional perceptions. She writes: "One obvious attraction of New Charismatic Movements is their harmony with primal religious sensibilities." She continues:

"Diseases are the most disturbing factor in the entire lives of Africans. When someone gets sick, it is believed that there must be a reason behind it. Today despite the fact that there is a lot of modern technology, Tanzanians are still sticking to the old traditions, especially when they get some unidentifiable disease like demon possession."<sup>167</sup>

Lugazia also notes that the healings and deliverances are different in the new Charismatic movements than in African Traditional Religion and in the AICs. There are no uses of paraphernalia, herbs or medicines. There is only prayers of faith.

Lugazia concludes her research with a challenge to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania:

"Theologians need to discover the Tanzanian context and develop a theology relevant to the people in Tanzania, who have a culture, religious language and philosophy of life. The people in Tanzania need to get answers to their questions and not answers to questions they never ask."

A question arises: Is the Pentecostalization of Africa the contextualization of Christianity in Africa that Africans long for? This leads us to the next chapter.

#### **4.5 Contextualization and inculturation – an African discourse**

African Christianity needs to be contextualized in order to become relevant to Africans.

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<sup>167</sup>Lugazia, 2003, p.50

Many African scholars will assert with Keshomshahara that "... Christianity has failed to relate and interpret the Gospel in the context of African spirituality." This, he states, has made Africans to become Christians during the day, but adherents to African Traditional Religion in the night. This is because ATR makes more sense to Africans. It engages in their worldview.<sup>168</sup>

Evaristi Magoti uses the word 'inculturation' to describe African Christianity's need to create a theology that is relevant for Africans. It is important because "the tension between western Christianity and African religiosity is not yet resolved."<sup>169</sup> About inculturation she writes:

"Inculturation is a never-ending process by which faith and culture constantly interrogate one another, for the benefit of both. The process is necessary because, without it, faith cannot become culture; and if faith cannot become part of culture, it cannot be faithfully lived. In other words, a faith that does not become a part of culture dies."<sup>170</sup>

Here Magoti indirectly states that African culture has not appropriated the Christian faith successfully yet. Still she indicates that Charismatic movements are more successful in inculturating the faith than the mainline churches. She writes:

"Charismatic movements represents a form of religiosity that is gaining popularity almost everywhere in East Africa. They are becoming an essential part of the contemporary African religious scene that can no longer be ignored by the mainstream churches and the society in general. Charismatic movements play an important role in the life and faith of many Christians here and will perhaps continue to do so in the future. It is important therefore, that we try to understand the challenges posed by the phenomenon and find out how we can relate to them best."<sup>171</sup>

Magoti thus states that the Charismatic movements have found a pattern towards an inculturated Christianity which the mainline churches has not found. Omenyo continues in the same track. He states that as far as Ghana is concerned, the Western missionary enterprise failed to "take the African context into serious consideration," and "was lack of constructive dialogue with traditional cultures and spiritualities." The post-colonial churches have also failed with this. He states that

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168Keshomshahara, 2010, p.99

169Magoti, 2003, p.91

170Ibid. p.92

171Ibid. p.91

already in the 1960s Ghanaian scholars warned about Christianity becoming alien to Africans. But the churches that has succeeded to dialogue with the realities of the African context are the AICs and the Pentecostal churches.<sup>172</sup>

Another Ghanaian who confronts the mission founded churches is Abraham Akrong. He also states that African Christianity is to bound to Western Christianity, and that it needs to be liberated from it. He writes:

"The identification of the Christian mission with the 'civilizing mission' of the colonial project generated paradigm for mission which skewed the liberating message of the Gospel and made the Christian experience in Africa more alienating and exclusive because of the accommodation of Christianity of European culture."<sup>173</sup>

Akrong calls the developments within African Christianity a paradigm shift which entails a 'deconstruction of colonial mission', which he also identifies as the 'babylonish captivity' of Christianity in Africa. He continues:

"The emerging issues for post-colonial African missiology is how to de-ideologize and de-imperialize the mission of God in Christ from its colonial and its Eurocentric bondage, which on most occasions did hamper the universal appeal of God's message of salvation in Christ. The task of post-colonial African missiology is to re-appropriate and re-interpret the universality of Jesus Christ and his message from the point of view of the stories and experiences of African Christians within the context of their own culture and spirituality."<sup>174</sup>

Akrong argues that African Christianity needs to be enculturated.<sup>175</sup> He argues that first, African Christianity must be liberated from its Western bondage. Western Christianity bears too much of Western culture in it. An too much of this has been transmitted to Africa, a context which finds much of this irrelevant. Lugazia provides us with a simple example of this from the hymn book, *Mwimbieni Bwana*, in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania. She writes:

"In the Lutheran Hymnal there are 382 hymns. Among these, only 46 hymns have a

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172Omenyo, 2003, p.6

173Akrong, 2008, p.63

174Akrong 2008, p.64-65

175'Enculturation' is a more secular use of the word 'inculturation', which has been more used in theology.

Tanzanian melody. The rest of the songs are typical Euro-American songs full of another history and context. For example, there are some songs asking God for sun, for flowers and warmth. Some are thanking God for seeing green again after a cold white winter. In evergreen Africa, those songs are out of context."<sup>176</sup>

I find this a lovely example of the bondage in which European culture has on African Christianity. Akrong therefore argues that the first step of contextualizing African Christianity is to liberate it from its Western bondage. Then, secondly, African Christianity can have enculturation. He writes:

"... one cannot have enculturation without the liberation of the African soul and personality from the bondage of the 'colonial mentality' that continues to enslave the African mind. ... Enculturation or recovery of authentic traditional culture *and* liberation must be part of a dialectics of a transformation theology that can address the complex challenges of the African society."<sup>177</sup>

*The AICs and Pentecostalism as authentic African Christianity*

Akrong holds the AICs to be the earliest expression of African protest against the missionary cultural imperialism, and that they "rescued the Christian message of salvation from its bondage to Western culture [which] led to the discovery of the truth about Christianity as a universal message of salvation addressed to all human beings in all circumstances, according to the questions and concerns which each group brings from its cultural backgrounds."<sup>178</sup> He continues:

"The AICs [were] quick to point out, on biblical grounds, the continuities between Christianity and African culture ... and a credible and legitimate vehicle for mediating the salvation message of Christianity for the African society. ... the AICs were able to demonstrate that African concerns hitherto marginalized by missionary Christianity were legitimate questions for which the Gospel has answers. The appropriation and re-interpretation of the Christianity from the perspectives of African spirituality and on biblical grounds constituted the point of departure for the theology of the AICs. This is precisely the theological revolution that has given Christianity a fertile soil on which an authentic African message of salvation can be nurtured."<sup>179</sup>

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176Lugazia, 2003, p.60

177Akrong, 2008, p.70 (my italics)

178Ibid. p.68-69

179Akrong, 2008, p.68



Omenyo share this view and confirms Akrong's thoughts He writes:

"Scholars of African Christianity who had passion for the contextualization of Christianity on African soil romanticized the AICs. Such scholars perceived the AICs as the authentic African expression of Christianity. In recent times, with the decline of growth of membership of the AICs, attention has been drawn to the significance of Pentecostal/Charismatic churches for the potential they hold in meeting the religious aspirations of Africans, and for the growth of Christianity in Africa."<sup>180</sup>

This contextualized Christianity is continued in African Pentecostalism. Omenyo continues:

"Pentecostal movements in Africa have developed a contextualized Christology that presents Jesus as the one who redeems, rescues, and delivers believers from all forms of mishaps in life and from whatever robs people of the good elements of life."<sup>181</sup>

Thus, where traditional Christianity failed, Pentecostalism has succeeded. This is what makes Pentecostalism so attractive in Africa. It succeeds in making the gospel relevant in an African context. It takes the indigenous worldviews seriously and engages in them.

There are challenges and limits to contextualization. I will continue this discussion in my next chapter, where I discuss my findings with my own words.

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<sup>180</sup>Omenyo, 2003, p.8

<sup>181</sup>Omenyo, 2011, p.238

# CHAPTER FIVE – MY PERSPECTIVES

## 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will give my thoughts on the African appropriation of Pentecostalism. The main theme in this research, or the key word, is resonance. Kalu asserts that there are resonances between African maps of the universe and Pentecostalism, and that these resonances are the reason why Pentecostalism so strongly appeals to Africans.

Since I in the previous chapter outlined some African perspectives on Pentecostalism as contextualization of Christianity in Africa, I will give some perspectives on this myself in this chapter.

### 5.1.1 Explaining the term

Resonance is a term that derives from the academical field of physics. It denotes when systems oscillate stronger to certain frequencies. The term is more commonly used in music. It is then called an acoustic resonance. With a guitar you can create a sound from some strings only by singing specific tones. Sounds are frequencies, and frequencies will make guitar strings vibrate. But some frequencies will make certain strings vibrate with greater amplitude. This is called a resonance. There is a resonance between the frequency and the string, resulting in a homogeneous pitch.

Other scholars have used other words to describe the relation between African traditional worldviews and Pentecostalism. These words can maybe clarify what Kalu means. Ghanaian scholar Kwame Bediako uses the word 'continuities', which entails that there are some things in the African worldview or culture that continues despite a radical change from traditional religion to Pentecostalism. Other scholars have used the word 'convergences', denoting that there are elements in the traditional worldview that are similar, or even identical, to those of Pentecostalism. David Bosch and Paul Knitter emphasize the flexibility of the Christian faith, that it is incarnational, and that it changes when it is transmitted from one culture to another.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>182</sup>Bosch, p.190-192

## **5. 1. 2      The problem with the resonance theory**

African Pentecostals do not confirm benevolently that their religion resonates with African Traditional Religion. A problem we often encounter when categorizing and generalizing groups of people is that they do not necessarily recognize the labels we put on them. As for Pentecostals, a break from the past – a complete rupture – is highly important when it comes to conversion. There is no room for mixing religions, or taking elements of the old religion into the new. As we saw in the introduction of chapter four, Pentecostals subscribe to replacement theology concerning other religions. There is no other salvation than the salvation granted through faith in Jesus Christ. Many Pentecostals even believe that there are no divine revelation of any kind in other religions. African Pentecostals are also highly evangelical in their reading of the Bible. It is therefore problematic to ascribe to Pentecostals anything that can indicate the opposite. Asserting that the spirituality of Pentecostals provides traditional pre-Christian perceptions to continue has therefore to be done carefully.

## **5. 2    *The roots of Pentecostalism – contextual approaches***

In chapter one I argued that the roots of Pentecostalism is found in diverse movements within 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century revival Christianity, leading to the Azusa Street revival in 1906. So, arguably, I stated that the roots of Pentecostalism is found in the West alone. Ogbu Kalu, on the other hand, is concerned with the African roots of Pentecostalism. He would disagree with my assertions. African Pentecostalism can not be traced back to Azusa Street alone. The Azusa Street revival is not even the main root of African Pentecostalism. The main roots of African Pentecostalism is found within African history. Kalu asserts that the first and foremost root of African Pentecostalism is found in the traditional maps of the universe. In the traditional religion we find so many elements that are continued in Pentecostalism. The other roots of Pentecostalism is found in African church history, in the different responses Africans made to the gospel brought by Western missionaries. This makes the liberation movement called Ethiopianism the first African initiated Christian root to Pentecostalism. The second root is the AICs, which definitely have more traditional attributes attached to them. They were focusing more on the Holy Spirit, and are thus an important root to the pneumatic emphasis of African Pentecostalism.

## **5. 2. 1      Precautions in the research of global Pentecostalism**

The main characteristic of global Pentecostalism is diversity. All around the world today there are Pentecostal churches. In many countries there are several Pentecostal denominations. Some have more classical Pentecostal affiliations, and some have more neo-Pentecostal approaches. Some have more elements of traditional religion, some are closer to mainline church theology and spirituality. This makes the maps of Pentecostalism daunting, and many are confused when meeting foreign Pentecostalism, which often differ from their perceptions of Pentecostalism.

Pentecostalism is mostly congregationalist. This means that each local church is dependent, and is more free to constitute its own theological and spiritual character. This has always been a characteristic of Pentecostalism, although there are some denominations, especially in the Global South, that are episcopalian, and have thus a more strict adherence to a certain theology and spirituality.

Pentecostalism is highly adaptable. This is one of the reasons of the rapid growth of it. There are no conversion rituals. There are no demands of adapting Western liturgies, prayers and hymns. To become a Pentecostal – or to become a Christian according to Pentecostals – one must simply just confess Lord Jesus as your personal savior. Although a conversion experience and a complete rupture from the past are subsequently expected, there are no strict process of renouncing and dedication. Pentecostals are not organized under a common confession. They have albeit their organizations, as the Assemblies of God, Church of God, and so on. But these are only denominations, representing a group of Pentecostals. Each congregation is still independent. This makes them highly adaptable to local contexts.

Having all these elements in mind it is therefore difficult to discern the roots of Pentecostalism without taking the contexts into consideration. African Traditional Religion is definitely a root of African Pentecostalism. But it is not to the same degree a root of Norwegian Pentecostalism. Chilean Pentecostalism has different roots than Korean Pentecostalism. Therefore we need different contextual approaches to different contextual Pentecostalisms.

## **5. 2. 2      Africa's charismatic worldview**

The pre-Christian worldview has always been essential when Christianity has been

appropriated. David Bosch and Paul Knitter both assert that when Christianity moved from being a Jewish religion to also being a Greco-Roman religion, it changed due to the worldview in the culture in which it was transmitted.<sup>183</sup> The mission paradigm, which Bosch is concerned with, changed drastically. "The Christian faith is intrinsically incarnational", Bosch states.

In Africa the pre-Christian worldview characterizes both the theology and the spirituality of Christianity. What is really transformed when one converts from African Traditional Religion to Christianity? Well, as far as this research is concerned, not the worldview. The cardinal doctrines of Christianity are appropriated. But they are appropriated into a different worldview than they came from. Mission does not change worldviews completely. It merely transmits some concepts on which to believe. These will, in turn, slowly change the worldview when they are adapted. Still contextual Christianities will always be colored by the worldview persisted in the cultures. And Christianity is always contextual.

*African worldviews as a root of African Pentecostalism – a case study*

The African worldview is charismatic in itself. This is shown in Birgit Meyer's research on the Pietist mission among the Ewe people in West Africa. In the Pietist worldview Satan exists, but is very static. It is the choice of each individual that is crucial. One has to repent and live a pious life. Meyer illustrates this worldview with an old lithograph called 'The broad and the narrow path'. The broad path is what is called 'the world'. It is the path of Satan. Here all kinds of secular activities are pictured. Satan is tempting with these things, which give pleasure of the heart, but infernal destruction in the hereafter. The narrow path is God's path. It is the Christian life according to the Pietists. This path means abstinence from worldly pleasure, soberness, dignity, virtue, decent dressing etc., and it leads to eternal enjoyment in heaven. The message the lithograph is that we must choose the right path. This worldview was propagated to the Ewe people with the aim that they would convert from their superstitious religion to Christianity.

The Ewe worldview, on the other hand, also had a concept of an evil force. But while the Pietist devil was static, only relegated to having a role of tempting human being, the Ewe evil was very active. The issue here was not choosing the devil or not, but to avoid being chosen. Meyer writes: "The Devil played a crucial role in the missionaries' worldview, but even more in the Ewe's worldview. Through the Devil the pre-Christian religion became a building block of their Christian understanding."<sup>184</sup> Here Meyer asserts that these understandings of the devil and the evil forces resonated and became a bridge from the old religion to the new. The old spirits and gods of the

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183Bosch, p.190-192

184Meyer, 1996, p.214

traditional religion were not disenchanting, but rather confirmed as real powers. In the Ewe worldview the spiritual powers were really active. They interfered in people's lives. And when the Ewe became Christians they "imagined the Christian God on the basis of existing concepts and still expected religion to *work*."<sup>185</sup> Her conclusion is thus: "... conversion does not entail a completely new way of thinking."<sup>186</sup>

When Africans appropriate Christianity it becomes automatically more Pentecostal-like. This is because their worldviews are initially more charismatic. They picture the evils more in line with Pentecostals. This constitutes the resonance I am exploring in this research.

### **5. 2. 3 Failing mission efforts from the West**

Most African scholars agree that the Western missionary enterprise failed to contextualize Christianity in Africa. The missiological paradigm of the time held that the European civilization was the Christian civilization, and that Christening Africa was to introduce Western civilization. David Livingstone's (1813 – 1873) three big Cs; 'Christianity, commerce and civilization', stand as a headline for 19<sup>th</sup> century mission thinking. African cultures were seen as non-civilized cultures, and thus non-Christian. It was therefore not an adaptable gospel that was first presented to Africans. It was a Western one. And it went to much degrees hand in hand with imperialism and colonialism. John Baur writes: "... we must conclude by admitting that the impact of European imperialism and civilization on African society was too strong for an independently-ruled African church with an indigenous culture to emerge at that time."<sup>187</sup> This failed enterprise triggered Africans to respond to the gospel, and ask questions from the interiors of their worldviews. Kalu emphasizes that the roots of Pentecostalism in Africa is found in these indigenous responses to gospel. The Western missionary enterprise is thus an important contributor to the emergence of African Pentecostalism, since it triggered Africans to respond with their own spiritualities. This correlates with his claim that African worldview is a charismatic worldview.

## **5. 3 The 'worldview' of Pentecostalism**

One of the characteristics of Pentecostalism is "the emphasis on divine encounter and the

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185Ibid. p.218

186Ibid. p.220

187Baur, p.134

resulting transformation of life ..."<sup>188</sup> There are always expectations of divine interventions. Humans are indeed not left for themselves. They always count on the Parakletos. Therefore Pentecostals put a lot of efforts in dedicating themselves by seeking revelations and divine interventions.

The very emphasis on the Holy Spirit makes Pentecostalism communicate with Africans better. Abednego Kesomshahara writes:

"The emphasis of the Charismatic churches on the functions of the Holy Spirit appeals to many Africans whose traditional spirit beliefs are associated with the miraculous aspects of life."

He also states that "the role of the Holy Spirit correlates with that of the ancestral spirits in the African Traditional Religion."<sup>189</sup> I will now outline some features found in Pentecostal theology that constitute a Pentecostal worldview. The Pentecostal worldview is in fact a charismatic worldview. Kalu also calls the African worldview a charismatic worldview.

### **5. 3. 1 Spirit baptism**

One of the theological concepts that characterizes Pentecostalism – in many Western countries it really defines it – is the concept of Spirit baptism. This is a term that reflects the events that occurred on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. John the Baptist also used this term when prophetizing this event, when he said that his successor, Jesus Christ, would "baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Mt 3:11-12; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:21-22; Jn 1:29-34). Jesus also said in Acts 1:5: "For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." It varies from Bible translations whether it says baptism *with* the Spirit, or baptism *in* the Spirit. Pentecostals tend to use the *in* translation. Both prepositions can actually be used.

The doctrine of Spirit baptism has its roots in the Holiness movement who described a post-conversion experience of sanctification. Charles Finney, and later the Keswick movement, identified this experience as the 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' and detached it from the doctrine of entire sanctification. Gradually Spirit baptism was seen as a post-conversion empowerment for witnessing.

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<sup>188</sup>Anderson, 2004, p.188

<sup>189</sup>Keshomshahara, 2010, p.100

Spirit baptism is described as a life changing experience that transforms the spiritual life of a believer. For the earliest Pentecostals it was necessary to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the doctrine changed. In classical Pentecostalism the speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of Spirit baptism has been evident. Later, especially with the growth of the Charismatic movement and neo-Pentecostalism, this has changed. Almost none of these advocates the initial evidence doctrine. But they all speak of Spirit baptism. And they are all defined by their belief in and seeking of a life changing post-conversion experience of the Holy Spirit.

The concept of Spirit baptism marks the Pentecostals. They are always in pursuit of encounters with the Holy Spirit. Some dedicate themselves in praying and worship. Others seek anointed leaders who can either preach some faith into their hearts or lay their hands on them and exercise some of their charisma like healing or prophecy. Others travel to places with charismatic revivals, which are seen as outpourings of the Spirit.

### **5. 3. 2      The charisma**

The most important charisma in Pentecostal history is glossolalia. This charisma is usually only referred to as 'tongues'. Speaking in tongues was the very evidence that God had consecrated you and baptized you in the Holy Spirit. Today this has changed. But all Pentecostals believe in the tongues, and most of them seek the gift.

With the emergence of neo-Pentecostalism other charisma has gained importance. The gift of healing, the gift of prophecy, the gift of distinguishing between spirits and the gift of miraculous powers are all important in this respect. These gifts can be given to any believer, not only clerics. In this regard the priesthood of all believers is evident in Pentecostalism. One is encourage not to pay attention to PhD degrees and formal education, but to the intimacy with the Lord, the possession of charismata and the seeking of gifts and purpose of life.

In neo-Pentecostalism the notion of faith has become very important. This is especially seen in the Faith movement, which is named because of this feature. For a Christian to receive charisma he must exercise faith. The one promoting this view and doctrinizing it was Kenneth Hagin. His exegesis of Mk 11:24 suggests that every gift can be acquired for a Christian if he exercises faith. The verse goes: "... whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." This notion of faith is a characterizing element of many neo-Pentecostal churches, and it has stressed the emergence of another important notion of neo-Pentecostalism, especially in the Global South. The notion of success.



### **5. 3. 3      The prosperity gospel**

The prosperity gospel is one of the controversial features of many neo-Pentecostal churches. And it is an extension and a consequence of the notion of faith. If a Christian can acquire spiritual gifts through faith, he can also acquire health and wealth. And when spiritual gifts are signs of having lots of faith, then having a lot of money and being healthy are a sign of being a successful Christian. The prosperity gospel holds it that it is God's will that humans prosper, and that you can prosper through taking steps of faith. It is important to stress that the prosperity gospel is highly criticized by most pentecostals, and is most connected to Faith movement churches.

Paul Gifford states that the origins of the prosperity gospel is found in the US.<sup>190</sup> It finds its roots in US capitalism and the televangelists of the 1940s and 1950s. It emerged in a time of economic growth. The 1950s are known as the 'happy 50s'. People started to prosper. The same we can see with the 1980. A blue wind swept over the Western world, with capitalism flourishing all over. In this climate the prosperity gospel emerged. Prosperity gospel thrives in and emerges from a culture of individualism and pursuits of individual happiness.

### **5. 3. 4      Spiritual warfare**

Pentecostals believe in the existence of Satan, demons and spiritual powers as in opposition to God, angels and the Holy Spirit. Evangelical Christianity in general take the Bible very seriously. But the notion of spiritual warfare became evident in the 1980s and 1990s, about the same time as the prosperity gospel emerged. Paul Gifford explains the idea of spiritual warfare: "... a Christian's progress and advance can be blocked by demons who maintain some power over the Christian, despite his or her coming to Christ."<sup>191</sup> He refers to a close connection between the ideas of progress and success and the concept of spiritual warfare. When there is absent of promised blessing explanations are needed. Spiritual warfare is such an explanation.

Pentecostals believe in an active army of evils. This distinguishes them from other Christian denominations. All Evangelicals believe in the existence of the devil and the evil forces. But in the Western perception of these they are very static. The focus is more on each individual's privilege to

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<sup>190</sup>Gifford, 2001

<sup>191</sup>Ibid. p.65

choose between the right and the wrong path. The devil is only tempting people to choose the wrong path. In Pentecostalism the devil is way more active. Demons can attack people and actively block their path. Some Pentecostals hold it that even Christians are not safe. There are doorways through which demons can enter our lives.

It is only through the empowerment of the Holy Spirits the Pentecostals are able to defeat evil forces. They are thus under divine power, and exercise authority over Satan and his army. In non-Western Pentecostalism this notion is even more important.

### **5. 3. 5 The 'anointed man of God'**

The focus on success and progress has produced some extraordinary successful Pentecostals. They are like superstars, and Pentecostals travel far to hear them preach and exercise their gifts on them. This is of course a phenomenon not exclusively Pentecostal. There has always been extraordinary people in all movements. People came from far to listen to Luther and John Wesley too. The revivals in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were marked by preachers that attracted large groups of people. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century we had non-Pentecostals like Billy Graham who figured as a 'man of God' people traveled from all corners to hear. But in Pentecostalism this has accelerated. The Pentecostal super stars are more exalted, they are held up as elected and anointed by God to stake out miraculous ways for the church. Some even take titles like apostles and prophets. And people travel from all over the world to hear them or to seek help from them. They are like modern medicine men, catering for people's needs. They fly with private jets, arrange big campaigns and crusades and dress very flamboyantly. They are accompanied with sumptuous crews and co-workers.

## **5. 4 Conflating worldviews**

A worldview is a way in which a culture or civilization perceive reality. I outlined Kalu's definition of the term in chapter 3. 5. 1. He defines it as assumptions, values and allegiances found at the core of cultures. A worldview is how we perceive reality.

#### **5. 4. 1 Western worldviews and African worldviews**

Western Christianity has been through different paradigms than Christianity elsewhere. These paradigms have transformed the Western worldview, and thus the worldview of Western Christianity. It is no doubt that the Western worldview has been disenchanted by natural science, modernism and critical science. The worldview in which the Bible was conceived and formulated is more or less abandoned and many concepts are redefined in contemporary Christianity. For example, the vigilant attention towards spiritual forces is now replaced with confident trust to natural scientific or medical explanations. The practices of healing and exorcism have dwindled. These concepts draw more skeptic attention today and are rejected as fraud.

Western worldviews are alien to many Africans. African worldviews have not been through the same developments. They have had their own developments and have been shaped by other factors. For Africans the existence of supernatural powers, spirits and deities is taken for granted, and denying this would be unthinkable. It would make no sense. For Westerners the existence of atheists and agnostics is taken for granted.

#### **5. 4. 2 African worldviews and the biblical worldview**

There are resonances between the biblical worldview and the African maps of the universe. Kalu states that this is especially evident in the notion of evil. "The biblical worldview images the Christian life to be just as precarious as the traditional African imagines."<sup>192</sup> Philip Jenkins touches the same resonance. He writes that "the scripture comes from a world familiar to them [Africans], that it is speaking their language."<sup>193</sup>

In the Bible evil powers were clearly part of the reality. Jesus encountered demons several times, and for early Christianity healing and exorcism were essential components when the gospel was proclaimed. In the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, the main characters were always surrounded by pagan religions. These were always connected with the evil through their gods and offerings. This reality is also experienced in Africa where traditional religions are part of society. Almost all Christians in Africa turned to Christianity from traditional religion, and they did it in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. This means that most Christians in Africa are either first, second or third

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<sup>192</sup>Kalu, 2008, p.179

<sup>193</sup>Jenkins, 2006, p.181 [my brackets]

generation Christians. Paganism is reality in Africa today, and most Africans are acquainted with it. Jenkins states: "In Africa the existence of evil ones and enemies is painfully real. Evil spirits, witches and wizards, sorcerers and ill wishers are a constant source of fear and anxiety."<sup>194</sup> Pagan and primal religions teach the existence of spiritual menaces facing society, but they also provide means to combat those dangers. Also Pentecostals and indigenous churches take the reality of evil forces seriously and provide means to combat them. They also identify this worldview not only in the Bible but in church history as well. For Justin Martyr and Origen, the truth of Christianity was proved when ordinary Christians cast out demons. This was done simply by invoking the name of Jesus, not through rituals and prayers. Tertullian also stated that all the authority they had over demons came from invoking the name of Jesus. This echoes deliverance practices among Pentecostals. In Western theology exorcism and deliverance are mostly relegated to the far periphery.

The African worldview is closer to the Biblical worldview. It is actually the Western worldview that is the most distinctive in this world. If an African and a Western man time-traveled to 50 AD Jerusalem the African would recognize more of the cultural perceptions. This is because Westerners have had their worldviews transformed through numerous paradigm shifts. Africans have to a larger degree maintained their traditional worldviews.

### **5. 4. 3 Pentecostals in opposition to the Western worldview**

Pentecostals are in opposition to the disenchanting worldview. They still believe in divine healing and glossolalia as given by God. They even believe in the menace of evil powers. Many of them still oppose the theory of evolution, which has been taken for granted by most Western people. They oppose the rejection of divine healing and the reliance on science as the mean of explaining superstitious things. This is because of their reading of the Bible. They believe in the Bible and everything that are stated there. They want to be in line with the biblical worldview. This makes them naturally also more in line with African worldviews. Other Evangelicals also have the same perception of the biblical authority. But the Pentecostals have revived the charisma that seems to have flourished in the early church, and thus re-introduced a charismatic worldview.

Western Pentecostals are still part of a Western worldview. So in that case they understand it. The Western worldview is not alien to them, as it is to most Africans, and as it would be for the authors of the Bible. But they still oppose it.

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<sup>194</sup>Ibid. p.103

## **5.5 Confrontations between Pentecostalism and African maps of the universe**

Pentecostalism has an exclusive theology of religions. As we have seen Pentecostals reject all other religions. They are false and contain no divine revelation. Therefore the confrontations between African Traditional Religions are obvious.

### *Demonizing*

Pentecostals demonize concepts in the African maps of the universe. Not only do they reject other religions as false, but they engage in their worldviews and give them a certain legitimacy. Spirits, whether they are perceived as ancestral or natural, are redefined as demons. So are other deities and spiritual concepts. Traditional religions and polytheistic religions seem to be most demonized. This redefining of spiritual concepts result in extensive deliverance activities.

### *The concepts*

Traditional African concepts of evil differ much from Pentecostal concepts of evil. In Pentecostalism, and in Christianity generally, the concept of good vs. evil is evident. God is the ultimate good, and the devil is the ultimate evil. Life is perceived as a battle between these where they both seek influence in people's lives. The emphasis is put on the individuals choice to allow the one or the other to exert influence.<sup>195</sup> In traditional African perceptions there are no such absolutes. The spirits and deities are unpredictable and erratic. One never knows if they are satisfied or not. Therefore African traditionalists put a lot of effort on being on the good side with spirits by giving offerings. One will never find Pentecostals doing this.

### *The practices*

Pentecostals have replaced traditional offices of healing and deliverance. This is because also these have been demonized. All of them are involved in some way or another with demons. Medicine men have usually received their calling from a living dead, and are thus agents for demons. So are the other offices. But witch doctors and sorcerers are the worst. They are perceived as demon possessed. This is what Onyinah calls witchdemonology.

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<sup>195</sup>Though, in Pentecostalism, as we have seen, it is perceived that it is not only humans that choose between evil and good. Evil can itself choose humans it wants to attack.

Pentecostals believe that they are engaged in spiritual warfare against traditional concepts. This is the only way in which they can defeat the evil powers. They believe that aggressive praying and proclaiming the blood of Jesus will cleanse all forms of evil.

Participation in traditional practices is seen as a doorway for demons to enter life. It is therefore crucial for Pentecostals not to be associated in any way with traditional practices. They stay away from medicine men, diviners, and even herbalists.

#### *Pentecostal notion on the rupture of the past*

According to Pentecostals, converting to Christianity entails a rupture from the past. This is connected with their strong belief in divine intervention and life-changing experiences. Like Paul, who met Jesus in an extraordinary intervention on his way to Damascus. His conversion from being a zealous persecutor of the church to becoming its most important missionary is a model for Pentecostals. A conversion is a complete break with the past and a new start of a new life. This is evident in the term 'born again Christian', which is expressively used by Pentecostals. African traditionalists are therefore expected to renounce everything they believe in and start new lives as born again Christians.

### **5.6 Pentecostalization as contextualization of Christianity**

There are two main waves in contemporary African Christianity. The first one is the *inculturation project* in the academical fields. This process has been long urged for, both by American and Western theologians. Their call for the liberation of African theology from its ties to the West and the creation of an authentic African theology, has put terms as *incarnational theology*, *adaptation*, *contextualization*, *indigenization*, and even *Africanization* on the missiological agenda.

The second wave is what this research has been concerned with; the *pentecostalization* of Christianity, or, as I have called it, the appropriation of Pentecostalism. This wave deals with the same issues, and is also a kind of inculturation process. But it is generated from the grassroots, and takes a Charismatic shape that challenges the mainline churches, from where most of the academical circles emanates. The pentecostalization of Christianity also challenges Western Christianity, which becomes more polarized to it. As far as Western Christianity is concerned it develops in a completely different direction. Lastly, the pentecostalization of Christianity challenges the academia, and the understanding of contextualization.

Can the Pentecostalization of Christianity in Africa be seen as a contextualization and

inculturation process? Ogbu Kalu, Abraham Akrong and Cephas N. Omenyo would all answer 'yes' to this. Pentecostals have succeeded in answering questions from the interiors of African worldviews. This is due to their charismatic worldview that resonates with the African maps of the universe. Still we should avoid to say that pentecostalization *is* contextualization. We should rather make clear that it is a *kind of* contextualization. This is what Omenyo means when he states that Pentecostals "have developed a contextualized Christology", entailing that there are many ways of contextualizing.<sup>196</sup>

#### *What is contextualization?*

The concept of contextualization is a difficult concept. There are different definitions of it, and it is a pretty fresh concept in theology.<sup>197</sup> Contextualization is to integrate and/or translate Christianity into another context in an understandable and relevant way. *Contextualization* is a slightly different concept than *inculturation*, as it emphasizes more than just culture. Still these two concepts deal with the same issues; to integrate Christianity in cultures and societies. I will cling to Magoti's definition of it, that contextualization is a process of interrogation between faith and culture for the benefit of both, and the aim of it is to make faith become culture.<sup>198</sup>

Another word that has been popular is *indigenization*. I do not find this term precise. As Tormod Engelsviken has stated, Christianity is never indigenous. It never comes from the inside, but from the outside.<sup>199</sup> Still, the intention of the term 'indigenization' must be to denote the same as contextualization and inculturation; to make Christianity relevant to indigenous cultures. But maybe it emphasizes more rural and remote cultures that are embedded in more primal religion. This is, after all, where the term 'indigenous' is most used.

#### *Limits to contextualization*

There are limits of contextualization. Whereas Christianity wants to be completely integrated in culture, not everything in culture can be translated into Christianity. In this research I have outlined some of the features in African maps of the universe that resonates with Pentecostalism. In Pentecostalism these features are easily translated and reinterpreted. The resonance then denotes that both Pentecostal perceptions and perceptions found in African maps of the universe operate in worldviews that correlates with each other. The worldviews are somehow similar, and thus also the perceptions. This research has also shown that one of the most evident

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196Omenyo, 2011, p.238

197As the academical discipline of missiology also is.

198See chapter 4.5

199Engelsviken, 2004, p.243

resonances between these worldviews is that they are both charismatic, especially in their notion of evil. But, as we have seen, there are also confrontations between the worldviews. Here we find the limits of contextualization.

Contextualization does not entail a complete transformation of culture and worldview. This is because of the intricate relationship between culture, faith and worldview. They all stand in dialectical relations to each other. Every culture has a worldview. Every worldview is based on faith and perceptions. Every faith and perception is expressed through culture. They are all woven together. This is the context in which Christianity is integrated. It has always been integrated into cultures and worldviews. Thus Christianity becomes *part of* a culture and a worldview that has been shaped by former religious faiths. It is even translated into it.

Christianity has to transform *something* in the culture and the worldview. Or else Christianity would not be transmitted and shared. There is a core of belief in Christianity that is always translated into cultures. This belief is also meant to be expressed in moral behavior. The worldview is affected by this transformation, but not changed completely.

There are different ways of addressing contextualization.<sup>200</sup> The first way is to ignore it. This is how mission was carried out earlier. Sociological and cultural integrities (the contexts) were not paid attention to. The idea was not to translate Christianity into different cultures, but to replace traditional cultures with Christian culture. The second way is to uncritically embrace the old culture. Then traditions and practices that seems to confront Christian faith are integrated. The problem with this way is that it often leads to syncretism. The third way, which seems to be the most responsible way according to Engelsviken, is the way of *critical contextualization*. He states that the "aim of all churches must be to create their own symbols and practices that are both rooted in the biblical revelation and in the local culture." He concludes:

"Concerning mission and culture, the big task for the church is to communicate the Word of God in such a way that the message is constant, but at the same time understandable and relevant. The crucial issue in contextualization is if Jesus Christ is allowed be Lord in the heart of each individual and in the heart of culture."<sup>201</sup>

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200See Engelsviken, 2004, p.258-261

201Engelsviken, 2004, p.260-261 (translated from Norwegian)



## 5. 6. 1 Pentecostalization of Christianity

Several scholars have the last years turned to these terms; 'pentecostalization' or 'charismatization'. The terms are used both to describe the growth of Pentecostal-type Christianity in Africa and thus the transformation of African Christianity as a whole, and to denote the growth of Pentecostalism *within* the mainline churches. Ghanaian scholar Cephas N. Omenyo names one of his articles 'the charismatization of mainline churches in Ghana'.<sup>202</sup> This term is literally the same as Kalu uses when he speaks of a 'pentecostalization' of Christianity. These terms are easily confused with each others, and for good reason. They speak of the same thing. In her acknowledged master thesis on this subject in a Tanzanian context, Congolese scholar Ngoy Leita Mwakilima used the title 'Lutheran Pentecostalism' to explain the expressions of deliverance ministries in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania.<sup>203</sup> No Lutheran professor ever doubted this title. This focus points to an interesting fact. Not only do Pentecostal movements grow independently, but also within the mainline churches. In this respect it would be more correct to speak of a charismatization rather than a pentecostalization. Traditionally the charismatic movement in the mainline churches have been distinguished in term from the Pentecostal movement. Still, in this research I have argued that including the charismatic movements with in the term Pentecostalism is justifiable.

A reformation is indeed going on in African Christianity. It is referred to as the "Pentecostalization of Christianity in Africa"<sup>204</sup>, and is "... a radical paradigm shift nurtured by African traditional spirituality."<sup>205</sup> Allan Anderson states: "Such a fundamental change has indeed taken place in African Christianity that Pentecostalism has become its dominant expression in many countries."<sup>206</sup> With the pentecostalization of Christianity the long-urged-for inculturation process in academia is answered. In African Pentecostalism African traditional thinking is well maintained.

## 5. 6. 2 The way ahead for African Christianity

There is a need of making African Christianity more independent from its ties to Western Christianity. This need is evident on many levels. First of all, churches have to become self sufficient. Many African churches and institutes depend on aid form the West. This call is heard in

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202Omenyo, 2003

203Mwakilima, 2011

204Anderson, 2004, p.104

205Akron, 2008, p.63

206Anderson, 2004, p.121

church partnership programs, where this bias clearly can be seen. Secondly, Africa has to disentangle from Western liturgy and spirituality. They must abandon the church organs and reintroduce African drumming and dancing to the Church service. Thirdly, Africans must initiate the development of contextualized theologies and integrate them in their churches. This road has already been stepped up, and in the academia Africanized theologies have emerged. But in this respect the Pentecostals are really challenging African Christianity. Today the development of an Africanized Christianity has reached far in Pentecostals churches. Not only in the academia, but in church theologies and spiritualities. But in the mainline churches the ties to the West are much stronger. It is the independent churches that are in the front line.

*Is Pentecostalism providing Africans with a gospel that is more relevant to them?*

This is a difficult question because this 'contextualization' is not done carefully and systematically in Pentecostal churches. Mainline theology is simply just put aside, charged of being emptied of power and of no use. Pentecostals draw the inspiration directly from the Holy Spirit, taking no regard to Western Christianity. It is purely African initiated.

Abraham Akrong, among many African scholars, wants to deconstruct colonial mission, and then reconstruct an African Christianity. The aim is to provide Africans with a gospel that is relevant to them while still being rooted in church history. This is a comprehensive task which is not done in short time. The question he must face is whether African Pentecostalism should be the starting point of reconstructing theology in Africa or not. After all, it is Pentecostalism that seems to attract Africans to the gospel, giving them relevant answers to their questions.

This research suggests that the charismatic worldview of Africa should be taken seriously when constructing a contextual theology. Thus Pentecostalism becomes a natural starting point. In this regard I also want to include the AICs, which clearly have pneumatological connections with Pentecostals. These bedfellows, as Kalu calls them, are the most Africanized Christianities today.

# CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUDING REMARKS

## 6.1 Introduction

In this my last chapter I will conclude my research with some remarks. I have outlined Kalu's theories concerning the roots of Pentecostalism in Africa, and his theories of a resonance between Pentecostalism and African maps of the universe. I have given some perspectives on the resonances between Pentecostalism and African worldviews, the appropriation of Pentecostalism in Africa, and Pentecostalism as contextualization of Christianity in Africa. During this process I have acquired an understanding of where I feel the starting point of an academical contextualization of Christian theology and spirituality in Africa should be.

## 6.2 The resonances

This research has been most concerned with the resonances between Pentecostalism and African maps of the universe. African Pentecostalism is both accused and credited for being nurtured by traditional perceptions.

### *Resonating worldviews*

African worldviews are charismatic, just as that of Pentecostalism. Humans are not left for themselves but are always in reach of God and spirits.

Both worldviews hold it that people should be attentive the spiritual surroundings. The physical dimension is not the only dimension that is taken into consideration. The importance of being on the good side with the divine and the rejection of evil are essential for people to make progress in life.

The expectations of divine interventions are characteristic in both worldview. People seek divine experiences and spiritual empowerment.

### *The notion of evil*

In African traditional thinking, the warfare against evil supernatural powers is a crucial

issue. When misfortunes and accidents strike Africans, they find it difficult to believe that these happened without an underlying reason. There must be some kind of interference by evil powers. Therefore Africans take precautions against such attacks, and search for protection. Pentecostals have the same notion of evil. They also see the world as inhabited by spiritual menaces; demons who are well capable of interfering in people's lives. Pentecostals feel the need to fight against these in their church services and daily prayers. This research suggests that the traditional perceptions of the abilities of evil powers have continued into Pentecostalism, whereas the very concepts of evil may have changed.

#### *The need for deliverance*

The resonance of deliverance is connected to the struggle for success. Success in life is connected to the very purpose of life. Being wealthy and having powerful positions in society can be a sign of success. When success delays it is perceived that there is some kind of disturbance in the progress towards it. This disturbance is believed to be spiritual. In traditional maps of the universe it can be witchcraft or ancestral curses that are causing disturbance. In Pentecostalism the blame is put on demons.

The first step is to diagnose. In traditional maps of the universe one must visit an expert, a kind of office of healing and divination. In Pentecostalism anyone can practically discern between spirits, but people possessing such gifts are usually ministers.

The second step is delivering the possessed person. Kalu divides between exorcism and deliverance. Exorcism is more associated with rituals and the mere exorcising of alien spirits. Deliverance, which is the term more used by Pentecostals, entails a re-filling of the Holy Spirit subsequently to the mere exorcising of the demon.

#### *The need for healing*

Health is important for Africans. Sickness is also seen as caused by supernatural forces. While Pentecostals do not put as much emphasis on diagnosing sickness as African traditionalists, they still believe that it is God's will that people are healthy, and that sicknesses and all kinds of sufferings come from the devil. Therefore sickness is an error that disturbs God's perfect plan for the individual.

Healing is also something Pentecostals and African traditionalists seek liberation from. And in many cases the protocols of healing are the same as those of deliverance. They are connected with each other, since they are both deriving from evil.

### *The anointed leader*

Both African maps of the universe and Pentecostal worldviews holds it that God has given some people extraordinary gifts and talents. These are often referred to as anointed people, men of God etc. People travel far to meet these people and maybe be blessed by them. In African maps of the universe these people are known as medicine men, diviners, seers etc. In Pentecostalism they are known as pastors, ministers, apostles etc. They possess gifts that people are in need of, and they are held up as chosen ones.

## **6.3 The confrontations**

We have seen that because Pentecostals subscribe to a replacement theology there are obviously confrontations between African maps of the universe and Pentecostalism.

### *The concept of evil*

The very concept of evil is different in African maps of the universe and Pentecostalism. In Pentecostalism the devil and his demons are the absolute contrasts to God and his angels. These are straight forward black and white. In African maps of the universe the evil forces can be spirits and deities that are not consequently evil. Good spirits can be offended and do harm. Bad spirits can be pleased and bless.

### *The practices of healing and deliverance*

The practices of healing and deliverance are different. In traditional African religions the sick and unfortunate gets a cure, which sometimes involves some kind of magical powers. Often the client is required to give some kind of offering to a spirit, an ancestor or a deity. In Pentecostalism the mere invocation of the name of Jesus Christ is the only way in which humans can be healed and delivered properly. This is done in prayer, often aggressive prayer which characterizes Pentecostals in a spiritual warfare mode. The invocation can often also be on the blood of Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the AICs traditional props are more used, still in a Christianized way. For example the use of rods and garments. But they are always used in the connection with Jesus Christ as means. Some also use the Bible as a mean for transmitting divine power.

### *Rupture from the past*

A complete break with the past is crucial for Pentecostals. They emphasize that becoming a Christian is being born again, which entails dying from what was. The traditional religion, and everything that comes with it, is to be replaced by Jesus. This makes it, as I have pointed out, challenging to speak of resonances between the pre-Christian religion and Christianity.

## **6.4 The African appropriation of Pentecostalism as contextualizing of Christianity**

This research has taken a turn towards a discussion on contextualization and inculturation. I have used these terms as if they denoted the same case. I have concluded that although Christianity is a well established religion in Africa, it is still not successfully contextualized. This research suggests that African Pentecostalism appeals stronger to Africans because it meets the religious aspirations that Africans have. To use Kalu's words; African Pentecostalism answers questions asked from the interior of African worldviews. It is thus more contextualized.

I have in this research called the appropriation of Pentecostalism in Africa a *kind of* inculturation process. This is because of its resonances with African maps of the universe. Through Pentecostalism Christianity becomes more contextual as it appeals more to Africans. Still it is not *the* inculturation or contextualization process *per se*. Both African and Western scholars would prefer an inculturation process that was more rooted in academia. They are even working with it, and have been for a long time.<sup>207</sup> This entails that there are different ways of contextualizing Christianity. I have suggested that contextualization should be taken further in mainline churches, and that Pentecostalism should be taken seriously in this matter.

I have also reflected on whether contextualization entails a transformation of worldview. I have suggested that contextualization is a process in which Christianity is integrated into a cultural context. Every cultural context has a worldview. Christianity is thus integrated into a worldview. This worldview will of course influence many elements of Christianity, especially the expression of it. But Christianity will also transform the culture in which it is integrated. This shows that there is a dialectical relation between culture, faith and worldview. African Pentecostalism is thus shaped by African maps of the universe, African culture and Christian belief.

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<sup>207</sup>East Africans like Charles Nyamiti (Tanzania) and John Mbiti (Kenya) have both contributed to the formation of African Christology and African religious philosophy.

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