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The *Kairos* in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A prophetic

voice in a context of socio-political instability

by

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DECLARATION

I, Joel Mbongi Kuvuna, hereby declare that the research presented under the title, 'The *Kairos* in the DR Congo: A prophetic voice in a context of socio-political instability' is my original work, except where otherwise indicated.

This thesis has not been submitted for a degree or examination at any other university.

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Joel MBONGI KUVUNA

As Supervisor I approve this thesis for submission

Dr CLINT C. LE BRUYNS

DEDICATION

To all those around the world who are suffering oppression, injustice from the Pharaohs
of this time,
To those who are fighting for social justice, understanding the *Kairos*, around the world,
To my parents, Mbongi Poba Sylvain and Mabiala Muanda Elysée,

I dedicate this work.

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To God, creator of all things, he who knew me before I was formed in the womb of my mother, he who knew all my past days. The days allotted to me had all been recorded in your book, before any of them ever began. To him be the glory for ever and ever.

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ACRONYMS

AARC: Africa Alliance of Reformed Churches

ABRDC : Alliance Biblique de la RDC

AFDL : Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération.

AIC : Association Internationale du Congo

ANC1 : Armée Nationale Congolaise

ANC2 : African National Congress

AU : African Union

CAP : Centre d'Accueil Protestant

CEDI : Centre Protestant d'Editions et de Diffusion

CENCO : Conseil Episcopale National du Congo

CEPAM : Centre Protestant d'Approvisionnement en Médicaments

CETA : Conférence des Eglises de Toute l'Afrique

CI : Compassion Internationale

CME : Centre Médical Evangélique

CNDP : Comité National pour la Défense du Peuple

COE : Conseil Œcuménique des Eglises

CPC : Conseil Protestant au Congo

CPI: Consumer Price Index

CPRA: Congolese Protestant Relief Agency

DOM : Département des Œuvres Médicales.

DRC : Democratic Republic of Congo

DSP : Division Spéciale Présidentielle

ECC : Eglise du Christ au Congo

ECP : Ecoles Conventionnées Protestantes

ECZ : Eglise du Christ au Zaïre

EIC : Etat Indépendant du Congo

EU : European Union

FDLR : Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda

FNLC : Front National pour la Libération du Congo

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

HDI: Human Development Indices

HIV : Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HPH : Habitat pour l'Humanité

HRW: Human Rights Watch

ICT: Institute for Contextual Theology

IIAG: Ibrahim Index of Africa Governance

IME : Institut Médical Evangélique

IRC : International Rescue Committee

ISP : Institut Supérieur Pédagogique

JMPR : Jeunesse du Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution

JPSC : Justice Paix et Sauvegarde de la Création

KMO : Kaiser Meyer Olkin

LLB : Ligue pour la Lecture de la Bible

M23 : Mouvement du 23 Mars

MAF : Mission Aviation Fellowship

MCCI : Ministère du Campus pour Christ International

MDG: Millennium Development Goals

MDiv: Master of Divinity

MERU : Ministère de l'Eglise pour les Réfugiés et les Urgences

MONUSCO : Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation de la RD Congo

MPR : Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution

NGO: Non-Government Organisation

ODA: Official Development Aid

OHCHR: Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights

OT: Old Testament

PhD: Doctor of Philosophy

PNUD : Programme des Nations Unies de Développement.

RCD : Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie

SACC: South African Council of Churches

SADC: South African Development Community

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

UKZN: University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

UEM: United Evangelical Mission

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

UNJHRO: United Nations Joint Human Rights Office

UPC : Université Protestante au Congo

VAS : Visual Analogue Scale

WARC: World Alliance of Reformed Churches

WCC: World Council of Churches

WCRC: World Communion of Reformed Churches

WDI: World Development Indicator

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to address challenges faced by the Church in most African countries in raising a prophetic voice. It considers a theological reflection of Walter Brueggemann on social justice. The research intends for its findings to be applied in the framework of a *Kairos* tradition. The study is motivated by the ever-increasing misery of African people and the confused position of the Church on issues of a socio-political nature. It also attempts to clear up misunderstandings of the concept prophet and public perceptions of the relation between Church and politics.

The research framework is based on the prophetic theology as reflected in three main themes: The *Kairos* tradition that, as is argued by this study, should be applied in the DR Congo, the liberation theology of Gustavo Gutierrez and the liberating model of Jesus advocating the plight of oppressed and voiceless people.

The methodology used in this research involves a case study of the Protestant Church in the DR Congo and consists in three methods of data collection, namely an analysis of documents, quantitative and qualitative research, and the theological view on social justice of Walter Brueggemann. The participation criteria used in the combined qualitative and quantitative research methods is the simple random sampling to the population of 83 participants (Church leaders), drawn from 95 communities of the ECC (Eglise du Christ au Congo). The questionnaire contained 23 questions divided into three sections.

The research findings confirm that individual engagement in socio-political issues by Church members and communities leads to a dispersion of forces resulting in a weak organisation. A lack of effective communication between communities and the national direction of the ECC (Eglise du Christ au Congo) leads to the failure of actions. Together these negative aspects of the Church's engagement with political affairs in the DR Congo have made its impact negligible. The results of the research clearly indicate the wish of participants that the Church gets seriously involved in socio-political issues as a prophetic voice. However, this position differs across categories of experience. The research reveals the lack of involvement of the National Direction of the Protestant Church in a prophetic way, while respondents are predominantly of the opinion that socio-political involvement is the mission of the Church, whereby the bible is considered as an effective tool to justify the Church's participation in the political world. Respondents suggest that, in case of a bad socio-political situation, it is wise to raise one's voice and pray. The

research results leave little doubt of the need for a *Kairos* tradition in the DR Congo, involving a publicly critical stance of the Church. At the same time the research found that the strongest risk posed by the Church raising its prophetic voice lies in it being exposed to corruption.

For the Church's engagement with the prophetic theology of social justice, Brueggemann's model focuses on the common good that can be endangered by an imperialist system, by oppressive social policies, and by the complexities of the state monopoly system.

Based on the above findings, the research recommends introducing the *Kairos* tradition in the DR Congo as a space for reflecting on socio-political and economic responsibility. Every single part of the Church shares in the responsibility for the wellbeing of the people. The success of socio-political engagement depends on what each Church member on all levels of the Church contributes by first changing him- or herself and thereafter focusing on improving his or her environment. The Congolese *Kairos* proposes a seven-step process. These steps are to encourage **self-positive change,** to develop sermon material on socio-political matter, to organise in the Church a strong system for socio-political involvement, to educate people, to organise prayer meetings, work on an advocacy process and participate in peaceful resistance.

Key words: Church, socio-politics, prophetic, social justice, *Kairos*, DR Congo.

RESUME

Cette étude porte sur « le *Kairos* en RD Congo : Une voix prophétique dans le contexte socio-politique d'instabilité ». Elle se fonde sur une réflexion de la plupart des pays africains confrontés aux défis liés à la voix prophétique. Il s'agit d'une réflexion théologique inspirée de Walter Brueggemann, relative à la justice sociale devant être appliquée dans une tradition de *Kairos*. Elle est motivée par quelques faits, notamment la croissance de la misère des peuples africains, la position confuse de l'église sur la question socio-politique, l'incompréhension des concepts 'prophète' et 'politique' dans la perception publique.

Le cadre théologique de cette recherche tire son fondement sur la 'théologie prophétique' comprenant trois principaux thèmes : La tradition de *Kairos* qui devrait être appliquée en RD Congo, la théologie de la libération de Gustavo Gutierrez ainsi que le modèle de libération de Jésus pour les opprimés et les sans voix.

La démarche méthodologique est basée sur l'étude de l'Eglise Protestante en RD Congo, principalement sur trois techniques de collecte de données. La première est une analyse de documents, la deuxième est quantitative et qualitative. Le critère de participation utilisé dans cette technique est le simple échantillonnage aléatoire auprès de 83 participants (dirigeants d'église) sur 95 communautés de l'ECC (Eglise du Christ au Congo). Le questionnaire était composé de 23 questions divisées en trois sections. La troisième technique est l'analyse théologique de Walter Brueggemann sur la justice sociale.

Les résultats de cette recherche confirment l'hypothèse selon laquelle l'individualité de l'engagement et la dispersion des forces, le manque d'organisation solide, les dysfonctionnements entre les communautés et la direction nationale de l'ECC (Eglise du Christ au Congo) sont les principales faiblesses pour l'engagement socio-politique de l'ECC en RD Congo.

Les analyses surtout ont montré que l'Eglise devrait être impliquée prophétiquement dans les questions socio-politiques. Cependant, ce point de vue diffère selon l'expérience des leaders. La recherche voit le manque d'implication sociopolitique de la Direction Nationale de l'Eglise Protestante de façon prophétique, pourtant les répondants confirment que

l'implication socio-politique fait aussi partie de la mission de l'Eglise, considérant la Bible comme outil efficace justifiant cette position. Les répondants suggèrent que lorsque la situation socio-politique est mauvaise, l'Eglise doit lever sa voix (parler) et prier. Cela crée un besoin d'une tradition de *Kairos* en RD Congo pour une voix critique de l'église. La recherche a pu noter que la corruption constitue un risque réel dans cette responsabilité prophétique.

L'église devrait s'engager dans la théologie prophétique de la justice sociale. Le modèle de Brueggemann est appliqué pour le bien-être commun pouvant être menacé par le système impérial, l'incarnation du système complexe du monopole d'état et la politique sociale oppressive.

Au regard de ce qui précède, la recherche recommande la tradition de *Kairos* en RD Congo comme espace de réflexion sur la responsabilité socio-politique et économique. Chaque partie de l'Église a la responsabilité du bien-être de la population. Le succès dépend du degré d'implication de chaque église locale, ainsi que chaque chrétien en particulier, qui devra faire de son mieux pour changer son environnement et le transformer, sous l'impulsion de l'ECC (Eglise du Christ au Congo) au niveau national et local.

La recherche propose enfin sept étapes pour le *Kairos* congolais : encourager positivement le changement de soi, élaborer du matériel de sermons sur les questions socio-politiques, développer dans l'Eglise un système organisé sur la question socio-politique, éduquer les gens, organiser des réunions de prière, travailler sur le processus de plaidoyer et de résistance pacifique.

Mots clés : Église, socio-politique, prophétique, justice sociale, *Kairos*, RD Congo.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

I would like to open this research report by quoting Martin Luther King Jr (HWL, 2014): **"**Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter". The statement declares that a prophetic voice mandated by God must guide the life of every man and woman. A prophetic voice engages humanity to speak out on things that matter. The prophetic voice which uses biblical imagery is one of three modes of public discourse, along with the classic way, used by the media, and the revolutionary way, used by political and social activists (Nyiawung, 2010: 2). The focus of the present research is on the prophetic mission of the church in the context of socio-political instability in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The hypothesis of the thesis is that many African churches are not able to fulfil their prophetic mission and defend the cause of oppressed and exploited populations. The oppression and exploitation are characterised by a lack of respect for human dignity. Examples are Angola, Burundi, Rwanda, Congo Brazzaville, and so forth. There is a lack of respect also, for constitutional texts and violence is committed against those who wish to raise their voices, specifically in the case of the DR Congo. The church's prophetic mission seems to be hampered by numerous socio-political forces which the current study intends to investigate. A theological reflection can – and should - motivate the African churches to address issues that condemn many Africans to live a dehumanized existence. This would allow the voiceless to be heard, while promoting their freedom to give expression to the abuse of their rights.

The main objective of the present study is to address challenges facing theological reflection and the raising of the prophetic voice in Africa.   There are churches in the DR Congo that are quite influential and that engage with the hardship suffered by the population, assuming a degree of political responsibility and speaking out critically or prophetically. Other churches have remained uncritical or are even withdrawing from the

public scene. This situation provides the rationale for the theology of Walter Brueggemann which involves the prophetic imagination that must stir every man and woman of God.

The theology of Walter Brueggemann is in the present study construed as a resource for advancing the prophetic voice speaking out about the deterioration of socio-political realities in the DR Congo. The research aims, through theological reflection, at empowering the ECC (Eglise du Christ au Congo, or, the Church of Christ in Congo) as the umbrella body of the Protestant Church in the DR Congo, so that it may take up its true prophetic role and face the challenges posed by issues of political responsibility.

1.2 MOTIVATION AND BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

Six points motivate this study of which the first is the growing misery of African people. It looks as if the African situation is worsening beyond anything that could have been foreseen. The sub-Saharan average income per person remains less than 1$ a day. This has made poverty into a multi-dimensional phenomenon that deprives people of such basic rights as education and shelter. The Biblical Exodus describes the misery of the Israelites in a similar situation. There is significant depth in Nyiawung's statement that, "A look at African societies shows that the independence obtained by most of its countries in the 1960s inherited indelible scars of exploitation, injustice and misery from colonial rule" (Nyiawung, 2010: 1). Colonial rule, after all, was often characterised by the functioning, side by side, of two distinct classes, the oppressors, or the elite, and the oppressed. At times the church tends to blame other agents as being responsible for the critical decay of life in the DR Congo, ignoring that it itself should stand for social transformation. It is as Leonardo Boff writes: "We can be followers of Jesus and true Christians only by making common cause with the poor and working out the Gospel of liberation" (Boff, 1987: 7).

The second point motivating the present study is the continuous worsening of the socio-political situation in the DR Congo. The population experiences manifold abuses of power. Migliore (2008: 6) argues that "the systematic abuse of power is a potential threat in every social and political order". Many African institutions of authority are of an oppressing

nature, instead of the loving and caring forces that could contribute to the well-being of people. Among the serious challenges faced by African populations are armed conflict and wars, human rights abuse and the instability of political systems. Respect for human beings and their rights appears to remain limited to the discourse of politicians.

The DR Congo has seen the arrest of many human rights activists and the intimidation in many ways of those who attempt to express their unease about curtailed civic rights. For example, the closing of some shops in Lubumbashi for not having opened on the day of the national strike (*ville morte*) organised by the opposition party. Twelve persons were arrested and intimidated in various ways, some journalists were muzzled and human rights activists arrested in their masses although the constitution of the DR Congo, in article 23, provides for freedom of expression in accordance with United Nations (UN) and Human Rights Watch observation (HRW, 2015). As a result, the DR Congolese have become as powerless as the Hebrews in Egypt under the control of Pharaoh. Recent decades in the DR Congo have been characterized by poverty and, since 1997, protracted war in the Eastern regions, frequently accompanied by rape and child soldiering (27.5 percent of African child soldiers in the last ten years were Congolese) (Kuvuna, 2015:2). In addition, the country suffers from unemployment, lack of decent wages for workers, and increased corruption. According to Transparency International Index (IIAG, 2018), the DR Congo features on the corruption perception index of 2017 as the 161th out of 180 listed countries. The African ranking is by the Ibrahim Index of Africa Governance (IIAG) presented as follows.   Safety and rule of law: The DR Congo is 52th out of 54 countries in Africa; overall governance: 47th out of 54; participation and human rights: 46th out of 54; sustainable economic opportunity: 44th out of 54; human development (welfare, education and health): 42th out of 54; freedom of expression: 41th out of 54; social safety: 53th out of 54; independence of the judiciary: 48th out of 54; absence of corruption in government branches: 53th out of 54; absence of corruption in the public sector: 42th out of 54; absence of government involvement in armed conflict: 49th out of 54 (IIAG, 2018). Although the DR Congo finds itself in an advanced state of decay, the Protestant Church in the country seems to keep silent and to consider human rights issues as the exclusive domain of the government and a few non-governmental organizations (NGOs). One discerns a dichotomy between biblical teaching and the

reality of people on the ground who cry out in misery. The church at times forgets to serve as God's agent in civil society in which case people become like a herd without shepherd (Woodbridge, 2013: 84). Is there any hope for the Congolese if their voices remain unheard? How can the Moses model in the Exodus and that of Jesus in the Gospels function in the contemporary church to give people hope and to counter an unjust government system, in accordance with the convictions of the reformer Martin Luther on the freedom of the human being (Hoffman, 1985:62).

The third motivation for this study is the confused position of the Protestant Church in DR Congo. The Protestant Church in DR Congo is the second largest religious institution after the Catholic Church. Further details concerning the church are provided in the literature review. Le Bruyns made a profound observation: "The quality of our democratic life is intimately bound up with the quality of our church-state relations" (Le-Bruyns, 2012:1). In its National Council of 2010 the Protestant Church in the DR Congo admitted to maintaining a passive silence as regards political occurrences and decided that, in the future, it would raise its voice (ECC, 2010a:96,97).

As Newlands (2006: 6) argues, there are huge numbers of voiceless victims of human rights abuse in the world and even, sadly, within churches. This is underlined by the limited interest in human rights and socio-political issues, shown by the church in the DR Congo. Gary Haugen accuses the church of having "forgotten how to be a witness of Christ's love, power and justice in the world" (McIlroy, 2010:471). God's words, "Let my people go", reflect God's wish that Christians do respond to injustice and object to unjust political systems and laws. The church should fulfil the great commandment to seek deep involvement in the lives of the oppressed, persecuted, abused, and dehumanized.

The challenge facing the Protestant Church in the DR Congo is to embrace Christian life-giving principles. That is also the way in which the testimony of Christ must be understood. People in the DR Congo accuse Protestant church leaders of taking the side of government by being 'good boys' and pleasing those in power.

De Gruchy wisely argues that "the church's prophetic role requires that it maintains a critical distance from both political and civil society and refuses being co-opted. To maintain a critical detachment is wiser than to abstain from permeating government decisions" (Nyiawung, 2010: 4). Le Bruyns proposes that the church does not only have

to remain 'watchdogs' of society, but also continue to be critical and prophetic participants in public transformation (Le-Bruyns, 2014:476). It is important to review the state of prophetic public theology in church, academy and society (Le-Bruyns, 2014: 466).

The relevance of this viewpoint for public theology is that, indeed, the church's theological capital for the constructive transformation of life should not remain stuck within ecclesial quarters or among the professional church elites but must most certainly be 'received' by the broader community. Furthermore, the church's theological contributions have to transcend mere visionary activity and extend to broader aspects of shared community life, including the domains of public policy, international law, political practice, economic ideologies, and so on (Le-Bruyns, 2014: 471). The church needs to respond to the call to be a watchman for society. Hence, it cannot distance itself from societal concerns and watch from the side-lines to warn and express criticism only in the end (Nyiawung, 2010: 4).

The fourth factor that instigated this study is concerned with the positions taken by different religious institutions in the DR Congo on political issues. There are these days two camps in the DR Congo. The Catholic Church, on the one hand, occupies a critical position as regards political issues, whereas the public perception is that the coalition of churches (Protestant, Orthodox, Kimbaguist, some revival churches and Islam) favours the government. Church leaders, functioning as God's ambassadors among the population and its political leaders, are failing to say the right thing at the right time and to stand up for the oppressed and exploited. By taking that position the church fails to accomplish its prophetic mission. This may suggest that, today, some church institutions in the DR Congo, for example the aforementioned coalition, have an agenda of their own to satisfy, or are even driven by individual greed. They seem to only speak words that political leaders want to hear instead of representing the voiceless. In Bishop Lori's view, "It's not enough for the bishops and leaders of church institutions to clearly state our teaching; government needs to hear from the lay faithful. The more they see a unity and resolve on the part of the whole church, the less likely they are to try to impose unjust and illegal rules" (Glemdon, 2012:19). The division between churches in the DR Congo works in the interests of politicians. Furthermore, the church needs to have the courage to expose the state's abuse of power. The following quote of St. Thomas, "There is dominion over free men when power is exercised not for the sake of the governing person

but for the common good and for the sake of the governed" (Simon, 2011:142), implies that the church has to remind those who govern to work for the common good of the people.

The fifth concern that led to the present study is the meaning of the concept "prophet" which is mistaken in the developing world. A church service ought not to resemble a form of entertainment whereby people experience feelings that satisfy their religious instinct. Talking about the prophetic voice, Kohl argues that the voice of a pastor should be heard, not only from the pulpit but also in the boardrooms of banks and businesses and in the halls of government and secular institutions. A prophetic voice has to deal with issues that people face today and tomorrow and advise how to deal with these in the light of the Scripture (Kohl, 2009: 78).

The general understanding is that 'prophetic' implies prediction. The majority of 'men of God', called prophets, predict the future and talk peace where there is no peace. A view that in the course of this study will be developed is that the prophetic role or mission needs to be redefined to avoid that the church does actually contribute to the existing crisis. Nyiawung talks already about enmity between church and state and how it persists throughout history, suggesting that the entities always stood for two centres of power and authority (Nyiawung, 2010: 1). Referring to discourse engagement, Gustafson emphasises prophetic discourse or prophetic mission as a familiar or common language that is required to be critical, to confront and to challenge those who are abusing the people of God. A prophet attacks that which is seen as the root cause of evil (Le-Bruyns, 2016:1).

My sixth point is the misinterpretation of 'politics'. Politics has in the public perception become associated with hypocrisy, lies and unreliability. At times this public view of public authorities withholds the church from getting involved in politics.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature relevant to the present study focuses on four specific areas, namely the socio-political context in Africa, the socio-political context in the DR Congo, the church

and politics in the DR Congo, and the relevance of *Kairos* as a prophetic witness in DR Congo.

1.3.1 Socio political context in Africa

Between 1990 and 2015 only a few African countries have succeeded in maintaining peace and democratic government systems (LeVan, 2015: 176). One of these is Ghana. Several African scholars consider the 1990s as a period of enormous political change on the continent (Ylönen, 2009: 38-40). Many countries experienced the end of dictatorial regimes. Democratic systems were developed. According to Salih (sourced from www.freedomhouse.org), until 2003 only 18 nations in Africa could be called minimal democracies. Just 7 of these were classified as liberal democracies with a high level of political rights and liberties. Discussing the source of political violence in Africa, Ylonen (2009: 38-40) argues that contemporary African wars are related to the weakness of post-colonial heirs of leadership roles. Without taking African culture into account, post-colonial states copied Western political systems. Even in the case of newly constructed African states, the ethnic communities were not taken as guidelines but, mostly, borders were drawn in accordance with colonial territorial frontiers. The main strategy was based on the political philosophy of "divide and rule". These African states became simply sort of 'made by Europeans', without applying their own vision of 'state'. Communities, tribes and ethnicities were divided along lines that supported Western interests. The African elites, who previously had collaborated with the colonial masters, obtained political power, even political favours, and strengthened their authority by exploiting their people. Ylonen notes that, "In general, current African states are a product of external geopolitical and economic interests of powers seeking to dominate the local reality by 'dividing and ruling'" (Ylönen, 2009: 38-40). This reasoning positions African elites who previously collaborated with colonial masters as the main culprits.

The traditional living style of African people is to a large extent determined by agriculture for which the climate is suited while in many regions sufficient water is available. One seventh of the world's mineral resources come from Africa and even the Sahara desert is rich in minerals. For an understanding of the various aspects of African political instability, a multi-focal approach is required but can lead to only one conclusion: In spite

of the continent's huge potential, Africans are still poor, often hungry, and inadequately housed (Menkiti, 1999: 81). Kitissou also mentions hunger as a contributing factor to the political instability. Hunger has in 2008 been called 'the silent tsunami' (Kitissou, 2014: 189). Citing Basset and Winter-Nelson, Kitissou compares the rates of extreme poverty in Asia with those in Africa. In Asia extreme poverty affected in 1990 55% of the population, decreasing to 17% in 2005 while, over the same period, in sub-Saharan Africa the number of people living in extreme poverty increased by 92 million (Kitissou, 2014: 191). Lunde speaks of a social cleavage, resulting from problems of ethnicity, linguistic issues and religious convictions as contributing to instability in Africa (Lunde, 1991: 14). Lunde suggests that *coups d'etat* in Africa spread from one country to the next because their problems are similar. The author mentions a wave of coups from 1965 onward, while it remains unclear in which country and how it subsequently progressed. As a result, attempts to apply solutions, came also to be somehow copied from country to country. As Korotayev *et al.* (2011: 277) put it, the situation was worsened by *coups d'état,* that were presented as aimed at restoring order and solving a myriad of economic and political problems, but that ultimately played into the hands of the power-hungry. In a forecast of the future of Africa, the United Nations Population Division predicts high political instability risks to persist in certain countries from 2011-2050 (Korotayev *et al.*, 2011: 290).

Although the African Union has made efforts to promote peace, many parts of the continent continue to be ravaged by conflict (Okumu, 2008: 118). In terms of globalization, Africa is struggling on with many Africans having only limited access to information. Life in Africa continues to be characterized by hunger, corruption, violence, gender inequality, autocratic rule, disease, lack of access to education, of proper sanitation, and of adequate shelter. Civil society organizations have always been marginalised and are often denounced (Okumu, 2008:114). Despite some degree of implementation of peace initiatives by the African Union, conflicts persist in many areas of the continent. It is easy to agree with Okumu who confirms the failure of the African Union's Common African Defence, and of security and defence provision in the fields of human rights, governance, the right to education and health, protection against poverty and marginalisation (Okumu, 2008: 118). Many African political leaders look upon opponents as enemies who deserve to be exiled, imprisoned or killed. These leaders don't allow criticism. Elections at all levels

are marred by fraud and usually accompanied by troubles, rebellions and even warfare (Nyiawung, 2010: 5).

1.3.2 Socio-political context in the DR Congo

Five points can summarise the socio-political situation of the DR Congo:

Firstly, there are the armed conflict and wars that began on the 2nd of August 1998 with Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi gathering to enter Goma and Bukavu which they did two weeks later (Reybrouck, 2012:474). Since 1998, there has been protracted warfare in the Eastern regions of the DR Congo, frequently accompanied by rape and child soldiering (27.5 percent of African child soldiers in the last ten years have been Congolese children) (Kuvuna, 2015:2).

Secondly, human rights abuse abounds and respect for human rights appears to exist only in politicians' discourse. Education, one of the most important human rights, is generally of a low standard. Another human rights abuse is possibly reflected in the discovery in 2017 of more than 80 mass grave in the DR Congo, the responsibility for which was ascribed to the country's leaders.

A third concern is the instability of political systems. Most African leaders do not recognise the concept of fixed terms in office. Once in power, many African leaders manipulate constitutions so that they may remain in power. Elections become occasions to be negotiated instead of being a constitutional right.

A fourth and crucial aspect of the socio-political turmoil in Africa consists in the high levels of poverty. In recent decades the Congolese have experienced severe poverty, while the country suffers unemployment and lack of decent wages for workers. According to Nzongola, the DR Congo ranks among the poorest countries on earth with an annual GDP of approximately USD 315 per capita for its population of 70 million (Nzongola, 2015,31).

A fifth circumstance that would appear to condemn Africa to remain stuck in socio-political instability is the huge impact of corruption. According to the Transparency International Index (IIAG, 2018), the DR Congo features on the 2017 corruption perception index as the 161th most corrupt country out of 180 listed countries. Nzongola stipulates the incapacity of the DR Congo government to protect its people from poverty and from the

terrorist activity of the Rwandan Hutu extremists of the FDLR (*Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda*, or, Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda) (Nzongola, 2015: 16).

The above described problems have made Africans and, in the context of the present study, specifically inhabitants of the DR Congo, as powerless as the Hebrews in Egypt, oppressed by the Pharaoh.

1.3.3 The Church and politics in the DR Congo

A brief discussion of some church reformers may inform an understanding of the position taken by the Congolese church in respect of politics. The Constantinian Christianity, which adopted a new way of thinking about political issues could be an inspiring example for the DR Congo. In Byzantium the church and the contemporary political powers came to occupy opposite positions (Beek, 2008: 324). In the opinion of the present researcher, Luther's viewpoint may be helpful, specifically his preaching on political issues, speaking as a true prophet and admonishing the state government as well as church authorities who, in his view, disobeyed the Scriptures. In a consideration of the prophetic role of the church, Santhosh writes that, according to Luther, Christians are free to challenge authorities when acting contrary to the Scripture. Luther sees the preacher as a prophet who must admonish sin and evil wherever he/she finds it, and not please the ears of those who like to continue doing evil. This does not mean that the authority of a ruler should be overthrown. Luther distinguishes three tasks of rulers, namely to allow the free expression of critical and prophetic voices, to secure justice and rights for the weak in society, and to protect the poor from abuse (Sahayadoss, 2006: 90).

Furthermore, Thompson presents Luther as arguing that Church leaders may not have any authority to interfere in temporal government or to wield the sword, but, apparently, may only admonish temporal rulers who abuse their authority in a sinful manner. Thompson understands Luther's assertion as emphasizing that Church authorities are not meant to make laws, but to secure that Christians and rulers act in obedience to the Gospel (Thompson, 1984: 127). In Calvin's view, the Church has from Christ received the authority to teach, to govern and to make laws in accordance with the Word, and as if the church's rules of order "came from the mouth of Christ Himself" (Smit, 2010: 187). In any

case, in the view of both Luther and Calvin, the Church has a political responsibility, whether to admonish rulers, or to govern, to make laws and enforce individual and structural changes. In this way, "true celebration of the Eucharist is an act of revolutionary politics" (Kealy, 1990: 18). Obery, on the basis of his own understanding of Jesus' ministry, sees in him a political revolutionary, because his message "proclaimed not only the change of the individual hearts, but also demanded sweeping and comprehensive change in political, social and economic structures in his setting in life: colonized Israel." (Hendricks, 2006:5).

In the DR Congo context, the voice of the Protestant Church has somehow not much been heard. Since many years, the Catholic Church has a document titled ' *Le discours socio-politique des Evêques de la conférence épiscopale du Congo',* socio-political discourse of the Bishops' episcopal conference (Bashuth, 2008). The political declarations of the bishops are collected in this single document whereas the Protestant Church is still struggling to formulate a systemic plan of political discourse.

N'kwim, writing on socio-political discourse and human rights issues as perceived by the Protestant Church in the DR Congo, also mentions holistic mission and the importance of holding on to integrated mission. Quoting Muller, N'kwim writes :

> *Le protestantisme, pas plus que le catholicisme ou que toute autre instance religieuse, ne saurait s'isoler du processus ainsi mis en route; sinon il devient super structure idéologique servant non à la société ou perdant toute effectivité sociale* (Bibi-Bikan, 2002:246).
> In translation: Protestantism, no more than Catholicism or any other religious body, can isolate itself from the process once underway; otherwise it becomes an elevated ideological structure that doesn't serve society or that loses its social effectiveness.

This implies that a Protestant Church which wishes to serve society, must engage in serving the wellbeing of the people. Otherwise, its functioning becomes a form of ideology. To sound an impacting voice, the Church in the DR Congo could follow the example of the South African struggle theology that came into being when, during apartheid, the need for another way of doing theology was reflected on. A document was issued under the name of *Kairos* document, that functioned as a tool of a crying people. Such a document could provide a model for other crying countries where populations and

churches need to reconsider their way of reading the bible and witness Christ in more prophetic ways (Buttelli, 2012:90).

1.3.4 The relevance of *Kairos* as a prophetic witness in DR Congo

Kairos stands for the special right time that has to be seized so that important events will come about. In essence *Kairos* represents the exactly right moment to respond to an opportunity. The concept will be further discussed in a separate chapter. Christians in the earlier centuries before the Reformation were not much interested in participating in political affairs. They might refuse to join the army and those who enrolled in the army could not use the weapon. Depending on their local customs, they could also refrain from participating in the administration, because they considered heaven as the true location of their communities. They didn't think of themselves as revolutionary and, perceiving themselves as foreigners on earth, they did not care how they lived (Beek, 2008: 318,319).

The *Kairos* theme was raised in the context of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Boesak speaks about reading the signs of the times and the awakening of people's consciousness (Boesak, 2015:9). The *Kairos* involves a concern with worldly liberation that may have validity also in the context of building a possible, other world (Le-Bruyns, 2014). It should lead to a contextual, prophetic and responsible theology that has an impact in different spheres of public life, including its political, economic and social aspects. The *Kairos* tradition in the DR Congo context wants to alert people to the specific time for properly responding to challenges posed by the world. Referring to the characteristics of the *Kairos* document as distinguished by Brown (1990:9-12) and as scrutinized in a separate section, the DR Congo situation is analysed on the basis of an active engagement with, and commitment to, the poor and oppressed. The role of the church will be presented as naming the enemy and giving hope according to the Gospel.

This becomes possible by initiating practical actions which the responsibility of the preacher. The preacher has to take a stand against the ruler who manipulates the church's authority for his or her own purpose. The preacher must act as a prophet, countering sin and evil wherever he finds it, without wanting to please those who would

rather persist in committing evil. This task should not be left to the preacher alone, but each Christian must contribute to an equitable reconstruction of society. The development of the social Gospel must be the preoccupation of every single Christian (King, 1999: 94). J. Martin discovered a new basis for his theological convictions when he understood that we cannot be concerned only with the soul and ignore the scars left on that soul by social and economic trials (King, 1999: 94). Leonardo Boff and Clodovis argue that "commitment to the liberation of the millions of the oppressed of our world restores to the Gospel the credibility it had at the beginning and at the great periods of holiness and prophetic witness in history" (Boff, 1987:8). This commitment and restoration will become a reality if the three levels of liberation theology work together: the professional (academic) level, the pastoral workers (through sermons), and the popular ranks (through action and bible study) (Boff, 1987: 13). What Boff and Clodovis want to get across is that challenging and admonishing the wrong committed by those in authority is the responsibility of each Christian and that, as such, it will revive historical periods when prophetic witness played a central role in society. It is my view, that the prophetic church is the church that becomes the eyes of the blind, the voice of the dumb, and the ears of the deaf, in addition to being – and boosting - the voice of the voiceless.

A prophetic church commits to a contextual, responsible theology that impacts on different spheres of public life, including political, economic and social aspects. It represents a way to make a Christian, biblical and theological comment on political crises (Leonard, 2011: 3). There is in the available literature a lack of focus on the role that could be fulfilled by the prophetic voice in the context of socio-political issues fuelling the crisis in the DR Congo. There is, in other words, no information on the concept of *Kairos* as a prophetic witness in DR Congo with which the present research is concerned. The present researcher employs the prophetic thinking of Walter Brueggemann to support the prophetic theology proposed in this study.

1.4 LOCATION OF THE STUDY

The present study is conducted in the context of the DR Congo. It involves Protestant Church leaders who are supposed to be living daily with people affected by serious socio-political issues. The period of study is from 1990-2016. A theological reflection of Walter Brueggemann on prophetic responsibility is used.

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Religious institutions in both developed and developing countries play an important role in society. Empirical evidence reveals that in the DR Congo 85 to 90 per cent of the population are Christians and most of its people in positions of leadership supposedly belong to one church or another. The church has been referred to as the salt and light of the earth. It is supposed to bring life to society. The Congolese church for example, began its mission by opening schools, hospitals and other institutions that benefit communities. Nowadays, however, some church leaders and religious institutions act as 'good boys', easy to be manipulated by corrupt political leaders. They use Scripture to convince their followers that the political powers must be obeyed as they were put in place by God. The result is that most of these followers are left exploited, in extreme poverty, while their voice remains unheard. Poverty in DR Congo affects about 70 million out of its 82 million inhabitants, depriving them of such basic needs as education and shelter. As the Congolese population is rendered powerless, not only to act on its own, but even to express itself, it relies on various international and religious institutions for help. Religious institutions - the focus of this study - are expected to function as 'God's ambassadors' in respect of the people and their political leaders. But, in view of the fact that the population is the victim of various forms of oppression and deprivation, religious institutions, including the church itself, seem to have failed in their prophetic responsibility to speak out against injustice and dehumanization. One may ask why God's institutions that should promote love, care, equality, and peace and better governance in society, apparently choose to meet the wickedness and wrongdoing of the powerful with silence. The present study intends to remind the church of its prophetic role in a corrupted society.

1.6 KEY QUESTION

The main question to be answered by this research is: In what ways can the Congolese church (the ECC) fulfil its responsibility in a more prophetic way within the *Kairos* framework, amidst the political turbulence in the DR Congo? Furthermore, in what might a *Kairos* and prophetic responsibility of the ECC in DR Congo consist while the nation is embroiled in political crises?

1.7 SUB-QUESTIONS

The key-question in the present research leads to the formulation of five sub-questions, namely:

i.   How can the prophetic voice for political responsibility be relevant in the midst of political upheaval and violence in the DR Congo?

ii.   Is there any theological foundation based on which political responsibility can be constructed, and the prophetic voice be heard in the DR Congo?

iii.   How can the ECC in the DR Congo demonstrate a caring political responsibility in a prophetic way?

iv.   In what way can the prophetic voice contribute to the improvement of the welfare of the people?

v.   Does the church run any risks by critically engaging in the political conflicts in DR Congo?

1.8 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The objectives can be summarized as follows.

i.   To understand the relevance of a prophetic voice in the context of political turbulence in the DR Congo.

ii.   To consider the theological foundation of a political responsibility expressed by the raising of a prophetic voice.

iii.   To assess the political responsibility of the ECC in its prophetic way.

iv.   To propose a theological perspective involving the *Kairos* tradition to the church in the DR Congo, for assessing the socio-political situation of the people.

v.   To assess the risks that the church could run by engaging with the socio-political situation by raising a prophetic voice.

1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The main research framework is based on prophetic theology which can be understood by considering three specific themes.

The first theme is the *Kairos* theoretical tradition. In the present research, this tradition is interpreted on the basis of views expressed by Le Bruyns, Boesak, and Albert Nolan. It is seen as one of the prophetic theologies. The views are concerned with the contextualisation of liberation theology in the situation of suffering, oppressed people. The *Kairos* tradition entails what the liberation theology stood for in the 1960s and '70s. Le Bruyns describes *Kairos* theology as a form of liberation theology applied in South Africa and beyond (Le-Bruyns, 2014:460). Many scholars consider the *Kairos* document as *the* classical text produced by the Institute for Contextual Theology in South Africa. It may be seen as a "paradigm" of contextual theology (Kaufmann, 2001a:97.). It is concerned with tyranny, reconciliation, rights and justice.

The second theme is the pedagogy of liberation theology. In Gustavo Gutierrez's interpretation of the theology of liberation, the Gospel of Christ must liberate the people from poverty and oppression. Theology should move beyond theoretical concerns to actions aimed at liberating the oppressed (Boff, 1989:9). Gutierrez is of the opinion that Jesus himself must be revered as a liberator (1983:13). Paulo Freire, in his pedagogy of the oppressed, discerns in human beings a power that springs from the weakness itself of being oppressed and that enables them to free themselves from the power of the oppressor. Thus, everyone can fight for his/her own liberation. It means, that no one must continue to see him- or herself as a victim, because self-victimisation perpetuates the control of the oppressor. By affecting their liberation, the oppressed allow themselves to be fully human. Oppression is dehumanising and deprives men and women of dignity. Urging liberation, Freire writes: Who can better understand the necessity of liberation? They will not gain this liberation by chance but through the praxis of their quest for it, through their recognition of the necessity to fight for it (2005:45).

Freire (2005:48) warns the oppressed against accepting their fate. In order to affect release from oppression, Freire proposes a pedagogy that has to be forged with, and not just for, the oppressed as they become fully conscious of their situation. With the awareness of being oppressed submerged by the reality of their situation, liberation takes on the appearance of a utopia to be achieved. It is against this background that Fanon criticises the views of Senghor and Césaire when he emphasizes the de-alienation of the victim as well as the perpetrator of racism and develops the notion of 'black skin and white mask' (Fanon-Mendès, 2012:9). Both the oppressed and the oppressor are alienated and stuck in what they perceive as their comfort zone. In Fanon's (1977:62) thought, freedom is a political ideal as are justice and equality. But freedom is by him regarded as man's supreme goal. It means that a man cannot exist without freedom. Fanon defines man in terms of freedom. For the sake of freedom, he encourages violence as a way to destroy the colonialist scheme for the indigenous people. He recognizes violence as a seed put into the head of the native by the oppressors (Fanon, 1977:86). In his book on Frantz Fanon and the psychology of oppression, Hussein stipulates that Fanon interprets violence as a liberative force to be used in situations where all other means have failed. Many scholars differ on Fanon's view that violence originates in the mental state of oppressed people. He himself was committed to the Algerian war of liberation, surely in a reflection of his wish to see people freed from oppressors. Fanon failed in his conception that reason must prevail and change the oppressor-oppressed relation. Hence, he finally came to accept that "only violence could transform the oppressive order and occupied psyches" (Bulhan, 1985:139-140). By then Fanon accepted revolutionary violence as a way to freedom. Formulating social and political thoughts, Fanon (1977:121) argues that violence is "a cleansing force which frees the colonized from his feeling of inferiority and humiliation and restores him to the fullness of himself as a man". However, this violence should be accompanied by political education. His words reflect the kind of person Fanon was. In the words of Emmanuel Hansen. "Like all revolutionaries, Fanon was sometimes impatient, brusque and arrogant toward people whose commitment never went beyond the talking stage. He also tried to impose on others the same discipline that he imposed on himself" (Fanon, 1977:51). However, violence as a possible way to affect liberation, plays no part in the current research as violence does not always lead to people being set free from complex situations. In the case of oppression in the present-day DR Congo,

dealing with the *Kairos* necessitates trying to understand social realities of discriminated members of society in order to promote social justice. Latin America and the Caribbean region were in the '60s and '70s the frontline of liberation theology with churchmen and politicians trying to grasp the biblical notion of salvation, which constitutes freedom from all kinds of oppression, injustice and unrighteousness. Unfortunately, in the '80s and '90s liberation theology came under attack from conservative Protestants and Catholics (Soares, 2008 : 480-484). Contemporary Protestant churches play a very ambiguous role in Brazilian society. However, in the 'late modernization' the country experienced a new culture of Protestants participating in public space (Buttelli, 2017:34,43). The second international conference on Protestant Church polity, held in South Africa in 2014, considered the highly relevant problem of how church polity may contribute to good governance in both church and society in the 21st century (Buda, 2014). This theology appears to be welcomed in the African context as the oppressive situation of the black continent continues. The liberation theology in question offers as key points a preferential option for the poor who are oppressed by contemporary Pharaohs, and the incarnation of our misery by Jesus who set us free. Even in times of oppression God is in control and the church must be both a sign and an instrument of liberation (Boff, 1987: 43-63). Liberation theology was in the context of Latin America what the Black Liberation Theology and the *Kairos* theology were in the context of South Africa.

The third theme of prophetic theology consists in the liberating model of Jesus. The ministry of Jesus advocates for those who are oppressed and voiceless. The church being the body of Christ and made up of his disciples, has to act upon, and share, the vision of its Master. 'Therefore, if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed' (John 8.31-36). In the Gospel of John, Christ reminds us that Christian love should be the motivation for, and the mark of, every act of the believer (John 13:35). Jesus himself promises us that the Spirit of our Father will speak for us when we are hauled before the earthly authorities and give us courage, insight and guidance (Davies, 2011:62). In the early beginning of the church, Jesus was seen as the inspiration of an egalitarian movement involving the powerless (Alexander, 2010: 84). Announcing the coming kingdom, he addressed injustice and poverty (Miller, 1977:83). This indicates a preferential option for the poor and acting upon this option, 'without excluding others'. This theology means 'to

speak on behalf of', in public life. Citing Barth, Le Bruyns emphasizes the need to see the deepest existential questions of the people (Le-Buyns, 2016:1). Without this, theology is, in the view of this researcher, at risk of becoming no more than a simple philosophy, a dead river and good, but empty, discourse. In agreement with Nolan, this study wishes to consider God as the one who suffers in, and through, the victims of injustice and oppression (Nolan, 2009: 35). In every age, theologians contextualise their period in relation to contemporary ways of thinking. Engaging in such a way with one's time of life, poses some challenges such as a disregard for mystical roots, overstressing political aspects, subordination of considerations of faith to considerations of society, absolutisation of liberation theology while downgrading the theologies of others, lack of concern for deepening dialogue with other churches, and disregard on the part of liberation theologians (Boff, 1987: 64-65). In his liberating method, Jesus is considered as a political revolutionary because of his message (Hendricks, 2006: 5). In this context, the theology of humanism has to be taken into account. Many other types of humanism (sometimes referred to as secular which increases confidence in human power), search for a way to withdraw God from human affairs, according to Auguste Comte who himself developed positivism as a worldview to replace religion. Examples of types of humanism include academic, scientific, Marxist or socialist, rationalist and religious ethical approaches. Not any of these humanisms is founded on Christian principles (Shaw, 1982: 32,33). Christian humanism differs from secular humanism in that it seeks the source and the goal of human power in God and understands the human experience in the light of Jesus Christ. The humanism referred to in the present research is rooted in the Gospel of Christ who desires the wellbeing of humankind and wishes human life to be 'human'. Humanism has in the past been rejected because, when the word 'humanism' entered the English language, it was associated with the ancient Classical un-Christian understanding of the word (Shaw, 1982: 23). According to John W. De Gruchy (2006: 31), a Christian humanist believes that the salvation in Christ is not aimed at making us more religious, but at restoring human wholeness and wellbeing. And, furthermore, the church is called upon to be the sign of a new humanity in which dehumanizing behaviours do not occur. This Christian humanism consists in taking theology, after academic issues have been considered, out of the university to become part of the common life of people (Kaufmann, 2001b:23).

Brueggemann (2001c:1) in his book "The prophetic imagination", presents the church with new insights into the role of the prophet today. He highlights the prophet's task seeing an alternative future, rather than being absorbed and numbed by the dominant culture of the present (Grey, 2014:7-11). The prophet has to give us glimpses of the future that no one can imagine. Brueggemann wrote "The prophetic imagination" to show how the ancient Israelite prophets brought about social transformation. These prophets made a profound contribution to society. Brueggemann uses the story of Exodus where prophets did dig to find the taproot.

Shelton (2013: 170) looks upon Brueggemann as a reflection of the Hebrew prophet for the contemporary age. Writing about the prophets in Israel, Brueggemann sees them as marked by the reference to YHWH, the uncompromising God of Israel, the sovereign one, seated in Jerusalem but international in significance. Brueggemann focuses on Isaiah who expresses prophetic criticism of economic exploitation (Isaiah 3.1-4.1; 5.7-10) (Horsley, 2008:30). It is the role of the church to rethink its own identity, its peculiar memories, and its poignant hopes that must be affirmed in prophetic oracles which anticipate the coming time of shalom (Horsley, 2008:38). The church must be distinguished in a discipline to avoid that it is co-opted in the discipline of the empire. Being distinct from empire, the church will recover its public voice and attest to alternative rule in the world. Horsley (2008:39-40) calls the ancient prophets 'poets'. As poets they must tell the truth and convey hope.

1.10 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The present research is designed as a case study of the Protestant Church in the DR Congo. The project is based on three methods of data collection.
The first method consists in an analysis of documents. These include written documents, books, journals and reviews concerning the socio-political situation in DR Congo from 1990-2016 and, in addition, an analysis of pastoral letters of the ECC.

The second method is the application of quantitative and qualitative research. Further details about research design and methodology are presented in the methodology chapter. Qualitative research involves interviewing sampled respondents. A 'text'

response is collected, either written, or recorded. The text is analysed for content themes. Quantitative analysis involves giving out questionnaires to a sample of a population. Data is received, and coded, and inferential analysis is conducted on the data thus received. The population of the present research consists in 95 church leaders of the Protestant churches under the umbrella of the ECC. Participation criteria involve simple random sampling. This means that the sample size, out of 95 and by accepting the margin of error of .05 and an alpha value of .05, will be 77 as minimum sample. 15 % should be added to compensate for respondents who ignore some questions or leave them unanswered. Thus, a size of 88 as sample is adequate. Participants receive questionnaires, prior to the date scheduled for interviews, and data is recorded for analyses. Church leaders are assessed on the degree to which they are the voice of the voiceless and how seriously they take their political responsibility. In keeping with ethical principles, the study respects the wishes of those participants who request anonymity regarding sensitive issues. Their wishes in this respect are established by using consent forms. The questionnaires are translated into a language that respondents understand. Hennink *et al* (2011:9) define qualitative research as an approach that allows a researcher to examine people's experience in detail by applying a specific set of research methods such as interview, focus group discussion, observation and so forth. By qualitative research, researchers can identify issues from the perspective of their study and of the participant and get to understand how a respondent interprets the meanings that he or she perceives in behaviours, events and objects. Qualitative research can also be used to study people in their natural settings to identify how their experiences and behaviours are shaped by their lives' context. Conducting qualitative research helps the researcher to understand church leaders' views and opinions on the involvement of the church in political responsibility and on their experiences in this respect. In summary, quantitative research is used to quantify the research problem, to measure and count issues and thereafter generalise the findings to cover a broader population. In contrast, qualitative research seeks to understand or explain behaviour and belief, identify processes, and the context of people's experiences. Data are textual and generated through different methods, such as an interview, a focus group discussion, or participant observation. The researcher interprets the meaning that participants themselves ascribe to their views and experiences (Hennink, 2011:16,17)**.**

The third method refers to the use of a theological perspective that is determined in the context of the DR Congo. The prophetic mission of the church in relation to its political responsibility is interpreted in the light of this perspective.

1.11 VALIDITY, RELIABILITY AND RIGOUR OF THE STUDY

Validity and reliability are the main criteria by which research studies are judged. As defined by Gomm (2008:13) validity is associated with truth. Gomm distinguishes between internal and external validity. The internal validity refers to the truthfulness of claims made about the research itself. The external validity is linked to the question whether the findings of the research can be generalised to include more persons, places and times (Gomm, 2008:13). He understands reliability to refer to consistency which is mostly apparent from the instruments used in the research. Questions must give the same result if research is done in the same circumstances and if the same things are measured more than once.

This research will enable the church to engage in a critical and prophetic way in political affairs, basing their actions on a theological framework. A questionnaire is used to collect data from church leaders. The research aims to propose a theoretical framework based on which the Protestant Church can, by accepting political responsibility, participate in the great mission of Jesus. Scientific rigour is applied to data collection, analysing and assessing the church leaders' involvement in political responsibility while a line of conduct is proposed.

1.12 ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS

While conducting the present study, various problems were encountered, among them some churches' sensitivity in respect of the subject and the perception of a presumption that they may have been corrupted by the government. Another challenge was posed by the long distances in the country between locations where church leaders are gathered. To deal with this issue, some researchers are employed that have been trained for data collection.

1.13 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The study is organized in eight chapters.

Chapter One: General considerations. The chapter provides a general introduction to the subject as well as the views of various scholars on the prophetic voice. It offers an overview of literature relevant to the topic under study. It clarifies the importance of the topic and considers studies of scholars that are of use to the present study.

Chapter Two: The church and politics in dialogue. A view of a prophetic paradigm. Chapter Two presents a dialogue between church and politics, focusing on points of discussion between them. It also highlights different points of view concerning the church and politics and how these fit in the African context.

Chapter Three builds on socio-political issues and the resulting situation in the DR Congo between 1990 and 2016.

Chapter Four focuses on the Protestant Church in the DR Congo in relation to socio-political issues between 1990 and 2016. The chapter studies the political responsibility of the Protestant Church in the country, from the beginning of democracy up to date, and critically assesses how the church has been involved in political affairs. Pastoral letters of the ECC are investigated and analysed.

Chapter Five presents the research methodology, data analysis and interpretation. The use of interviews and written materials for the collection of data relevant to the position taken by church leaders in the context of socio-political problems, is discussed. Relevant viewpoints of the church leaders are investigated along with factors that may be prohibiting the raising of the prophetic voice of a church that accepts its political responsibility.

Chapter Six discusses a theological perspective on prophetic theology in the cause of social justice in the DR Congo. This section considers the theological understanding of social justice as perceived in Brueggemann's theology. It describes Brueggemann's stress on the common good of which all human beings are deserving and that requires the church to imagine a better world. The chapter presents a theological reflection on the prophetic role of the church in consequence of its political responsibility.

Chapter Seven promotes a DR Congo *Kairos* as a prophetic theology for social justice. Chapter Seven studies the possibility to think of a Congolese *Kairos* as a prophetic voice in the context of the DR Congo and presents a proposal to that effect.

Chapter Eight contains the conclusion and recommendations.

CONCLUSION

The first chapter of this research study provides general considerations of the prophetic responsibility. The hypothesis of the thesis is that many African churches are not able to fulfil their prophetic mission to the oppressed and exploited people because of the political situation in their countries. The section proposes the main objective of study which is to address challenges posed to the raising of the prophetic voice.

The six points motivating the study are, the growing misery in the lives of African people, the decay of the socio-political situation in the DR Congo, the confused position taken by the Protestant Church in DR Congo, the positions of different religious institutions in the country, misunderstandings regarding the concept 'prophet', and misinterpretations of 'politics'. While reviewing the relevant literature, four specific themes were selected: These are the socio-political context in Africa, and more specifically in the DR Congo, the relation between church and politics in the DR Congo, and the relevance of prophetic witness as *Kairos*. The chapter describes the study as framed in the context of the DR Congo in the period from 1990 to 2016. It uses a sample of the Protestant Church leadership; it specifies the key question as concerned with the way in which the Protestant Church should exercise its prophetic responsibility amidst political turbulence in a prophetic way. The chapter presents the study as aiming to propose a prophetic theology with the central themes of the *Kairos* tradition, liberation theology and the liberating model of Jesus.

The Protestant Church is designated as a case study with three methods of data collection, namely document analysis, quantitative and qualitative research and a theological perspective. The last section mentions the challenge of church authorities being hesitant to share views on the church's political stance and of the long distances

covered for meeting gathered church leaders in remote localities. The thesis consists of eight chapters.

The following chapter considers the prophetic paradigm of church and politics.

CHAPTER TWO

CHURCH AND POLITICS IN DIALOGUE: A VIEW OF A PROPHETIC PARADIGM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two is concerned with a dialogue between Church and politics and seeks to determine points of discussion between them. The chapter highlights differences in the outlook of Church and politics and the role this plays in the African context. The *Kairos* tradition is consulted as a paradigm of a prophetic theology.

2.2 THE AFRICAN POLITICAL CONTEXT

The African political context differs from one country to the next, depending on, *inter alia*, the Western heritage of the country in question. African countries were before independence focused on achieving freedom and independence. Referring to politics in Africa, Lindfors (1969:13) argues:

> In the 1950s the African politician was a hero. He was fighting to bring an end to European colonial rule; he was leading his nation to independence; he was the voice and symbol of African aspirations for a glorious future. When independence was achieved, his people hailed him as father of the nation, paramount chief, redeemer, and living god. However, by the mid-1960s the African politician had fallen from grace and in many parts of the continent had turned into a villain. He was mismanaging the affairs of the nation, robbing the poor to enrich himself and his wealthy colleagues, and ruthlessly suppressing opposition and dissent.

Lindfors' view describes the post-independence fate of African pre-independence expectations. That fate does to a degree justify the start and the enduring presence of violence and rebellion, characterizing many countries on the continent. The so-called heroes became after independence dictators. People had been released from Western bondage to fall into local bondage. It was, in the view of the present researcher, a matter of 'local colonialism' under the dictatorship of the 'liberators'. This cycle seems to have

become a persistent presence characterizing African leadership and unhappy members of the public are perceived as enemies and prevented from opposing those in power. Once the liberation heroes have power, they become like the oppressors they have been fighting. This reality creates false forces of opposition in Africa whose fight is not based on ideology or on political views of any kind, but purely on hunger for power. Politics in his context gets to mean no more than attempting to secure power. This political outlook creates opportunist politicians who easily change sides, meandering from one party to another. Lindfords (1969:14) reminds us that these political functionaries are in much African literature described as 'fictional politicians'. It is clear that some African heroes were simply revolutionists but are no politicians.

The existence of democracy in Africa is a relative affair, varying from one country to the next. It appears that democracy is conceived of in different ways. In African society this is in part the result of self-serving leaders for whom community development is just an afterthought (Nyiawung, 2010:1). In Salih's view, "the wave of democratization to Africa in the early 1990s represented the most significant political change in the continent since the independence period three decades before" (Salih, 2003:169). This implies that, since political independence in the 1960s, true democratization has failed to be practised in most African countries. That represents what Freston (2001:109) calls 'virtual democratization', because economic policies were insulated from popular involvement and those in power held on to it while pandering to international interests and neglecting those of the people. The authoritarian African as represented by African leaders governs without a shade of tolerance, jailing, exiling or killing those perceived by their regimes as possible candidates for a new leadership. The ill-treatment of political opponents provides a highly problematic background for the development of any democratic tolerance at all. The period of the 1990s offered democracy a second chance, according to Southall (2003:1), with the wave of democratization that accompanied political and intellectual activism. Citing Bratton & Van de Walle, Southall states that, in 1989, 29 African countries were governed by a single-party system. The role of elections at the time was, in the case of the DR Congo, simply to legitimize the power of the president and there was no question of political change. This seems still to be the current process in many African countries where elections are not held to be won. Talking about elections Wiseman

(2003:2) argues that, since 1989, only 15 African states experienced a change of government through elections. Freston (2001:109) writes that African leaders have been advising each other on how to hold elections in such a way as not to risk losing power. Hence, it seems as if democracy in Africa has still to outgrow its teenage years. That levels of democratization in Africa vary from one country to another, is the result of, *inter alia*, each country's historical experiences and socio-economic structures.

The multi-party system of government began to spread in 1994 at the cost of single parties yielding all the power (2003:9). The period was characterized by rulers resisting change and the ruled insisting on it by participating in protest movements organized by students, churches, media and other entities in society. Their thought on, and need of, democracy focused the minds of people on their political rights and involvement. The 1990s in Africa became a scene of political transformation Movements in African civil societies creating sustainable processes to affect the re-democratization of their countries, must be encouraged, provided they act independently. Their autonomy will enable movements to act impartially and convincingly. I agree with Wiseman that the African continent is in need of competing leadership groups that are sufficiently structured and ordered to maintain democracy (2003:225). Unfortunately, mostly civil societies are far from united. Divided along lines serving their self-interest, they strengthen the power of rulers who, without robust opposition, have little difficulty to exercise totalitarian authority.

The efforts towards democratization made in the 1990's in parts of Africa need to be reconsidered. Wiseman's observations in this respect are of interest. At the time, a deep concern was the absence of political accountability in African countries that knew no democracy. The spreading of democracy may be explained as the fulfilment of one of the requirements for receiving international aid as stated in the following.

> A number of Western governments and international financial agencies such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) began to insist that aid and investment had to be linked to political reform in Africa. Thus, around the end of the 1980s political conditionality was added to the economic conditionality which had emerged around a decade earlier. The fundamental concept of political conditionality was that aid and investment should be withheld from African governments which abused human rights and denied political freedoms to their citizens until such time

as these abuses were removed. In some cases political conditionality was specifically linked to democratization (A.Wiseman, 2003:4).

The implication is that democracy was not rooted in African realities. This may well have been the case in many African countries where so-called democracies were without a true foundation. They just jumped on the democratic bandwagon because it offered economic opportunities, without appreciating and adopting democratic values.   In Africa 'democracy' still seems to be little more than a word that satisfies international standards and that brings in financial aid and investments.   As long as democracy in Africa does not involve a way of thinking and a changed mindset, African countries risk being called democratic while under considerable threat of dictatorship, *coups d'état*, rebellion, militia and increasing poverty. In the African continent there are 'democracies' which are ruled more autocratically then some dictatures that show at least some democratic features. Wiseman is of the opinion that the democratization of the 1990's was followed by an era of domestic pressure. Referring to Wiseman (2003:4), it is my view that true democracy needs to be obtained by the purposeful pressurizing of African populations for democratic rule. People who have familiarized themselves with true democratic values and who take charge of a democratic development process have a fair chance of making headway as has happened in case of Latin American countries and in South Africa, where authoritarian rule was ended. Scholars point out that when church leaders and other educated citizens, participants in professional associations, mass actions, spontaneous protests and strikes, intensify the pressure on governments to advance democratization, regimes often turn to using force and attack opponents (A.Wiseman, 2003:5). In this context, Haynes (1996:106) supports the view that recent democratic change in Africa have not gone deep enough to reform what are fundamentally non-democratic systems. Many African countries, in responding to democratization, share the same characteristics and, where there are differences, these result from their various stages of development and underdevelopment. These stages follow from the particular kind of leadership of a country and the length of time it has lasted, and, in addition, from the roles played by groups based on ethnic, racial, religious and linguistic factors.

The question remains if all the presently labelled democratic countries in Africa are real democracies with democracy being defined as based on free elections and a multi-party

system as defined by some orthodox Western institutions (Southall, 2003:17). Meanwhile, violence and civil war as well as the war along the Eastern border of the DR Congo are continuing to spread.

Researchers describe the study of democratization as arriving in Africa before 1960, simultaneously with decolonization. The study of political science was at the time discouraged because politics presume the existence of a state, whereas African peoples were considered to be barbaric. Political studies were limited to the privileged who were being prepared to function as higher civil servants, clerks, secretaries and teachers, in accordance with the requirements of colonialists (Southall, 2003:2). Such a perception did not contribute to developing the African continent. It has been demonstrated that intellectual dependence tends to lead to physical and social dependence. In this context, Southall (2003:6) posits:

> The colonialism *underdeveloped* the personality of the colonized. This could only be reversed by the victim undergoing the catharsis of brutalising his/her brutaliser. Only a people who had gone through such an experience could hope to develop the political consciousness needed to keep their leaders from betraying the revolution following political independence.

In his book, '*The wretched of the earth'*, Frantz Fanon (1977:50) explains that the African problem is rooted in the fact that "there had been no effective decolonization because the colonial structure had not been destroyed". He continues stating that the independence process entailed just the "Africanisation of colonialism". What survived the process is economic dependence that still holds the developing countries in its grip.

Following some Latin American theorists and Kwame Nkrumah from Ghana, it is reasoned that continuing economic dependence of African countries slows down the beneficial results of their political independence as indicated by the unequal positions of import and export (Southall, 2003:6). It is my view that, as long as Africa remains economically dependent to its former colonisers, its best performance will still be limited by a framework of neo-colonialism. Even though external pressure has been one factor promoting democratization, it cannot be assumed that external powers will continue to support democratic consolidation (A.Wiseman, 2003:228). Many African nations have made progress but this has not diminished the challenges they face in political

governance and that cause much violence (CDI, 2005:17). Ylonen, discussing the source of political violence in Africa, proposes that the contemporary African wars are related to the weakness of post-colonial heirs. Without taking diversified African cultures into account, post-colonial states copied Western political systems. He notes: "In general, current African states are a product of external geopolitical and economic interests of powers seeking to dominate the local reality…" (Ylönen, 2009: 38-40). The African states become in fact just kind of "made by Europeans" and the results divide communities along tribal, religious and ethnic lines. African elites who previously collaborated with the colonial masters, obtained political power, even political favours from the colonial masters, and managed to further strengthen their authority by exploiting people. Many African politicians have up to date demonstrated how to exploit particular individuals that may enable them to draw constituencies and maximize their personal benefit from running authoritarian regimes (Ylönen, 2009: 38-40). This mode of government was the cause of a wave of *coups d'état* that took off around 1965 and there is little clarity on the order in which countries were affected. When situations turned chaotic, solutions were copied by affected countries from each other. At times a *coup d'état* would appear to be a way of establishing some civil order and solving economic and political problems without necessarily sacrificing one's authoritative status. Krotayev (2011: 277), citing Malthusianism, argues that economic problems including the resulting hunger, are not due to failing political leadership as much as to a country's population growing faster than its economic output. A comparison with countries such as Libya, Egypt and Syria, where population growth has been accompanied by increased social stability, contradicts this theory.

Emerging African governance was weak on democracy of which the quality in some states is illustrated by the following quote from Wiseman (2003:226).

> "…there have been states in which the new political leadership has emerged through insurgent warfare, in violent opposition to established state elites. Understandably, this has characteristically been the pattern in states where the abuse of state power has been most extreme and the opportunities for peaceful opposition have been most slight. Guerrilla insurgency may lead, as in Uganda, to the installation of a more effective and even accountable regime than its predecessor, though it may also lead, as in Liberia and Somalia, to the collapse of state institutions as a whole. In

neither case, however, does it provide a propitious setting for the consolidation of multi-party democracy."

The weakness of African democracy is confirmed by the quality of local governments that are considered as the weakest worldwide for three major reasons: One reason is that most African democracies focus on central seats of authority rather than on local levels. In the DR Congo clearly, little importance is attached to local government. Since the introduction of a multi-party system in 1990, and the first democratic election in 2006, the election for local government occurred only once and was not repeated until 2016. Yet, democracy cannot be consolidated centrally without being devolved to the local level. Some analysts note that many crucial mistakes in African governance are usually attributed to an excessive centralization of power. Only few African countries are leaving the centralized for the decentralized approach. There are proofs that the MDGs (the millennium development goals which include basic health care, education, water and sanitation) can be successfully delivered by local government. Developing the capacity of local government can complement the efforts of the national government (Salih, 2005:61-62).

Southall in his study (2003:20-22) mentions three obstacles to democracy: The first is lack of accountability in African countries. Leaders cannot improve their leadership if they are unable to face the popular judgement. The second obstacle is the status of participatory democracy in the continent. Few African people understand what democracy really means. In addition, there is the confusion of the concepts democracy and globalisation. On his part, Ndegwa (2001:5) lists five conditions that have to be dealt with before the consolidating of democracy in Africa can be affected. These are the economic crises and deep discontent, institutional weakness or decay, external conditionality and broader dependency, the post-cold war fluidity and lack of external patronage, patrimony and tendencies to personal rule. All these factors pose internal and external challenges in African countries. The promotion of balance in political leadership, external and internal relationships and the economies of countries can contribute to consolidating African democracy. In Wiseman's view (2003:227), the consolidation of democracy in Africa also requires a demonstrable relationship between political accountability and quality of government. Democracy and human rights do generally

indeed seem to go together. Citing Basset and Winter-Nelson, Kitissou (2014: 191) considers the rate of extreme poverty in Asia which decreased from 55% of the population in 1990 to 17% in 2005 whereas in the same period of time, Africa South of the Sahara added 92 million to the total number of people living in extreme poverty.

As mentioned above, African states are generally a products of external geopolitical and economic interests of powers that seek to dominate local situations (Ylönen, 2009: 38-40). To get an insight in the African political instability the phenomenon has to be considered using various approaches. The new class of kleptocrats in Africa usually compromise the development of the continent.

 As democracy in Africa is about 25 years old, the question arises if it isn't too early to assess its results. Ndegwa (2001:1-3) argues, that a decade is evidently too short a period to come to conclusions regarding democratic achievements. He observes that democratization cannot be attained and judged only by its introduction of elections and of certain institutions. Democracy is multi-faceted, and its concerns include, among others, social change and gender issues. Attaining democratization is a process rather than the fixed point of its achievement. Ndegwa defines democracy as the 'institutionalization of uncertainty', comparing it to the uncertainty of life itself. From that perspective democratization becomes the management of general uncertainty by channelling political uncertainty into a rule-based domain. In such a context democracy becomes a process that citizens may claim to judge on the basis of a government's ability to weather critical situations and protect them from uncertainty. In my view two to three decades of democratization provide a sufficient basis for criticism. Successful, true democratization frees society from all aspects of domination. In the African continent the concern of its populations cannot be disconnected from the religious context. The next section deals with the connection between church and politics.

2.3 CHURCH AND POLITICS

2.3.1 Defining the Church

The Greek word for church, *ekklesia*, means 'gathering of people', or congregation. The Old Testament uses the Hebrew *qahal,* meaning 'assembly' (Deuteronomy 9.10) (Schmidt, 1950:1-5). Based on Acts 2.47, Schmidt (1950:7) notes that the word *ekklesia*

is always used to distinguish the people of God from other members of society. *Ekklesia* (people of God) differs from *'laon'* and *'cosmon'* ('all the world' and 'all the people'. In Modern Greek *laos* is the people, for example of the country, and *kosmos* is the world but can also indicate people). Schmidt mentions that in Acts 19.32,39,40 *ekklesia* is three times defined as assembly or gathering of the heathen. It is thus used as a secular expression. In Colossians and Ephesians, Paul presents interpretations of the word church. *Ekklesia* is the body of Christ and Christ is the head of the body (Colossians 1.18-24; Ephesians 1.22-23).

Six forms of church can be distinguished (Le-Buyns, 2016): the congregational church, oecumenical church, worshiping service, individual church, denominational church, and organisational church, for instance NGOs and other organisations which also fulfil the role of spreading the Gospel.

2.3.2 Defining politics

The word politics is derived from the Greek word *polis* which literally means city or city-state. Politics thus stands for the management of the affairs of the *polis*. Heywood (2002:5) considers the interpretation of politics as restrictive, because it positions politics as taking place within a polity, a system of social organisation where it is practised in cabinet rooms, legislative chambers and government departments. Thus, only politicians are engaged in politics and the majority of citizens are excluded from the activity. Politics is concerned with the practice of making, preserving and amending general rule under which the people live. 'Politics' is by some considered as a dirty word that Is associated with troubles, disruptions, violence, deceit, manipulation and lies (Heywood, 2002:4). It is in this line of thought that Henry Adams, a US historian of the 19th century, describes politics as 'the systematic organisation of hatreds' (Heywood, 2002:4). This understanding is still a part of the general opinion of people. Different insights into the meaning of politics may lead to a clearer understanding of the concept. Roughly four different views can be distinguished. These refer to politics as an art of government, as simply public affairs, as a matter of compromise and consensus, and as power and the distribution of resources.

When politics is seen as the art of government, it is defined, not as a science but an art in how it engages with social life.

Politics as concerned with public affairs reflects Aristotle's statement that man is by nature a political animal. He implied that it is only as part of a political community that human beings can live the good life (Heywood, 2002:8). Heywood also presents his own view that politics should be an ethical activity concerned with creating a just society.

The third view of politics expects it to be a question of compromise and consensus. It requires conflict to be resolved by conciliation rather than violence. To compromise means that concessions have to be made by all sides involved, which ultimately leaves no one perfectly satisfied.

Another view connects politics to power. Power suggests an ability to achieve a desired outcome by applying whatever means. Politics is found in every area of human existence and in all social activity. It is the heart of collective social activity, formal and informal, public, private and in all groups and institutions concerned with human beings. It is a power as it involves decision-making, an agenda setting and thought control (Heywood, 2002:10-11).

This section is aimed at finding out how church and politics can be connected or move in the same direction. The cohabitation between Church or Christian faith and politics is always a subject of discussion. Some scholars support the incompatibility of the church or Christianity with political affairs. Others see it as the duty of Christians to play a part in politics. The perceptions of specific scholars regarding the ambiguous nature of participation in political responsibility are considered.

2.3.3 Politics as a vocation

In a reflection on the meaning of political responsibility, Gamwell (2005:ix) mentions how a Chicago-based organization of clergy and laity engaged with politics as a Christian vocation because of the failure of the Protestant Church to do so. Vocation means having a calling. Not only joining the priesthood, but also being a Christian is a vocation. A Christian may answer to a calling and function in a secular area for the common good. In that case he or she discusses politics, not professionally, as a job, but simply because

the Christian faith acknowledges people's membership of political communities (Gamwell, 2005:3). All Christians, being citizens, may consider their calling to participate in political life as important because it offers an opportunity to influence the political rules they are bound by. In many countries and in the wider contemporary world, many Christians see political participation as central to Christian life. For example, in South Africa, when Christians were reprimanded by the then minister of education for organising a prayer meeting, Boesak, a man of the church, was deeply upset and wrote from prison to the minister:

> "Yes, for this very reason our prayers are sometimes political. They must be, because all the world is the Lord's, and there is no area of life, not a single inch, that is not subject to the lordship of Jesus Christ. In this way politics and politicians cannot consider themselves outside the demands of the gospel or outside the cycle of prayer. We pray for politics, not because we feel so much at home there, in that world of intrigue and compromise, of betrayal and power, of immense temptation and awesome responsibility, but because even there we must assume our position as believers" (Boesak, 2009:248-249).

Thus, politicians have to submit to the kingdom of Jesus of whom men of the church are the ambassadors. Boesak stipulates the difficulties of engaging in politics while being focused on religious living. Even many Christians seem not to be aware of the complexity, but a fact understood by most Christians is that all belongs to Jesus, including the temporary powers. In his ecclesiology Boesak joins Calvin when talking about the submission of government to the law of God. To be involved in politics presents believers with the responsibility to promote the kingdom of God. They should not be motivated by some form of political expediency, but by a conviction of their responsibility to further God's mission. The true Christian engagement in political affairs is not driven by the theories of Marx or Lenin, or by any other ideology, but by the wish to express faith in Jesus Christ.

Van de Beek (2008:317) confirms the pleas of theologians and church leaders in many countries for an involvement of the church in politics. Politicians have often appealed to churches and religious groups in general for an input in affairs of a political nature. Many governments rely on the contribution of the church to public life. Van de Beek underlines that church participation may differ from one country to another. No matter how much

situations vary, most relevant studies stress that the church as well as individual Christians should participate in political activity. In 200 CE, Tertullian in his writings already pleads for the participation of Christians in economic and social affairs, recognizing that the intercession and the virtuous living of Christians could advance peace in the world and in its cities (Fergusson, 2004:25).

The execution of Jesus is viewed in a political light. His teaching is based in a, ironically, political metaphor, the '*basileia* of God' (reign, or kingdom, of God). Staying out of politics is in a practical sense not possible as social and spiritual man cannot be separated. Hoffmeyer (2013:169) states: "According to the principle of inertia, trying to be politically neutral equates to support for the existing order. If you are not doing something to change the way things are, you are letting things continue the way they are".

Other scholars speak of the partnership between Church and state collaborating in mutual respect (Kouadio, 1994:2). Throughout the centuries, relations between church and state have been dynamic.

2.3.4 History of the relation church and state

In this section the co-existence of state and Church before the Reformation is discussed as well as how it was perceived by the Reformers.

2.3.4.1 Pre-Reformation

The Pre-Reformation relationship of state and Church is to a large extent determined by the adoption, at the time of Constantine, in 313 CE, of a Roman imperial decree declaring Christianity to be the state religion. In practice, it became so only in the 380s. The Church's new status earned it favours from the state, including the exemption of the clergy from paying personal taxes and the Sunday becoming a public holiday. The church also won itself a generally dominant position for which it was criticized.

Before 313 Christianity had opposed the Roman emperor as mentioned in the confession of Polycarp: "'Swear by the fortune of Caesar,'" he answered, "'Since thou are vainly urgent that, as thou sayest, I should swear by the fortune of Caesar, and pretendest not to know who and what I am, hear me declare with boldness, I am a Christian'" (Goranzon, 2010:46).

2.3.4.2 During the Reformation

At the period of the Reformation, estates of monasteries were transferred to the crown or to local magnates. Some changes occurred in theological and political assumptions. Many Church leaders remained part of governing structures. There was question of how to re-define a new Church-state partnership, but not of breaking the linkage. And the perception kept standing that "no bishop meant no king" (Moyser, 1988:7).

After the Reformation, soon after 1520, the Lutheran church was subjected to civil authority (Kouadio, 1994:1). As a result, in many countries a separation of Church and state evolved. This historical background plays an important role in Reformers' viewpoints on, and in studies of, the Church-state relationship. Moyser *et al* (1988:3) comment that Christianity emerged as the legitimator of state authority and as the principal single integrating force within European society.

The early Reformers felt challenged to change society. During the Reformation process, the state-Church relation was by the Church understood in many different ways and interpretations vary from one theologian to another. Below the viewpoints of some Reformers regarding the gap between Church and state are discussed.

Martin Luther is known as the first of the Reformers. He was born on November 10, 1483, in Eisleben, Germany. On July 17, 1505, he entered the Erfurt monastery of the Augustinians. He was ordained priest in 1507 and began theological studies (Aland, 1979:9)*.* The Middle Ages distinguished between two states of being, namely the temporal and the spiritual. The papal authority considered the clergy as belonging to the spiritual and the laity to the temporal state, so that the two were by their different categorization separated from each other. Luther, as part of his Reformative view, resisted this papal arrangement. All Christians belong in the spiritual estate and are equal in Luther's view. Laity is different from clergy only in function (McGrath, 1993:205). When describing the difference between spiritual and worldly government, Luther talks about a spiritual government that is impacted by the word of God bearing the fruit of Spirit. With such a government humanity wouldn't need legislative rule to guide it. Believers would naturally act morally and responsibly. God made worldly government and included kings, princes and magistrates, to perform God's work, whether they are true believers or not.

Government, or the temporal order, is imposed by God so that it may maintain peace and repress sin. Luther recognises the coexistence of good and evil in both Church and society. In Luther's view, good must be ruled by the spirit and evil by the sword. Consequently, he encourages the coexistence of spirit and sword in governments of Christian societies. God established political power so that it may restrain human greed and wickedness. The church has spiritual authority which is persuasive but not coercive. State authority, on the other hand, is coercive rather than persuasive. Luther acknowledges that Christians have civic and social responsibility and that some should hold public positions (McGrath, 1993:207-210)*.* Luther developed a theocentric thinking, formulating his concept of two regiments and explaining God's work in two ways. He understands God's work firstly as using the church to fulfil his plan for his creation. Secondly, God works through people and governments, in which context the temporal power is used to lead humanity (Dreyer, 2010:167). In this reflection, state and church both become agents of God's work in the creation. Luther has regards for the temporal power. When appearing before the emperor and the Diet of Worms on April 18, 1521, he shows his regard by speaking modestly without raising his voice.

> "My lord, emperor most serene, princes most illustrious, lords most gracious, I am here obedient to the order made yesterday evening that I should appear at this time. By the mercy of God, I beseech your most Serene Majesty and your most illustrious lordship to deign to hear with forbearance my cause which (I hope) is just and true. If through my inexperience I do not give any one his proper title or offend in anyway courtly etiquette, I beg you of your kindness to pardon me as a man whose life has not been spent in the court of princes, but in the cells of monks…" (Drewery, 1970:58).

A second Reformer is Huldrych Zwingli, born in Wildhaus, Toggenburg, the Eastern part of Switzerland, on January 1, 1484. He grew up in a family that counted several priests. Two of his uncles had joined the priesthood and five of the family's children had entered orders. At the age of 22 he was an ordained priest and on the 29th September 1506 he celebrated his first Mass in his native village (Courvoisier, 1963:13). He understood the *'republica'* as synonymous with the church. Considering the relationship between church and government he writes:

> "The best governments are those who submit themselves to the governance of the eternal King, Jesus Christ. The government must rule in accordance to the will of God. Every member of society should be baptised. As such, there is no distinction between the church and the people" (Dreyer, 2010:167).

In Zwingli's opinion, church and social life should be mixed. This view elicited some criticism from Calvin. Courvoisier, studying Zwingli's position on the relation between Church and state, writes that today's conception of the church-state question does not necessary resemble 16th century views. In the time of Zwingli, the *corpus christianum* was a unified, single Christian society (Courvoisier, 1963:79). Zwingli's concept of the state-Church question was influenced by the relationship of Church and state in his own region. He himself was a prophet in the Secret Council of the state of Zurich where he interpreted the Scripture for the authorities. At the end of his life Zwingli established a distinction between Church and state, insisting on the unalienable rights of the church. Zwingli's view of the responsibility of the Church ministers is that they have to preach the Gospel of the Lord. They report on civil authorities who use force in the exercise of their duty, Christian ministers have no power besides the word of God. The governor who uses force does so in his official capacity and not as a private individual. The governor's responsibility is not to dominate (Courvoisier, 1963:85-86). Zwingli cites Matthew 22.21, where Christ says to render to God what is God's and to Caesar what is Caesar's. It refers to the obedience the minister of God is obliged to show to the government which, after all, like the church originates from God. Ministers have a duty to preach divine justice to governors and citizens alike. By preaching divine justice, human justice will evolve. Without divine justice, the justice that human beings experience can only remain sickly. Even the magistrate with his temporary authority, must be aware that his authority derives from the teaching of Christ's life as Christ also obeyed temporary authority. Zwingli is of the opinion that governors must act in accordance with the rule of Christ. No law should go against God. But Zwingli understands that the magistrate is the servant and administrator of a spiritual office before God, even when he is collecting taxes or restraining disorder by applying force (Courvoisier, 1963:87).

Zwingli's theology of the relation Church-state is symbolised by a statue of the Reformer in Zurich, standing with the bible in one, and the sword in the other hand. In his thought, Church and state were as one community ruled by God. Zwingli's insights were inevitably

related to the political reality of his time and in his surroundings. As a Reformer the patriotic dimension of his ministry impacted his interpretation of the Gospel. His political engagement was not tainted by any hint that the Gospel might be employed to serve political ends (Stephens, 1986:282-283). Zwingli's prophetic mission was influenced by the example of the prophets of the Old Testament. He realised that the ministry must not be restricted to a special level of human existence but touch all of it. Zwingli has been named as the Reformer who was most influenced by humanism (Aland, 1979:90).

The third major Reformer is John Calvin. He was born on July 10, 1509, as the second child in his family. In his understanding human beings belonged to God: the people of God. Hence, he saw the inhabitants of Geneva as people of God, but he did not consider them as identical with the Church, because of differences of conviction and faith. There were among the Genevans those who had been baptized but who were sinners and disobeyed the Gospel. Calvin was of the opinion that "government had the responsibility to protect the Church and promote the Christian faith and true reformed teaching". He bases his insights on the supremacy of the law of God. In his understanding of the relationship between church and government, worldly authority is subordinate to the law of God. True government must not exalt and place itself above the law of God but subject to it. At the same time, Calvin defines distinctions between Church and state. He differs from Luther in his understanding of the two kingdoms, the spiritual and the temporal kingdom. The fundamental difference between church and civil government consists, according to Calvin, in governance. Jesus Christ is the only king governing the Church. The earthly government and power on the other hand, have been instituted by God. They have the power of the sword. The earthly governance has as its objective the maintenance of law and order. In Calvin's opinion, the 'law' should be based on the Ten Commandments. His view of the role of governments is that they must not invent new laws, but rather interpret and apply the perfect law found in Scripture (Dreyer, 2010:174).

In Calvin's view, government is called and duty-bound to protect and promote public religion and worship. In his Institution 4.20.2, Calvin writes that governments should encourage Christians and church leaders to live in peace with each other. He calls Church and government the external means that assist all Christians to live an orderly existence and glorify God. However, in Inst. 4.20.8b Calvin distinguishes three forms of government:

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the monarchy which, according to him, leads to tyranny, aristocracy leading to nepotism and personal enrichment, and, thirdly, democracy which results in disorder and chaos (Dreyer, 2010:175).

Calvin's understanding of theocracy does not imply that the church should take on the function of a temporal government. The state, however, needs to listen to the preaching of the Gospel by the Church. In Calvin's view, government's duty is to govern with justice and for the benefit of each man and woman so that they may receive what is theirs. He sees rebellion against, and disrespect of, a just government as incompatible with the law of God. In Inst. 4.20.22 Calvin encourages men and women to obey and respect their government in all its actions as long as these are good and to the glory of God. He differs from other scholars in his opinion on disobedience, expressed in Inst. 4.20.25, where he encourages obedience to, and respect for, governments, even if they persecute people. He argues that their institutions are willed by God and may represent God's way to punish people for their sins. He does warn though against obeying a king who orders his subjects to commit acts that are clearly contrary to the Gospel. Instead of staging rebellions or making war against kings and governments, Calvin suggests one should rather leave one's country in cases of persecution. His suggestion was taken up by many French Protestants who emigrated to, among other destinations, Southern Africa (Dreyer, 2010:177).

2.3.4.3 A secularised society

There have been suggestions that secularism arrived in Europe, accompanying the Judaeo-Christian tradition that sees sacred and profane both as belonging to God's creation (Moyser, 1988:19). Moltmann considers Christian faith up to now as made up of two different models. One model prescribes a Church freed from political engagement while politics has to be unburdened by religion. Hence, this is called the 'unburdening model'. It implies that the Church is not responsible for the actions of politicians and their consequences, nor do politicians have to take account of religion. The second model, however, advances the view that political issues and religious interests should be of concern to each other. The present researcher is in agreement with Moltmann (1993:318) who argues: "The more unpolitical - in [the] critical sense - the Church becomes, the more irreligious, secular and rationalist becomes the state". If that happens, and the church

has chosen to function in separation from the profane realm and not be involved in the management of a country, then the Church also should not blame those who are responsible for the state's management and are doing it their way.

2.3.5 Jesus and his political concern

Moltmann (1993:318) refers to political hermeneutics which is a way of recognizing social and economic influences on theological institutions and languages in order to bring their liberating content into the political sphere and make them relevant in the context of truly freeing men from the misery of deplorable living conditions. Moltmann proposes that Christians use the freedom they experience in their faith as an additional inspiration towards realizing the necessary political liberation in their environments. Talking on political involvement of Jesus, Obery (2006:5-6), studying Jesus' political concerns, finds that Jesus did not involve himself in politics in any compromising way and motivated by partisanship nor did he want to overthrow the Roman empire by using force. Jesus' political revolutionary position is contained in his message calling for change of individual hearts and demanding sweeping, comprehensive changes in political, social and economic institutions. His strategy inspired and empowered people to remove injustices in public structures. The changes demanded by Jesus are individual, institutional and structural, and aimed at alleviating the systemic causes of people's suffering. In his inaugural sermon in Luke 4.18-19, Jesus announces that the reason for his anointing lies in his mission, associated with the suffering of people. The Greek word *Ptochois* (poor) refers to the collectively impoverished who are by a system of governance kept in that state, unjustly imprisoned and economically exploited. The year that Christ is proclaiming is the year of Jubilee. Announced in Exodus 25.8-10 as the end of the fifty-year cycle when the land that had been confiscated and unjustly taken, will be returned to its owners. It is also the year in which people may be freed. In relation to Jesus' liberation mission, Rodriguez (2012:2,3) speaks of an integral liberation where by salvation is understood to include spiritual and social aspects. He affirms Philip Esler's suggestion that "Luke develops a theology of poverty influenced by social, political and economic factors". Poverty has never been innocent. Rodriguez (2012:4,5), following Gutiérrez' thought, mentions as one of the most challenging aspects of Luke's theological focus, his sensitivity concerning the less favoured social sectors and his awareness of the six

dimensions of salvation, namely economic, social, political, physical, psychological and spiritual. Following this line of thought one ends up with what can constitute the salvation of the entire human being. Obery lists three types of factors that characterize Jesus' revolutionary stance.

The first type concerns politics. Jesus lived when the Emperor Augustus ruled the Roman empire where few Jews were living. Obery (2006:51) reports two thousand crucifixions executed by the Roman military around the time of Jesus' life. The victims were mostly Galileans who had rebelled again Roman rule. Another political issue was the pulpit rule of Herod, used by the empire. In addition, there was the political challenge of the aristocratic priestly class ruling in the temple. These priests were seen as agents of the Roman empire, serving for the sake of the emperor. John 19.15 confirms that priests saw themselves in such a role. "But they cried out, 'Away with *Him,* away with *Him! * Crucify Him!' Pilate said to them, 'Shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but Caesar!'".

Those who should recognize the sovereignty of God alone, did betray their priesthood by serving the God of Israel. To oppose the priests was synonymous with opposing Rome. Similarly, the elders and the Sadducees who were socially and politically influenced, looked towards maintaining the status quo and strengthening their relationship with the Roman empire. Pharisees were ritually pure, but not politically radical. Meanwhile, it was stated in rabbinic writings that priests went through large sums of money. They were extravagant and reputedly entertained lavishly, hiring expensive cooks for festivities and drinking choice wines from crystal glasses. The aristocratic priesthood also was accused of maltreating the people they were supposed to serve. With regard to this behaviour, Obery (2006:60) argues: "Because of the priests' religious authority and the allegiance that authority elicited from their fellow Jews, it was the priests' role as agents of Roman interests that presented the major political problem for the people of Jesus".

The second kind of factors related to Jesus' revolutionary stance are economic in nature such as:

- Poverty. Israelite society was composed of two classes, one very rich class, consisting of only 5 per cent of the population, all of them bureaucrats and priests who were also landowners and tax collectors. The rest of the population was very

poor. The average piece of land available for cultivation by one family was 1.5 acres, very small for maintaining a family (Hendricks, 2006:61,62). Hence we find in the Gospel, among others, the following references to poverty: Judas who'd like to sell the perfume and give money to the poor (John 12.4, 5); the poor Lazarus (Luke 19.19-31); the statement on the blessing of the poor (Luke 6.20), and, teaching his disciples to pray Jesus is concerned about their poverty, our daily bread (Matthew 6.11). Moltmann (1999:99) understands poverty as a collective term entailing the hungry, sick, discouraged, sad, suffering and needy. They are humiliated, oppressed, and as a result dehumanised. They have lost their rights, are non-persons, sub-humans and human fodder.

- Then there is the taxation system. Taxation was collected as multiple payments, levied in kind and in personal services, and taxes served to maintain the Roman officials and soldiers. People had to pay religious and secular taxes. The estimated total of charged secular and religious taxes consumed up to 40 percent of the peasants' subsistence. E.P. Sanders observes in his study that "every year farmers had officials of their religion knocking on the door and asking for tithes" (Hendricks, 2006:64). This system of taxation could only deepen the poverty of the Israelites. Moltmann (1999:99-100) uses in this context the term 'man of violence' as the opposite of the poor man. The man of violence is the one who enriches himself by making other people poor. Thus, the tax collector becomes rich by exploiting his power which the poor are unable to resist. The tax collector cheats the poor out of the little they have and, being poor, they have no choice but to pay up.

- Another huge economic challenge was posed by the debt system. Many peasants had to borrow to pay tax. Once they failed paying, they were seized, either to become slaves or to give up their eldest children for slavery. Matthew 18.25-35 highlights this fact. It could also happen that a moneylender enslaved a debtor's wife, children, and even members of the extended family and their possessions as payment for debts. Obery (2006:65) notes that "debt slavery was such a bitter issue in Israel that one of the first acts of the rebels in the Jewish War was to seize and burn the records of debts that were stored in the Temple". When teaching to pray, Jesus uses this context: "Forgive us our '*opheleimata*', our debts or legal obligations (Matthew 6.12). The Greek verb *'ophiemi'* translated as 'forgive', has the primary meaning of 'release'.

The prayer also gives an indication of Jesus' concern for the financial issues of people.

Among problems of a social nature are crime and the schism between the inhabitants of rural and urban areas. Crime was a major concern in the social reality of Israel. It was a consequence of the social alienation of poor and landless people. There is an understanding, supported by scholarly evidence, that in the case of political and economic breakdown, banditry takes place. Typically this occurs in rural areas where a large proportion of the populace is economically exploited and dispossessed (Hendricks, 2006:66). Roman law countered banditry as if it were a common natural disease and cause of death. Many rebellions took place in Israel in protest against exploitation by Rome and by wealthy Jewish landowners who often also were priests. Those perceived as exploiters are targeted by Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10.25-37). A sign of the times can also be cleaned from the scene of the crucifixion where two men are crucified alongside Jesus. Another social problem was posed by a schism between urbanites and rural dwellers who formed an 'inferior' class in society. The priests who dwelled in the temple thought that, being privileged, they also enjoyed a superior status in society. Hence, the priest in John 7.15 assumes that Jesus is illiterate because he comes from a rural area. One of the social ills in the region is the marginalization of the Galileans who were synonymous with poverty and shame and, therefore, by society side-lined. Ninety percent of Galileans were poor. Rodriguez (2012:27, 36) emphasizes that God's special love for the poor and marginalized is the central theme of the liberating message of the bible. Jesus spent his life in Galilee where Hebrew was spoken with a local accent. Because of their pronunciation Galileans were not allowed to lead prayer outside their own region. Peter's origin is in Matthew 26.73 identified by his Hebrew pronunciation. Galileans were also pejoratively known as "those who earn their life from agriculture". In Luke 2.16, Jesus is presented as wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. What does this statement convey about the new born king? The Lucan version represents the identification of the Messiah as an entire human being. Lying in a manger expresses Jesus' identification with the destitute and defenceless in the world. Jesus is shown in his solidarity with the needy and the outcasts who exist in the periphery of society (Rodriguez, 2012:9). In first century Palestine, the marginalized included lepers, tax collectors, publicans, women, children, Samaritans and the sick. They could be divided into four

groups: those marginalized because of their economic status, the socially marginalized, those side-lined for cultural reasons and, finally, people marginalized on religious grounds. It implies that not exclusively poor people were marginalized. The same fate affected some moneyed persons who belonged to societal categories that were deemed unacceptable. For example, Zacchaeus and Matthew are marginalized in their communities although they are rich (Rodriguez, 2012:18). In spite of the impact of Jesus' ministry on present-day social relations, excusing oneself from political participation is still a common occurrence at which we take a closer look in the following section.

2.3.6 Some reasons offered in church for avoiding politics

Arguments that church leaders ought to steer clear of involvement in politics are mostly based on the religious nature of their positions. The reasoning goes that politics is foreign to the church mission which is of a spiritual character whereas politics are seen as physical or, at the least, non-spiritual. Church leaders are perceived as not concerned with the material or social existence of believers because that is the task of the temporal kingdom. Churchmen, even if belonging temporarily to this temporal kingdom, don't belong there. Their homeland is in heaven.

2.3.6.1 Render to Caesar his and to God His

The argument often proffered by opponents of Christian participation in politics is the text of Mark 12.17 and Matthew 22.21: 'Render to Caesar his and to God His'. In the understanding of many believers this spells out that politics has to be separated from Christian life because politics cannot fit in an existence that is truly bound up with Christ. Believers adhere to some principle based on civil ethics which they have to take into account. They may be faced with dilemmas when serving God seems to conflict with the service of worldly authorities, as Jesus mentions in John 15:18-21, 16:1-4. The apostles in Acts 4.2-7 at an early stage experienced such a dilemma (Kouadio, 1994:1).

A careful study of the Gospel of Mark shows Jesus responding to the Pharisee and Herodians' question who sought to lure him into making politically coloured declarations related to the matter of Jews being obliged to pay taxes levied by the Roman rulers. Probably this taxation was by some Jews resented. However, the meaning of Caesar's presence in the context of the above texts remains to be identified. Does 'Caesar' stand

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for political matters? What can be learned from this text in respect of a Christian's political responsibility? The question posed by Pharisees and Herodians was aimed at trapping Jesus into a negative comment on taxes imposed on Jews by their oppressors. Jesus does not specify in this narrative what belongs to Caesar and what is God's. It is known that everything belongs to God. Paul's reading is that people should submit to authorities. But early Christians could not worship the Roman emperor as a sign of submission. Discussions on the meaning of the verses Mark 12.17 and Matthew 22.21 do not provide satisfactory arguments for avoiding political engagement.

Even so, the texts were used by the DR Congo President Kabila in a media conference on January 26, 2018, after people had been killed on January 9 and 21, during a march organised by the Catholic Church. Being questioned, Kabila underlined that "the political matter does not belong to the church: The church must render to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs God". Here too, no clarification of the text's meaning. Indirectly responding to Kabila's statement, the priest N'Shole, general secretary of CENCO (Conseil Episcopale National du Congo), noted that "the lives of the Congolese people do not belong to Caesar, rather to God" (interview with Abbe N'shole on the evening of January 26, 2018). The priest emphasized the prophetic role of the church in socio-economic and political matters. The church must be present where people are suffering.

2.3.6.2 Our kingdom is not from this world

When Jesus said (John 18.36), "My Kingdom is not of this world", he meant to underline the origin and nature of his kingdom which is a spiritual kingdom. Pilate is not able to deliver him by the power of the Jew. Subjects of Jesus' kingdom do not fight with actual weapons. His kingdom is supernatural and is in the world without being worldly. It is maintained by means that are spiritual and moral. Jesus prays that "Christians are not of this world" (John 17:14), but "it is important to know that we are sent into the world" (John 17-18. The world is where Christians must act and carry out their testimony. They are sent to be the salt and the light in the world. Hence, Christians belong in the world without being of the world. This reality does not allow Christians to escape the world's realities.

2.3.6.3 Politics often lead to bad endings

Storkey (2005:143), in his study of Jesus and politics, is concerned about the relation between truth and politics which is often ambiguous. There is an ambiguity in this researcher's culture as well when talking about politicians. In the vernacular the word means 'liars', or it indicates at the least a person who doesn't tell the truth. Often, political actors impose on the public whatever they wish to impose and wish or believe to be true. Whatever is in their interest is embraced as truth. It is not always a question of liking to swim against the current. Telling the truth may be dangerous and many have been killed for doing so. An example is John the Baptist who lost his head in the process. This type of discipline is still applied in the present-day world. It happens that speakers of what is the truth are imprisoned or murdered. Others choose to rather keep silent and avoid trouble. Or else they join the proclaimers of untruths and declare to see white where there is dark and two where there is one. That is what may be called compromising.

Jesus faced similar choices when he appeared before his detractors, among them Pilate, representative of Caesar. They attempted to force him to accept that which was not his mission. Jesus stood firm and spoke truth. He was by that time hated and condemned to death for speaking truth. As in ancient times, corruption was the hallmark of political rulers. Most prophets underwent torture because they proclaimed truth while admonishing evil. Whoever is engaged in a similar way today, must accept the consequences of choices made as his or her reality. They speak truth or they will find themselves compromising.

Concerning the involvement of Christians in politics, Kouadio (1994:2) proposes that they participate in city management where they can be the best advocates of the Gospel. He adds, however, that politics is "a complicated game". Often involvement with politics exposes one to environments where fraud and corruption are routinely practised. In that case Christians need to adhere to strictly ethical practices in order to live by Christ. But too often those perceived as being the "best Christians" who might be supposed to introduce enlightenment into a political environment are restricted to the church. Kouadio (1994:3) suggests that political engagement must be based on vocation as well as faith, and represent the serving of peace and justice. Pastors who have already been ordained,

he advises to not embrace politics as a career, but to involve in prayer and to vote for, and engage in, a politic party so as not to be neutral.

In a discussion of faith and vocation Mehlhorn (2008:77), a Protestant pastor in an evangelical church in Germany, makes a strong statement on her conception of public life.

> Already as a young girl, I did not consider my faith to be something private. Faith was my way of seeing the world; it was also what showed me my responsibility in and for the world. Ever since I was about sixteen years old, it became ever clearer to me that this faith should also become my profession. With that, I made a decision in favour of a public mission where religious matters were concerned

The church is no longer considered as a national institution in Western Europe. Religious institutions are no more the dominant force as they used to be, as church membership has declined in many Western countries (Fergusson, 2004:141). In that respect Africa occupies the stronger position as churches in this continent seem to be more plentiful than ever before.

2.3.6.4 The authority has been established by God (Romans 13.1-4)

The Greek word for authority is "*exousia*", meaning privilege, mastery, delegated influence. It is the same word that Pilate uses when admonishing Jesus saying: "…don't you realise I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" It is a problem that temporary and political authorities abuse the word "*exousia*". Instead of giving the word its meaning of privilege, mastery or influence delegated, they use it for power and neglect the word "*Dunamis*" which properly means force, miraculous power, and the ability to squeeze people. *Dunamis* is mostly used to express the supranatural power by the Lord given to his own to control the prince of evil (Luke 5.10; 4.14; 9.1; 21.27).

The point of this Scripture is first of all to define the context of Paul's statement. He argues on the origin of temporal power. God is presented as the origin of spiritual and temporal governments.

2.3.6.5 To submit to the political authority (Romans 13.5-7; 1 Peter 2.13-14)

From Greek comes the verb "*hypotassesthai*", meaning to subordinate, to obey, to be under obedience, to subdue unto. The word submission is sometimes used in the context of exploitation and abuse which require the submission of victims. What to do when the worldly authority itself does not submit to God and rules against God's will? The apostles to the Sanhedrin give a straight answer in Acts 5.29: "We must obey God rather than human beings". In the context of social injustice in America, Martin Luther King states: "We have moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws". Disobedience in the context of injustice is a responsibility of Christians. How such considerations impact the African continent is discussed in the following section.

2.3.7 Church and politics in the early African independence

Against the background of religion and politics in Africa, Haynes (1996:11,12) compares the Christian church in Latin America and Africa, and concludes that the African church has not developed such a clear political upsurge as the Latin American church has. In Latin America, there were radicalised priests, capable of standing up. The African continent had no such religious leaders. Haynes (1996:17,18) further observes that African church leaders tend to proclaim their political neutrality but are sturdily supportive of the status quo and strong government. He thinks that many fundamentalist Christians in Africa don't need to join political parties because they believe in the temporal power that must be in the hands of political leaders whereas the spiritual should remain the concern of spiritual leaders.

At the outset of the wave of democratisation in Africa, the Catholic Church tried to take the leadership by holding certain conferences. But the resulting church-state relationship in Africa took on an appearance of ambiguity as it seemed to be associated not so much with relevant developments but with the particular period of time and with those who adopted leadership roles. While it generally seemed to be the Catholic Church that ran conferences on issues of democracy, there was on the other hand the example of the archbishop Malula in the former Zaire, addressing President Mobutu and stating: "Mr President, the church recognises your authority, because authority comes from God. We will loyally apply the laws you establish. You can count on us in your work restoring peace

towards which all so ardently aspired" (Haynes, 1996:110). In the colonial era, the church (Catholic) and the state worked in concert and the church appeared to act as a state church. It continued that way until the very beginning of the era of independence in Zaire (DR Congo).

Generally, church leaders in Africa are said to have remained silent in the face of corrupted governments. They are thought to have benefited materially from the situation. Haynes (1996:112) traces examples from a few countries. One example is the archbishop of Zaire who was in 1974 given a house by the President which silenced him, Likewise the Protestant Church received favours. In Togo where Catholic and political leaders created and consolidated a hegemonic relationship. Until 1985, the archbishop of Kigali in Rwanda was part of the committee of the single party in the country. In Zambia, bishop Mutale was a member of the commission that in the 1970s established a one-party system. In such circumstances, the wave of the liberation theology in Latin America in the 1960s could not light a spark in Africa. Nevertheless, in South Africa a Christian theological interpretation was presented in the 1970s and 1980s which resulted in the Institute for Contextual Theology (Haynes, 1996:17,18). The movement involved a way to interpret the bible from the perspective of politics and liberation. Social analyses were made, the movement led to increased awareness and a root of liberation theology began to grow in South Africa and will be considered in the *Kairos* document discussed below.

Lehmann (1975:233-234), in a reflection on politics, declares that piety and politics belong intrinsically together and cannot be separated. Piety is the reverence that gives power to, and transforms the reciprocity of creaturehood and creativity, in private and in society, enabling it to attain human freedom and joy. Politics, on the other hand, is the compound of justice and ordination for the sake of practising humanness in communities. Lehmann concludes that piety without politics loses its integrity and converts to apostasy while politics without piety converts into perverted justice and idolatry. Archbishop Tutu when asked by a Danish journal if he was a politician, answered as follows.

> I am not a politician. I am a church person who believes that religion does not just deal with a certain compartment of life. Religion has a relevance for the whole of life, and we have to say whether a particular policy is consistent with the policy of Jesus Christ or not, and if you mean to say that that is

political, then I am a politician in those terms. But I won't be as one who is involved in party politics (Hulley, 1996:52).

The African continent has still a long way to go in order to realise the political involvement that constitutes a prophetic responsibility.

2.4 PROPHETIC THEOLOGY AND PROPHETIC RESPONSIBILITY

The theology of liberation is mostly seen as a theology of prophetic mode. Gustavo Gutiérrez is on the basis of his theology of liberation considered a modern prophet. Nolan describes some characteristics of prophetic theology that in relation to possible prophethood in the present day and age, have to be taken into account. Contemporary liberation theology speaks of, and to, a particular place in a particular era about a particular situation (Maduro, 1989:433). The human being usually has a social, political, and cultural environment. Doing theology in a determined context is what Gutiérrez calls the real Gospel message (Maduro, 1989:89). This will later in this thesis be presented in a section devoted to the *Kairos* tradition as a demonstration of the prophetic voice in South Africa. Three key points are of importance and need to be addressed, namely: when, where and what. In each country its particular situation can be defined as well as what prophetical theology suits it. The situation in the DR Congo features as my case for which to develop a suitable prophetical theology, draw on a *Kairos* tradition.

In Maduro's writing, Nolan criticizes the 'Western theology' which he considers unprophetic because it understands truth as being timeless and universal. According to Nolan this way of thinking endangers Africans of being kept in a state of colonisation (Maduro, 1989:434).

'Prophesy' can be defined as the action of receiving and delivering the message of God. 'Prophetic' is usually applied to indicate a group of people exercising the activity of prophecy. In Greek, the word *'Prophetes'* referred to a member of the Classical temple who interpreted the ecstatic or unintelligible utterances of a priestess of Zeus or of the Pythia (Goranzon, 2010:68). Many scholars observe that there are few similarities between ancient and more recent prophets. The Hebrew word '*nabi*' is translated into '*prophetes*' in LXX. From this word are derived two titles. The first is *'hozeh'* translated as 'seer', from the Hebrew verb *'haza'* which means 'to see'. Hence, a prophet can get a

vision, referring to Numbers 24.16-; Ezekiel 13.16,23. The second title is *'ro'eh'* which refers to a diviner who uncovers things that used to be hidden (McConville, 2012: 589). Goranzon (2010:34-42) mentions that *nābî* is not the only type of prophet in the Old Testament. LXX also uses the word *prophētēs*, translated as *roeh* (seer) and *mālāk* (messenger).

Max Weber, studying the image of the prophets in the OT, understands them as acting predominantly on their own. They used dramatic language in emotional ways to convey their message in a convincing way and often had to overcome great resistance. Weber concludes that the Old Testament prophets were heroic, charismatic, exceptional, and also lonely persons. Israel faced political crises which feature in the theologizing of Old Testament prophets. If Israel sometimes was unfaithful, God never stopped demonstrating his faithfulness, promising liberation from political oppression and even from material deprivation. Weber is impressed by the charismatic leadership of biblical prophets. He proposes their leadership as a model for contemporary political leaders (de Villiers, 2010:1,2).

Today, prophetical preachers are simply understood as people who address political issues from the pulpit. In South Africa, for example, Mandela, Boesak, Beyers Naude and Tutu used the bible as their primary source for articulating an alternative society. The bible was a resource for societal transformation (Cilliers, 2015:374). Next to these prophetical preachers there are many other preachers who chose to avoid political utterances and who could be called the silent majority.

Particular points that concerned the OT prophets are the following. There was, firstly, the syncretism that could lead to the degeneration of Yahwism. Another point was the political motivation for the establishment of a state in the process of which 'Israel had thrown off Yahweh's guiding hand and become politically autonomous'. Simultaneously, economic and social developments and the rise of social injustice (Isaiah 5:8, Micah 2:1f) had become worrisome, while there was also the disturbing rise of Assyria.

Two prophetic traditions can be distinguished in the Old Testament. The prophets in the Davidic tradition support the monarchy and the higher classes whereas the Mosaic

tradition is liberative in character and focuses on God's righteousness and justice as we see from Nathan who, in the court of David, prophesised according to the will of God (1 Samuel 12.1-15). The role of prophets in the Mosaic tradition was to admonish the evil in the king's yard. Many prophetic messages were directed at kings, priests and leaders, from whom they generated diverse reactions (McConville, 2012:590). By Jeremiah prophets are portrayed as spokesmen for God in directing the nation while the priests carried the responsibility for teaching the Law (Jeremiah 23.11). Thus, the Old Testament exposes certain characteristics of prophets. The prophets were seers who in dreams or divination received the message from God which they passed on (1 Samuel 9.9). They were called future predictors and recognized as genuine if their predictions were fulfilled. Prophets – Elijah, Elisha, Nathan – performed miracles and, furthermore, they acted in the social life of people (Amos 7.10-13, Jeremiah 26.8, Isaiah 6.9). Many prophets objected to aspects of royal court proceedings. They engaged critically with political authorities or with the sacrificial system if behaviours were not truthful and neglected moral responsibility (Isaiah 1.10-, Amos 5.24-25) (Browning, 1996:303-304). From Isaiah and Jeremiah, we see that prophets were also advisors to the kings of their time (Isaiah 7.1-17, Jeremiah 21.10, 37.16-21). Based on Amos 7.14, Freedman (2009b:487) states that none of the canonical prophets was comfortable with being called *'nabi'*. They avoided calling themselves by that name. Their popular success was very limited. Scholars think that *'nabi'* implies induced ecstasy, manic bizarreness and, in general, irrational activity.

Crucially, the OT prophet is defender of God's rights and human rights. It is the prophet's duty to remind human beings of God and of their belonging to him. Israel must be faithful. Faithfulness to the Law requires respect for God and the human being. The prophet is not just supporting one side. Dosithee Atal (1993: 144-145), developing an interpretation of the prophet's presence in the Old Testament, emphasises that God in the Old Testament spoke to rich and poor, men and women in every situation. Each domain of life, spiritual, social, or spiritual, is the concern of the prophet. It appears that some prophets were also priests; such as Isaiah and Joel in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

In the New Testament, the prophet has taken on a different character. Jesus Christ is portrayed as the Prophet of prophets. The New Testament is the fulfilment of what the

OT prophets spoke about. For an understanding of New Testament prophecy three points can be highlighted: the disclosure of future events, the keeping alive of expectations of the *'parousia'* and the addressing of contemporary issues. It is also important to be aware of the different relations between prophets and other societal groups. Villa-Vicencio in Goranzon's writing argues in a history of the church that, since the Edict of Milan in 313, churches have been, almost without exception, an integral part of socio-economic structures in their respective communities. The impression exists that few churches supported radical social change. However, there was a noticeable polarisation in the church. On the one hand the church was tempted to leave the political arena and to function as an apolitical institute. For some time, it managed to avoid the extremes, sometimes opposing the harshest rulers, at other times favouring the existing regime. These varying positions are noted in church histories. Mostly, when it needed to position itself in respect of some political dilemma or was faced with the need to take prophetic responsibility, the church has been divided, as was the case during apartheid in South Africa. Goranzon (2010:87), discussing how Christian tradition dealt with church-state relations, selects some salient aspects. As the political order is recognized as God's institution, the church was forced to make political choices. Obedience to God had to come first and disagreements in this respect – to stay obedient or to diverge - posed an enormous challenge. Christian history contains some reports on resulting violence. Along with Goranzon, the present researcher agrees with Villa-Vicencio, that Christian resistance to worldly powers can be described as prophetic.

Many scholars judge the Christian church for having played an ambiguous political role throughout its history. At times, it has blessed and legitimated the state. At least since the Constantinian settlement, this has been the dominant approach of the church. At other times the church, although more often minority groups within the church, has rejected the status quo by affirming the rule of God which often meant a renunciation of the existing social order.

Some scholars see the concept of prophetic politics as an infusion of religion into politics. It is a charismatic political leadership that focuses on the use of future-oriented storytelling as well as narrating the past differently, transforming each present act of politicking into a moment of choice. Accepting that religion plays a huge role in prophetic politics, Hanska

(2009:94) tries to distance the concept from the more established church religions. He separates the idea of prophesying from its religious connection arguing that prophetic politics can use the religiosity that is inbuilt in all of humanity.

Hanska (2009:97, 99) understands the role of the prophetic politician as quoted by Frye, namely as revealing the god's will in respect of a specific occasion. According to Hanska, one of the greatest challenges of prophetic politics is to combine notions of God's will with such rational political guidelines that even an atheist could accept the reasoning behind them.

Hanska (2009:101) has another way of looking upon prophetic politics which he reduces to political figures or institutions of which the identities are based in certain biblical narratives that, in turn, enable the formation of relatively stable political positions and visions.

The aim of the church is to bring about social justice. Justice must be done to the poor and oppressed. When the church of the oppressed becomes the church of the oppressors, the danger is that its theology will be remoulded accordingly. The challenge to continue to speak prophetically after the fortunes of history have changed faces all churches which are committed to the liberation of an oppressed people (Goranzon, 2010:33-49).

The status of most African churches is affected by people losing confidence in their support during periods of adversity. The church seems to have established a dichotomy between theology and societal realities by concentrating mostly on evangelizing people and getting them to attend Sunday services while neglecting those who live on the streets. In this context, sermons reflect a degree of passivity when democracy is spoken of, and the faithful are not urged to strive for a committed and responsible stewardship (Nyiawung, 2010:1).

Walshe (1995:12-15) mentions the early utterances of a prophetic voice heard between 1910 and 1960 that was open to the social Gospel, working on the nascent liberation or contextual theology. In this period, many priests were directly involved in political affairs. Example are Reverend John Dube, a Congregational minister and the first President of

the ANC (African National Congress), Reverend Zacheus Mahabane, a Methodist minister and ANC President in the late twenties and thirties. In their belief, according to Walshe, "the universal acknowledgment of Christ as common Lord and King would break down the social, spiritual and intellectual barriers between the races".

A contextual theology came into force between 1977 and 1990. The church had come under international pressure and sanctions against the state had been instituted. The governing Afrikaner National Party attempted to modify apartheid by co-opting blacks into the system. The churches were divided. Some supported the regime and others opposed it. At this time a prophetic Christian movement was created and dedicated to the social Gospel and defiance of the state. With ongoing regional and international pressure, the apartheid system was increasingly threatened. An ambiguity in the prophetic voice in South Africa arose from its beginning in a context of confusion and division between Christians. Walshe (1995:63) writes: "Passing through an interpretive crisis, [the] minority came to understand their faith as a call to proclaim the dignity of human beings and so to join with the poor and repressed in a popular struggle against the system". The key point in the successful beginning of the liberation thought in contextual theology lies firstly in the existence of a minority that was aware of its calling. The prophetic voice did not necessarily come with the support of a majority but was driven by people with a prophetic vision. From 1977 onwards, the South African Council of Churches had continued the struggle against apartheid after it had come under the leadership of the activist Desmond Tutu as General Secretary. The SACC (South African Council of Churches) was joined by the Catholic Bishops' Conference. Together they participated in the struggle against repression. Eventually, as liberation theology took effect in Latin America, the struggle for justice in South Africa became an integral part of the church's mission. From moment Christian witness must bear the capacity of social analysis (Walshe, 1995:114-115).

Gutierrez's life is in all its different phases defined by his interest in the poor. Writing a biographical note on Gutierrez, Teresa Okure (at the time executive secretary of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians), mentions that from correspondence between dominant theologians it is clear that Gutierrez conceived of a lifestyle that mirrored his theology (Maduro, 1989:86). Gutierrez 'lived his theology' as the symbol of a committed faith. Against this background, not to live one's theology would be

the sign of a lack of faith. The prophetic theology and the prophetic voice come into play when theologians begin to consider doing theology in the way of Gutierrez. Theology then is not just an academic exercise, but a consolidation of one's Christian life. Ways of doing theology are concerned with what theologians have called person-centred and life-centred theology (Maduro, 1989:86). It involves demonstrating one's theology in one's manner of daily living. In my view, the success of the liberation theology is that Gutierrez reasoned from the perspective of the poor and not for the poor. His life among poor people inspired him to develop a way to think with those who were suffering instead of thinking on their behalf, or of reflecting on theological studies with the aim of fulfilling academic duties without making an effort to come down on real-life experience. This is what Okure calls the authentic inspiration of doing theology as testifying. Gutierrez' daily contact with the living experience of certain people provided a generative impulse for doing theology of liberation (Maduro, 1989:87). This prophetic theology reminds humanity of Jesus living with the poor.

The ecumenical church in South Africa was very strong, active and, prior to 1994, committed in its critical voice on justice, freedom, democracy and non-racism. It was even referred to as the struggle church, the voice of the people, and the church of God. The unity of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), bible study groups, the World Council of Churches (WCC), the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), the Africa Alliance of Reformed Churches (AARC), and the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) for the sake of justice made the movement effective and its commitment was determined (Katts, 2015:197).

In this context Haspel (2004:14-17) speaks of the substantial contribution of the church to the establishment of a normal public discourse by developing a political theology. This was possible by combining the hermeneutical reconstruction of the Christian tradition with the rational standards of discourse ethics. The process involves what Dietrich Bonhoeffer calls the '*ecclesia visibilis*', whereby the church is being church at all, its vision having an overall impact.

In South Africa was in 1981 a foundation established linked to the Institute for Contextual Theology. It focused on liberation theology, taking account not only of issues of race and

exploitation, but also dealing with a complex of participants from Christian denominations and Islam to the heritage of traditional religion. A statement was published in 1985, signed by 151 clergy, laity and academic theologians. This was the *Kairos* document. It distinguished three forms of theology (Walshe, 1995:117-118).

The first was the state theology which is simply the theological justification of the status quo, including its racism, capitalism and totalitarianism. It blesses injustice, canonises the will of the powerful and reduces the poor to passivity, obedience and, inevitably, apathy (Leonard, 2011:6). The methodology used by state theology involves the misuse of theological concepts and biblical texts. Blind obedience can be 'justified', for example, by citing Romans 13.1-7 which text should however strictly be interpreted in its context. Paul addresses this message to Roman Christians who were claiming that Christians are exonerated from obeying state regulations because Jesus alone is Lord and King and must be obeyed. Paul clarifies that, until the coming of the Lord, Christians have to accept secular authority. The use of religion to strengthen tyrannical structures, to manipulate populations and keep them in slavery, has been a fairly common experience. The theology of state is a tool applied by many colonial systems with the bible serving as an instrument to ensure people's obedience.

As stipulated by Moltmann, in this way religion becomes a supreme bond of society. "The more the churches become departments of bourgeois religion, the more strongly they must suppress recollection of the political trial of Christ and lose their identity as Christian churches, for recollection of it endangers their religious-political relevance. However, if they retreat from the social theme of 'bourgeois religion', they become irrelevant sects on the boundary of society and abandon their place for others" (Moltmann, 1993:322,324). In his political theology of the cross Moltmann argues for liberation of the state from the political service of idols and for the liberation of human beings from political alienation and loss of their rights. God was crucified in Christ by the politico-religious powers of his time. The church must end its political bondage.

The *Kairos* document furthermore mentions church theology as applied without proper analysis of circumstances. It follows the Christian tradition without any critical appraisal of details and without appreciation of changing contexts. The Christian tradition

represents notions of reconciliation, peace, justice, non-violence. It is fair to say that reconciliation without justice and repentance can't avoid being superficial. Justice might not be offered by the oppressors (Leonard, 2011:11-14) and church theology was criticised because it opened a door to premature reconciliation with the apartheid regime and its followers without making significantly deep social analyses.

The approach supported by the *Kairos* document is the prophetic theology that declares solidarity with the poor and oppressed. Christians are called upon to confront evil and, yet, love their enemies. This message can be effective provided the church sides with the oppressed. Civil disobedience inevitably played an essential part in maintaining the morally weak and illegitimate apartheid regime. The formation of the prophetic Christianity resulted from three factors. These were the popular struggle, strong social analysis, and the capacity to build a network such as that uniting four prophetic South African organisations, namely the SACC, the Catholic bishops, ICT and Diakonia (Walshe, 1995:120).

CONCLUSION

Chapter Two considers the prophetic paradigm and its function in church and politics. In this respect several points are highlighted.

The first is the ambiguity of the African political situation where people seem to be bound by locally imposed limitations after having been freed from Western domination. Inevitably, contemporary African states remain the product of Western geopolitical and economic interests. Many Africans involved in politics turn out to be opportunists while some others are simply revolutionaries and not politicians at all. Another concern discussed in the present chapter is the lack of quality of leadership which exacerbates the weakness of African democracy. Much effort focuses on the central levels of leadership with the aim of enforcing its power whereas local levels are overlooked. The lack of accountability of political leaders is highly problematic. Among developments are polities defined as a Christian vocation involving people who have become convinced of the need to accomplish God's responsibility. The chapter considers political positions

obtained by the efforts of the church before and during the Reformation, taking account of the relevant views of some Reformers such as Martin Luther, Zwingli and Calvin. They all thought along the lines of Jesus' ministry about being involved in politics. Jesus' message was a revolutionary one, calling for a change of individual hearts. The chapter discusses that general excuses for avoiding church engagement in politics are justified on the basis of some Scriptures. Many church leaders in Africa have been silenced by corrupt governments. The chapter finds that, in many ways, proclaiming political neutrality helps to support an unjust system and maintain the status quo. The South-American liberation theology was eventually welcomed in an African context. The contextual theology was enforced in South Africa to interpret the bible's stance on church involvement in politics and liberation. This is prophetic theology trying to speak to a particular situation in a particular place and at a particular time. A final consideration is that the church might be able to offer a last chance to save an increasingly lost continent. Chapter Three deals with the socio-political outlook of the DR Congo.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DR CONGO AND ITS SOCIO-POLITICAL ISSUES FROM 1990-2016

3.1 A GENERAL CONSIDERATION OF THE COUNTRY
The RD Congo has a surface of 2.345.409 km²

Figure 1: Map of the DR Congo
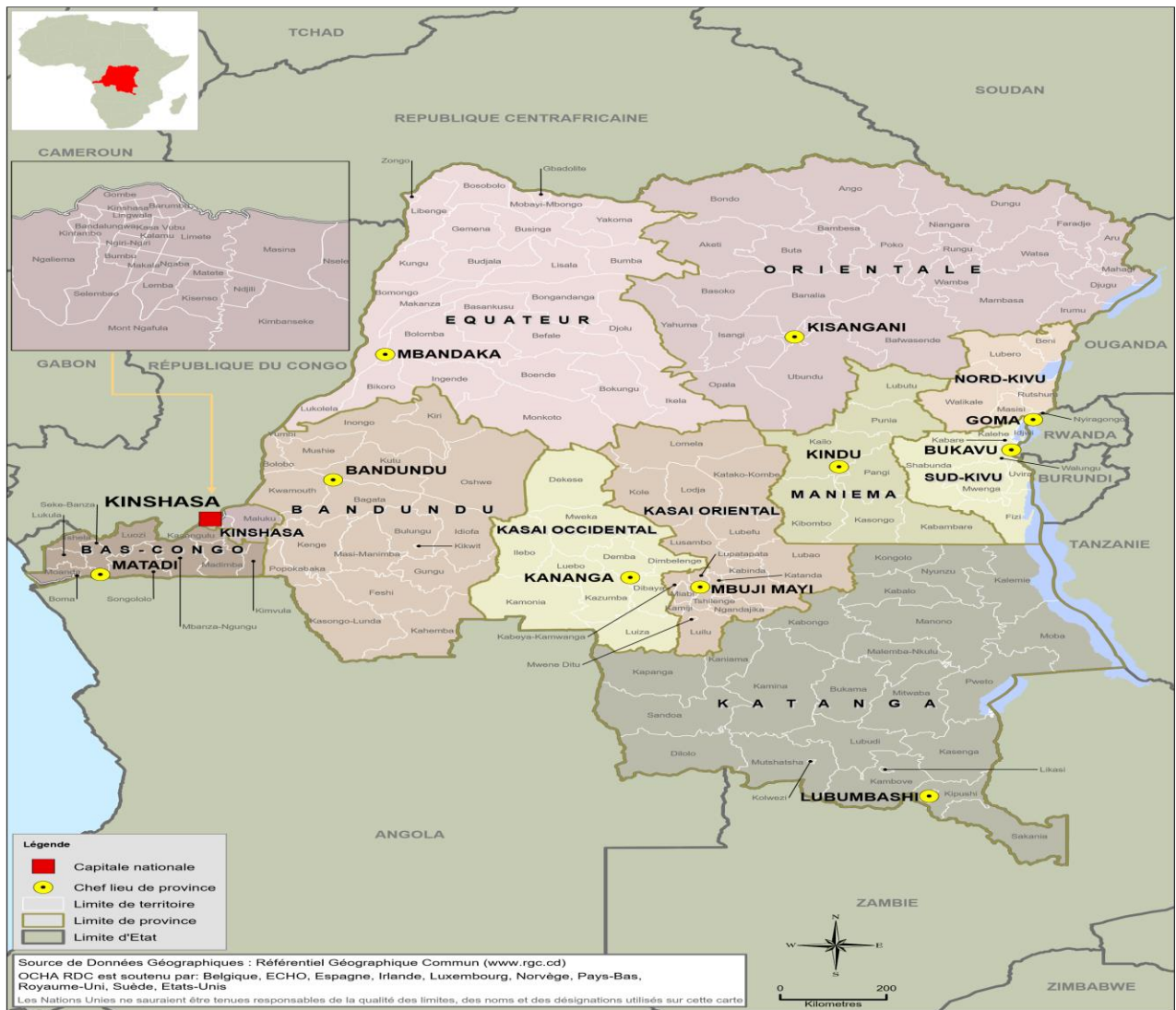
This map showing 11 provinces is used when discussing church leaders. Currently the DR Congo is divided into 26 provinces

3.1.1 Population of the RD Congo from 1955-2017

Table 1: Population of the DR Congo from 1955-2017

Year	Population	Yearly % Change	Yearly Change	Migrants (net)	Median Age	Fertility Rate	Density (P/Km²)	Urban Pop %	Urban Population	Country's Share of World Pop	World Population	DRC Global Rank
2017	82,242,685	3.16%	2,520,061	0	17	6.05	36	39.80%	32,712,918	1.09%	7,515,284,153	16
2016	79,722,624	3.18%	2,455,810	0	17	6.05	35	39.50%	31,474,834	1.07%	7,432,663,275	18
2015	77,266,814	3.22%	2,265,620	-19,200	17	6.15	34	39.20%	30,275,467	1.05%	7,349,472,099	19
2010	65,938,712	3.29%	1,969,835	-8,700	17	6.6	29	37.70%	24,837,538	0.95%	6,929,725,043	20
2005	56,089,536	3.14%	1,608,174	-48,300	17	6.95	25	36.10%	20,248,430	0.86%	6,519,635,850	23
2000	48,048,664	2.64%	1,173,009	-201,300	17	7.1	21	34.30%	16,489,579	0.78%	6,126,622,121	24
1995	42,183,620	3.83%	1,444,189	240,500	17	7.1	19	32.70%	13,796,035	0.74%	5,735,123,084	26
1990	34,962,676	3.12%	995,402	14,900	17	6.98	15	30.60%	10,694,055	0.66%	5,309,667,699	29
1985	29,985,665	2.61%	725,652	-89,400	17	6.72	13	28.60%	8,565,179	0.62%	4,852,540,569	31
1980	26,357,407	2.85%	691,026	20,100	18	6.46	12	27.10%	7,135,507	0.59%	4,439,632,465	31
1975	22,902,275	2.74%	578,475	5,500	18	6.29	10	25.80%	5,913,521	0.56%	4,061,399,228	32
1970	20,009,902	2.87%	528,009	48,400	18	6.15	9	24.60%	4,924,015	0.54%	3,682,487,691	33
1965	17,369,859	2.64%	424,323	0	18	5.98	6	23.40%	4,070,466	0.52%	3,322,495,121	33
1960	15,248,246	2.44%	346,145	15,000	18	5.98	7	22.30%	3,400,359	0.51%	3,018,343,828	33
1955	13,517,519	2.10%	266,772	0	18	5.98	6	20.70%	2,791,905	0.49%	2,758,314,525	33

Source: Worldometers www.Worldometers.info

Elaboration of data by United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision.

DR Congo population forecast till 2050

Table 2: Forecast population in DR Congo till 2050

Year	Population	Yearly % Change	Yearly Change	Migrants (net)	Median Age	Fertility Rate	Density (P/Km²)	Urban Pop %	Urban Population	Country's Share of World Pop	World Population	DRC Global Rank
2020	90,169,404	3.14%	2,580,518	0	17	5.66	40	40.70%	36,658,763	1.16%	7,758,156,792	16
2025	104,536,102	3%	2,873,340	0	18	5.2	46	42.10%	44,000,165	1.28%	8,141,661,007	15
2030	120,304,070	2.85%	3,153,594	-15,000	19	4.77	53	43.40%	52,250,509	1.42%	8,500,766,052	13
2035	137,444,052	2.70%	3,427,996	-15,000	19	4.37	61	44.70%	61,382,350	1.55%	8,838,907,877	11
2040	155,794,049	2.54%	3,669,999	-15,000	20	4.02	69	45.80%	71,408,626	1.70%	9,157,233,976	11
2045	175,145,128	2.37%	3,870,216	-15,000	21	3.7	77	47%	82,262,518	1.85%	9,453,891,780	10
2050	195,277,035	2.20%	4,026,381	-15,000	22	3.43	86	48.10%	93,864,046	2.01%	9,725,147,994	9

Source: Worldometers (www.Worldometers.info)

Elaboration of data by United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision. (Medium-fertility variant).

3.1.2 Language, ethnic groups and religion

French is the official language of the DR Congo. In addition, the country has four national languages, Lingala, Kikongo, Swahili and Tshiluba. Depending on the source, the country counts from 200 to 450 ethnic groups divided into 4 ethnicities which are Bantou (80 %), Central Sudanic, Nilotique and Pygmée. About 85 to 90 % of the population in the DR Congo is Christian. Until 2015 the country had 11 provinces, namely Bandundu, Bas Congo, Équateur, Kasaï Occidental, Kasaï Oriental, Katanga, Kinshasa, Maniema, Nord Kivu, Orientale and Sud-Kivu. Since 2015, provinces have been split resulting in a total of 26 provinces which are Bas Uele, Équateur, Haut-Katanga, Haut-Lomami, Haut Uele, Ituri, Kasaï, Kasaï Central, Kasaï Oriental, Kinshasa, Kongo Central, Kwango, Kwilu, Lomami, Lualaba, Mai-Ndombe, Maniema, Mongala, Nord Kivu, Nord-Ubangi, Sankuru, Sud-Kivu, Sud-Ubangi, Tanganyika, Tshopo and Tshuapa.

3.1.3 Background and natural resources

In 1879, Leopold II, King of the Belgians, asked Henry Morton Stanley to establish the King's authority over the Congo Basin. Stanley persuaded more than 400 local chiefs to sign 'treaties', ceding land ownership to the International Association of Congo (AIC) under the authority of the King. Leopold's claim to the Congo was formally recognized at the Berlin Conference (1884-1985) when, on April 30, 1885, he signed an ordinance creating the 'Free State of the Congo' (*Etat libre du Congo*), establishing legal and official control of a huge and very lucrative enterprise. Under the 1885 ordinance, the local people got restricted access to the land concerned, while since then local communities have had only limited property rights (Witness, 2004:6).

In 1907, Leopold II ceded the Free State of the Congo to Belgium. It did not bring much change in the lives of people. Locals still were subjected to forced labour in plantations and mines, and in the construction of economically vital roads and railways. Many fled to neighbouring countries and began to explore alternative possibilities (trafficking) for trade in consumer goods (Witness, 2004:7). The state of Belgium built railway lines to complement the historic commercial network of communications along the Congo River and its tributaries in the 1920s, with the aim of getting maximum access to resources and enabling the export of commodities such as gold, coffee and sugar. Roads and railways

were the means of generating tax while customs revenue was obtained from raw materials. It is interesting to note the ingenuity of the colonial state in respect of its infrastructure policy. Today, however, the DR Congo is, from one end to the other, practically impossible to reach. The little infrastructure left by the Belgians has been left almost entirely unmaintained.

The 1950s were characterized by rebellions, insurrections, political demonstrations and intermittent workers' strikes against systems of forced labour, brutal oppression, and social and economic exploitation. After rebellion broke out on 4 January 1959 in Kinshasa, Belgium decided to grant the Congo independence on June 30, 1960 and Patrice Lumumba became prime minister. However, the rapid departure of the Belgians did not leave Lumumba with effective means for administering the country. Lumumba was dismissed, still in 1960, by President Joseph Kasa Vubu and replaced by Moses Tshombe.

When acceding independence in 1960 the Democratic Republic of the Congo was viewed as one of the most promising countries in Africa. Unfortunately, in spite of the abundant presence of natural resources, the 1960s were the beginning of decline ending in economic and political collapse (Matti, 2010:401).
Many scholars confirm that, like his predecessors - Leopold and the state of Belgium, Mobutu managed the Congo (which in 1971 became 'Zaire') as his private property. His political control throughout the country was absolute and ensured by repressive methods. He suppressed political opposition and distributed the mineral wealth of the country to whomever he wanted (Witness, 2004:8).

In 1997 Laurent Désiré Kabila came to power which made no difference to the failing management of the public good and the general dilapidation of the country. Global Witness says that, although the DR Congo had managed to stabilize its currency and had embarked on several public works programmes, Kabila's style of governance based on personal control resembled that of Mobutu. Kabila kept the control of state resources in his own hands and generally resumed the methods of his predecessor, basing governance on nepotism and corruption, thereby consolidating his power (Witness, 2004:8). In 2001, Joseph Kabila succeeded to the throne of Laurent Desire Kabila. Today,

the devastation of mineral resources seems to continue unabated and the warfare is interminable. According to World Bank, the DR Congo has over 1100 types of minerals of which the value is estimated at US $ 24 trillion, equivalent to the GDPs of the US and EU combined (Witness, 2004:5). In 1910 cobalt was discovered in the Kivu region of the DR Congo. With the technological advances of the 1990s, the worldwide demand for cobalt increased. The DR Congo remains among the top five producers of cobalt globally.

Of another mineral, coltan, it is estimated that 80% of the globally known sources in Africa are located in the DR Congo (Witness, 2004:19). Cassiterite (pewter) has been exploited in the Eastern DR Congo since colonial times. Of copper 10% of the world's reserves are in DR Congo. Among other minerals sourced from the DR Congo are led, germanium, zinc which is produced in 40 countries, cadmium used in NiCd batteries, pigments, coatings and plastic stabilizers, and silver that has been used for utensils as well as ornaments since thousands of years.

Uranium, a very sensitive material, was in 1939 supplied by the Congo to the United States and, possibly, used in the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Many issues of control over, and trade in, minerals are probably a root cause of the continued warfare and international conflicts in the country. The uranium mine was officially closed in the early 1960s. In 1998, it was reported that the government of Laurent Kabila had granted the rights to exploit uranium to Korea in exchange for the training of Congolese troops. This information has been denied by the government (Witness, 2004:27).
The DR Congo has long been acknowledged as the largest source of alluvial industrial diamonds while gold has been identified as one of its most promising natural resources that could provide the country with important revenue.

Oil exploration in the DR Congo did begin soon after independence. There are untapped natural gas reserves in the Kivu region. Also, coal is on the list of main natural resources of the DR Congo while iron and manganese are already exploited.
Only 10% of the land in DR Congo is exploited. The country has almost half of Africa's water (UNDP). The Congo River with the Inga Dam could supply electricity to the whole African continent and Europe. Unfortunately, only 9 % of Congolese have electricity.

In addition, the DR Congo has 154 million ha, of forest amounting to half of the African forest. Wood covers 135.110.000 ha of the forested areas in the DR Congo. In Africa it represents the largest forest reserve and globally it takes second place after the Amazon. Thus, the country has the highest level of biodiversity in Africa, including both flora and fauna.

In terms of natural resources, the DR of Congo is the richest country in the world. It also has the best climate and it is one of the best watered regions with numerous lakes, among these Tanganyika Lake, Kivu Lake and Lake Albert which is the richest lake in fish in the world. The Kivu Lake contains methane gas that has thus far never been exploited (Gerstl et al., 2013:2).

The mineral wealth of the DR Congo is indisputable. With the presence of 64% of the world's known coltan reserves, 10% of the copper, 30% of the diamonds and gold deposits that are among the most promising on the planet. The DR Congo is, besides, the world's top producer of cassiterite, together with Australia (Mercier, 2009:13). Is, however, this implied massive wealth in a country ravaged by conflict, greed, and exploitative leadership going to be of any use to the wellbeing of its inhabitants?

3.2 DIFFICULT BIRTH 0F A NATION AND THE PROBLEMATIC INTRODUCTION OF A MULTY-PARTY SYSTEM

In the year 1990 two main events stand out in the DR Congo, the speech of President Mobutu on 24 April 1990 and the massacre of students a few weeks later on 11 and 12 May 1990 in Lubumbashi.

The main line of President Mobutu's speech on the multi-party system follows.

> *Nous voici pour la troisième fois au rendez-vous de l'histoire. (…)*
> *La première fois, ce fut en ce beau jour du 30 juin 1960. Dans l'allégresse générale, notre pays accédait à la souveraineté nationale et internationale. Mais ce fut également le début de la difficile naissance d'une nation et l'apprentissage laborieux de l'exercice du pouvoir.*
> *La seconde fois, le 24 novembre 1965. L'anarchie s'installait partout dans le pays. (…) Devant le chaos et la division qui menaçaient d'éclatement les fondements même de l'Etat. (…)*

Aujourd'hui 24 avril 1990, enfin. A la veille du trentième anniversaire de l'accession du Zaïre à la souveraineté nationale, après une présence de près de 25 ans à la tête du pays, et face aux grandes mutations qui tourmentent le monde en ce vingtième siècle finissant, j'ai pensé qu'il était temps de recueillir les avis du peuple zaïrois, afin de dégager les lignes directrices susceptibles d'orienter nos choix politiques.

Ainsi, le 14 janvier 1990, à l'occasion de l'échange des vœux de nouvel an, j'avais annoncé à mon peuple ma volonté d'organiser un large débat national sur le fonctionnement des institutions politiques de la deuxième République.

J'ai recueilli des mémorandums aussi bien individuels que collectifs. J'ai reçu en audience différents groupes socio-professionnels tels que professeurs, missionnaires, opérateurs économiques, médecins, avocats, fonctionnaires, chefs coutumiers, femmes commerçantes, étudiants. Tout a été pris en compte et a fait l'objet de ma profonde réflexion, même le mémorandum des évêques. (….)

A l'analyse de tous les mémorandums qui m'ont été adressés, j'ai été surpris de constater que le peuple, à qui j'avais demandé de se prononcer seulement sur le fonctionnement des institutions politiques, a plutôt axé l'essentiel de ses doléances sur les difficultés qu'il éprouve dans sa vie quotidienne. Ainsi, au plan social, on pourrait retenir notamment la dégradation des infrastructures sociales : Hôpitaux, écoles, universités, édifices publics. A cela, il faut ajouter :

- *La vétusté des formations médicales,*
- *La carence en équipements et en médicaments,*
- *L'insuffisance du personnel medical,*
- *La surpopulation dans les salles des cours ainsi que dans les résidences universitaires et les internats,*
- *La modicité des rémunérations des agents de l'Administration publique,*
- *Le sous-emploi des cadres universitaires, certains abus qui se commettent par-ci par-là.*

Au plan économique, il m'a été signalé entre autres :

- *La dégradation des voies de communication : routes, voiries, télécommunication,*
- *Le poids de la fiscalité et de la parafiscalité,*
- *Les tracasseries administratives,*
- *La détérioration des termes de l'échange du paysan,*
- *L'insuffisance de l'énergie électrique dans certaines régions du pays.*

Sur les 6.128 mémorandums reçus, 5.310, soit 87 %, ont proposé des réformes en profondeur au sein du Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution/ (…)

En revanche, 818 mémorandums, soit 13 %, se sont clairement exprimés en recommandant vivement l'instauration du multipartisme. (…)

Après avoir mûrement réfléchi et contrairement à mon engagement de suivre l'opinion de la majorité, j'ai estimé, seul devant ma conscience, devoir aller au-delà des vœux exprimés par la majorité du grand peuple du Zaïre. Aussi, j'ai décidé de tenter de nouveau l'expérience du pluralisme politique dans notre pays en optant pour un système de trois partis politiques, en ce compris le Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution, avec à la base le principe de la liberté pour chaque citoyen d'adhérer à la formation politique de son choix. (…)

Mais, fort de l'expérience du multipartisme de la première République, j'estime que le changement qu'ensemble nous allons conduire dans ce domaine devra éviter les erreurs du passé. Raison pour laquelle, dans mon esprit, le multipartisme ne doit entraîner ni prolifération ni bipolarisation des formations politiques. Nous devons surtout éviter que le multipartisme ne devienne au Zaïre synonyme de multi tribalisme. Le multipartisme doit être considéré comme la manifestation d'une volonté réelle de dépassement des tendances tribales, régionalistes et séparatistes. (…)

J'ai parlé de bien des choses et de tout le monde. Je n'ai pas parlé de moi. Que devient le Chef dans tout cela ?
Dans le nouveau paysage politique zaïrois, quel sera le nouveau rôle du chef ?
Le Chef de l'Etat est au-dessus des partis politiques. Il sera l'arbitre, mieux : l'ultime recours. (…)

Tous les fils et toutes les filles de notre pays, membres ou non d'un parti doivent se reconnaître en lui. Et quoi qu'il arrive, en sa qualité de chef, se situant au-dessus de la mêlée, il s'engage à demeurer le dénominateur commun, c'est-à-dire le rassembleur, le pacificateur et l'unificateur.
Mon rôle d'arbitre au-dessus des partis ayant été ainsi défini, je vous annonce que je prends ce jour congé du Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution pour lui permettre de se choisir un nouveau chef devant conduire le changement des structures matérielles et humaines de ce parti. (…)
Toutes ces réformes, vue leur ampleur, requièrent une période de transition nécessaire et suffisante. (…)
Dans les tous prochains jours, sera connu le nom du Premier commissaire d'Etat ou du Premier ministre si vous voulez. Avec le nouveau chef du gouvernement, des consultations seront engagées pour la constitution de l'équipe de transition qui aura principalement pour mission l'exécution d'un programme d'urgence visant à

répondre aux attentes de la population dans les domaines économiques et social.

Pour toutes ces raisons, la période de transition ira du 24 avril 1990 au 30 avril 1991. Cette période de 12 mois sera mise à profit par les formations politiques pour faire l'apprentissage de la démocratie pluraliste et affronter l'électorat.

La période de transition sera également mise à profit pour procéder à la révision de la Constitution qui se fera en deux étapes. (…)

Voilà le nouveau visage du Zaïre, voilà le Zaïre de la Troisième République qui prend naissance aujourd'hui, et que nous voulons grand et prospère. (…)

Translated as follows.

This is the third time we meet at an historical moment. (...)

The first time was on that beautiful day of June 30, 1960. In the midst of general expressions of joy, our country acceded to national and international sovereignty. But it was also the beginning of the difficult birth of a nation and the laborious learning of the exercise of power.

The second time, November 24, 1965. Anarchy was spreading everywhere in the country. (...) Faced with the chaos and division that threatened to burst the foundations of the state. (...)

Finally, today, April 24, 1990. On the eve of the thirtieth anniversary of the accession of Zaire to national sovereignty, after a presence of nearly 25 years at the head of the country and in face of the great changes that trouble the world at the closing of the twentieth century, I thought it was time to gather the views of the Zairian people, in order to identify the guidelines that could lead our political choices.

Thus, on January 14, 1990, during the exchange of New Year's greetings, I have informed my people of my desire to organize a broad national debate on the functioning of the political institutions of the Second Republic.

I received both individual and collective memoranda. I received in audience various socio-professional groups such as teachers, missionaries, economic operators, doctors, lawyers, civil servants, customary chiefs, commercial women, students. Everything was taken into account and became the subject of my deep reflection, even the memorandum of the bishops. (...)

Analysing all the memoranda sent to me, I was surprised to find that the people whom I had asked to speak out only on the functioning of political institutions, instead focused on their essential grievances in respect of difficulties they experience in their daily lives. Thus, at the social level, we mention as notable the deterioration of social infrastructure: hospitals, schools, universities, public buildings. To this we must add:
- Dilapidated medical infrastructures
- Lack of equipment and medicines,
- Insufficient medical staff

- Overcrowding of classrooms as well as university residences and boarding schools
- The low pay of public administration agents
- Underemployment of university staff, and some abuses happening here and there.

At the economic level, I was reported on, among other things:
- The degradation of communication: roads, telecommunication
- The weight of taxation and para-taxation
- Administrative hassles
- Deterioration of the peasant's terms of trade,
- Insufficient electric power in some parts of the country.

Of the 6,128 memoranda received, 5,310, or 87%, proposed profound reforms within the Popular Movement of the Revolution. (...)

On the other hand, 818 memoranda, or 13%, clearly expressed and strongly recommended the introduction of a multi-party system. (...)

After careful reflection, and contrary to my commitment to follow the opinion of the majority, I decided, alone with my conscience, to go beyond the wishes expressed by the majority of the great people of Zaire. Thus, I took the decision to return to the experience of political pluralism in our country by opting for a system of three political parties, including the Popular Movement of the Revolution, with, at the basis, the principle of freedom for each citizen to join the political formation of his choice. (...)

But, based on the experience with the multiparty system of the First Republic, I believe that the change we will together affect in this area must avoid the mistakes of the past. Therefore, in my mind, multi-party politics should not lead to the proliferation or bipolarization of political parties. We must above all avoid that the multi-party system becomes synonymous with multi-tribalism in Zaire. The multi-party system has to be seen as the manifestation of a real desire to overcome tribal, regionalist and separatist tendencies. (...)

I have spoken about many things and about all the people. I did not talk about myself. What becomes of the Chief in all this?

In the new Zairean political landscape, what will be the new role of the leader?

The head of state is above the political parties. He will be the referee, or better, the last resort. (...)

All the sons and daughters of our country, whether members of a party or not, must recognize themselves in him. And whatever happens, as leader, standing above the fray, he commits himself to remain the common denominator, that is, the convener, the peacemaker, and the unifier.

My role of referee above the parties thus having been defined, I announce to you that today I take leave of the Popular Movement of the Revolution to let it choose a new leader to lead the transformation

of the party's material and human structures. All these reforms, being of great importance, require of necessity a sufficient period of transition. (...)

In the next few days, the name of the First State Commissioner or, if you want, Prime Minister will be made known. With the new head of government, consultations will be held for the constitution of the transition team whose main task will be to implement an emergency program aimed at meeting the expectations of the population in the economic and social domains. For all these reasons, the transition period will run from April 24, 1990 to April 30, 1991. This 12-month period will be used by political parties to learn about pluralist democracy and confront the electorate.

The transition period will also be used to revise the Constitution in two stages (...)

 This is the new face of Zaire, this is the Zaire of the Third Republic which is born today and which we want to be great and prosperous. (....)

With this speech by Mobutu the transition period to a new era in Zaire began. It ended up lasting sixteen years, from 24 April 1990 until the first democratic elections in 2006. It was the longest transition experienced by any country yet. In the context of the present research some aspects of Mobutu's speech can be underlined.

The first aspect is his understanding of the *Kairos:* "I thought it was time to gather the views of the Zairian people". Mobutu presents this as the occasion of a new start. It is apparent that he could read and interpret the signs of the time. However, to what end? Another aspect is that he took the risk of listening to other people and his response is: "I received both individual and collective memoranda", implying his willingness to consider different views, even if this state of mind was possibly adopted due to pressure from the exterior.

It has to be admitted that Mobutu seems to be honest in this speech and is able to name a problem in its fullness as, "deterioration of social infrastructure: hospitals, schools, universities, public buildings", while besides, "*La modicité des rémunérations des agents de l'Administration publique*" refers to "the low pay of public administration agents".

In another line he challenges his conscience: "After careful reflection (…) I decided, alone with my conscience, to go beyond the wishes expressed by the majority. (…) Thus, I took the decision to return to the experience of political pluralism in our country (...) of three political parties". He could have followed the majority of 87% telling him to remain. He

decided to follow the 13%. In my view, however, he showed some insight into the *Kairos* and chose to try his best to earn the confidence of the people. He was willing to create a new political vision, a new way of leading Zaire which, from that moment on, would be referred to as the Third Republic.

The actual process of transition was introduced by the National Sovereign Conference (*conference nationale souveraine*) of August 7, 1991. Mobutu's agreement to hold this conference was a great victory for his opponents. The conference was intended to consider the evaluation by the Congolese people of the past and to determine the road to a new future for the country. 2800 Participants managed to reach the congress. It was not perceived as strange that the President of the conference was appointed by Mobutu himself so that he could choose someone who could possibly be manipulated. Kalonji Mutambayi wa Pasteur Kabongo was appointed to the post. The conference was planned for 3 months. On 23 September 1991, Kinshasa was affected by the first occurrence of plunder, initiated by soldiers themselves and possibly due to their ill-treatment. Reybrouck (2012:429), referring to the plunder, declares: "The population that hunger and poverty had driven to despair, joined the military. It was a fantastic feeling of euphoria, a fete, the moment of great pilfering. The population could finally do what the power holder had been doing for 25 years! ".

The plundering lasted for many days. Thirty to forty percent of local companies were devastated, 117 people killed and 1500 wounded (Reybrouck, 2012:429). Worse was to follow. According to some analysts, the pillage was suppressed by Mobutu who wished to punish the people for hating him. He was not concerned with leaving behind a better country. As he said: *"Après moi, c'est le deluge",* or, 'After me, it's the great flood'. The period saw the worst GDPs in the country between 1980 and 2015. The fall of Zairian GDP from 1990 to 1994 took on alarming proportions.

1990: DGP of -6.6;

1991: DGP of -8.4;

1992: DGP of -10.5;

1993: DGP of -13.5;

1994: DGP of -3.9;

After the pillage, the Sovereign National Conference elected another President, Bishop Laurent Mosengwo who was seen as the Desmond Tutu of Zaire. Now, there was the

semblance of a new beginning for Zairean civil society in a development inspired by Latin American liberation theology. Laurent Mosengwo was not the kind of person Mobutu had wanted to see running the conference as he could not manipulate him as he had expected to do Kalonji Mutambayi. The fact is that five months later, in January 1992, Mobutu ordered the conference shut. A month later, on Sunday 16 February, a march was organized, led by Catholic bishops, demanding its continuation. More than 100 parishes from Kinshasa and around the country arose and marched. Protestants, Kimbaguists and Muslims participated. More than 35 people were killed (Reybrouck, 2012:433). But the conference was re-opened in April 1992. Civil society felt strengthened by the church action and inspired by the force of the organized churches. The leadership of the church became now a focal point and people were determined to see the country change. From the conference emanated a transitional parliament tasked with elaborating the management tools of the Third Republic and, in the interim period, setting up organs for steering the organization of elections.

Ndaywel e Nziem (2008:577) writes that the electoral issue as planned by the conference was halted by the advent of Laurent Desire Kabila. From the time of Kabila's arrival on the political scene a new so-called period of transition was inaugurated, scheduled for May 1997 to January 2001. It was, not unexpectedly, followed by a third transition lasting until April 2003 and sealed by the signed 'inclusive and global act on the transition' (*acte global et inclusive sur la transition*). The fifth transition, finally, would see the adoption of a scheme called '1 plus 4', referring to 'one President plus four vice-presidents' who served from 2003 to 2006 when the first 'democratic' elections were organized.

Concerning the winding up of political careers in the DR Congo, the end of Mobutu's regime was no different from related proceedings today. Matter of fact, the actions of the powerful leaders of the past pale in comparison to present-day goings-on. Commenting on the final days of Mobutu's regime, Reybrouck (2012:433) stipulates:

> *"Tshisekedi voulait au contraire un triomphe rapide, en prenant le risque d'un grave conflit. Mosengwo a adopté pour un atterrissage en douceur. Il a essayé de négocier tranquillement dans une situation complexe ».*
> In translation: "Tshisekedi on the contrary wanted a rapid triumph, posing the risk of a serious conflict. Mosengwo has chosen for a soft landing. He has tried calm negotiations in a complex situation."

A similar conflict arose in respect of CENCO (*Conférence épiscopale nationale du Congo*) between those who signed the agreement of 'camp Tshatshi' and its opponents. The Catholic Church did, through CENCO, run several negotiations, ending in an agreement at 31 December 2016.

Oyatambwe argues that the DR Congo and the entire Great Lakes Region has grown into a complex political emergency, being conflicted a little earlier. He considers the crisis in the Great Lakes Region as described by Breytenbach, as probably one of the most complicated and perplexing events the post-cold war world has seen (Oyatambwe, 2002:414).

Democracy and the introduction of a multi-party system in the DR Congo involved an exceedingly shaky process. From 1990 to 1997 Zaire had no less than eight prime ministers.

The entry of Laurent Désiré Kabila in politics was supposed to bring the change expected by the Congolese people. Unfortunately, there was only minimal change and much of it for the worse. The GDP during his rule from 1997 to 2001 was bad. He came into power on May 17, 1997 and was killed on January 16, 2001. Judging by the below listed GDPs his politics for economic growth were unsuccessful.

1997: GDP -5.7;

1998: GDP -1.7;

1999: GDP -4.3;

2000: GDP -6.9;

2001: GDP -2.1 (Nyembo, 2015: 38).

The table below informs us on fluctuations in the GDP per inhabitant from 1990 to 2000.

Year	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	2000
GDP/inhab in USD	168	157	146	122	113	110	106	97	92	80	68
Growth in %	-6,6	-8,4	-13,4	-16,5	-7,0	-2,5	-4,3	-8,3	-5,0	-13,4	-14,3

Source : Banque Nationale Congolaise , condensé de statistiques, différents n°, Kinshasa, 2000-5/2001 (Marysse, 2001:9).

Reviewing Mobutu's speech, signs of the approaching economic collapse of the DR Congo can already in 1990 be identified. Similar indicators of the nation's bad state are apparent today. In the 1990s indicators were the dilapidated state of medical training, lack of equipment and medicines, insufficient medical staff, overcrowding of classrooms as well as of residences and boarding schools. In respect of these phenomena, the population in 1990 was 34,962,676. Twenty-six years later, the country has 82,242,685 inhabitants without significant improvement of public institutions. This means that conditions at schools could be three times worse than in the 1990s. The low remuneration of agents of the public administration and the underemployment of university managers endure, along with other abuses (fitting under the umbrella of corruption).

Economic problems were by Mobutu listed as the degradation of roads, telecommunications, the weight of taxation and the para system of taxation, administrative harassment, the deterioration of the peasant's terms of trade and the lack of electricity in parts of the country.

3.3 THE DR CONGO AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL

This section looks at Millennium Development Goals as dealt with in the DR Congo. In June 2009 the UN Food and Agriculture Organization declared that more than a billion people worldwide suffered of hunger. As a result of this finding an association for dealing with hunger and poverty was formed and UN's first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) formulated (Banerjee, 2011:19).

Figure 2: The Millennium Development Goals and the Global Goal

The 8 Millennium Development Goals

1 — ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER
2 — ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION
3 — PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN
4 — REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY
5 — IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH
6 — COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES
7 — ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
8 — GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

1 NO POVERTY
2 NO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 RENEWABLE ENERGY
8 GOOD JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND
16 PEACE AND JUSTICE
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development

The DR Congo is a signatory to the 8 points Millennium Development Goals, aimed at eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving

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maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and global partnership for development.

The next section concerns efforts that have been made to achieve the goals. The intensity of these efforts will be assessed by the place accorded by governments to programmes for the empowerment of people in social life.

3.3.1 Social policy of the DR Congo

The quality of social life of people can be measured by three indicators of which the first is life expectancy at birth. Life expectancy in the DR Congo is 48-50 years for Congolese, a rate that is below the sub-Saharan average of 56.6 years and that of developing countries of 61.5 years (Revue, 2015:60). Based on the global average, the Congolese expectation is low.

A second indicator consists in literacy rates. In relation to literacy rates, Mabaya and Mwamba mention net enrolment ratios from 51.7% in 2001 to 80.4% in 2013 (Revue, 2015:87). It also has to be said that promises by the government of free primary education turned out to be no more than slogans. School fees from primary to high school are unaffordable for many parents.

Infant mortality rate is another indicator of the quality of life. Infant mortality decreased between 2005 and 2013 from 92 to 58 deaths per 1000 children. According to a UNDP report, the DR Congo was in 2014 186th out of 187 countries in terms of human development. About 30.8% of children aged 6 to 59 months suffer from malaria (Revue, 2015:60,70).

As regards human development indices, the report of PNUD positions the DR Congo on the 2015 Human Development Indices (*Indices de développement humain*) at 0.433, or 176th out of 188 countries.

The following table lists some indices as provided by Nyembo.

Table 3: Indices of Human Development Index.

	DRC	Sub-Saharan Africa	Country with low HDI	Country with average HDI	Country with high HDI	Country with very high HDI
Human Development index	0,433	0,518	0,505	0,630	0,744	0,896
Life expectancy at birth	58,7	58,5	60,6	68,6	75,1	80,5
Expected duration of schooling	9,8	9,6	9,0	11,8	13,6	16,4
The average schooling	6,0	5,2	4,5	6,2	8,2	11,8
Gross national income per capita	680	3363	3085	6353	13961	41584

 (Nyembo, 2015:27)

The social policy of the government of the DR Congo can be understood by examining its priorities in state budgets.

The following table presents expenditures of the country, revealing the government's priorities.

Structure of current expenditures by ministries and institutions (Nyembo, 2014:78)

Table 4: Expenditures by ministries and institutions

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Common services	74,7	78,3	65,0	68,9	82,3	69,6	74,8	67,2	75,9	82,0
Political institutions	7,7	6,6	7,2	7,1	5,9	13,7	12,2	14,0	10,2	8,3
Finances	4,5	4,5	9,2	6,9	3,4	2,1	1,9	2,8	3,3	1,8
Army	6,9	4,6	8,2	8,3	3,0	6,8	4,4	5,8	4,4	3,0

Home Affairs	1,3	1,1	0,6	0,7	1,1	1,4	0,8	1,5	0,6	0,5
Public Work	0,2	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,0
Health	0,2	0,8	1,1	0,8	0,5	0,2	0,3	0,5	0,6	0,6
Education	0.3	0.3	2,1	1,8	0,1	0,6	0,3	0,9	0,3	0,6
Other departments	4,1	3,7	6,6	5,4	3,4	5,5	5,0	7,2	4,5	3,2
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

3.3.2 Educational system

The DR Congo inherited the Belgium educational system. Martin Ekwa notes that the Western-style educational system in the DR Congo made its appearance in 1878 with the arrival of Protestant missionaries in Palabala in the Central Kongo. In 1880, the Catholics created two schools, one in Boma and another in the Tangagnika (Mabiala, 2006:124). A 1961 conference, headed by UNESCO in Addis Ababa, gave impetus to the issue of education in the DR Congo. The Catholic Education Office created in the same year the ISP (*Institut Supérieur Pédagogique*), with pedagogical colleges in Kinshasa and Boma. The institute of Boma was in 1963 transferred to Mbanza Ngungu and coupled with the Protestant School of Kimpese. Kikwit and Lubumbashi were created in 1966 and Mbuji Mayi and Bunia in 1968 (Mabiala, 2006:125). But in 1980 the educational system began to decline as a result of what is sometimes called Zaireanization. In some estimations, the primary school admission rate was 34% in 1978-79, 22.5% in 1995 and 17% in 2001. The decline from 1995 to 2001 is probably caused by the socio-political situation in the country, including warfare and the shrinking of the GDP as stipulated above.

As regards the state budget allocated to education, Ekwa writes:

> But overall, the share allocated to education in the state budget is regressing considerably after the country's independence: 30 per cent in 1960; 19 per cent in 1970; 16.8 per cent in 1983; 0.5 per cent in 1994 and 0.8 per cent in 1996. Education spending is barely 1 per cent of GDP, while the average for developing countries is 5 per cent (Mabiala, 2006:127).

The report of the Central Bank puts the percentage of the budget allocated to education on 0.3 in 2005 and 2006, 2.1 in 2007, 1.8 in 2008, 0.1 in 2009, 0.6 in 2010, 0.3 in 2011, 0.9 in 2012, 0.3 in 2013 and 0.6 in 2014.

In sum, the educational budget decreased from 30% in 1960 to 0.6 in 2014. If there is no improvement the education budget may end up being removed from the government budget altogether. It is clear that the government's priorities no longer include education. Early during independence, it was a strong priority to raise the education level of the people. However, the sweeter power became, the more government's priorities change. Discussing the persistence of poverty in Africa and Asia, Baulch considers lack of education as a crucial factor that prevents a solution of chronic poverty (Baulch, 2011:13). The following table reflects the government's priorities according to its budget allocations.

Table 5: Priorities in the budget

	Priority	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1	Political institutions	7,7	6,6	7,2	7,1	5,9	13,7	12,2	14,0	10,2	8,3
2	Army	6,9	4,6	8,2	8,3	3,0	6,8	4,4	5,8	4,4	3,0
3	Health	0,2	0,8	1,1	0,8	0,5	0,2	0,3	0,5	0,6	0,6
4	Education	0.3	0.3	2,1	1,8	0,1	0,6	0,3	0,9	0,3	0,6

Little effort has been made to build new infrastructure since the 1980s and even before that. In education only, the private sector is experiencing growth, especially in the city. Generally, efforts to affect progress in any sector are thwarted by the arising of infrastructure problems.

The extremely modest financial allocations to education lead to teachers being paid salaries that are so poor as to be humiliating. The average salary of a primary and secondary or high school teacher is around 70 US $ per month while the average costs of living of a small family are around 500 US $. In addition, many teachers in the country have for many years not been paid. They are called new units (*nouvelles unités*). They have been recruited by the government to teach and correctly enlisted, but not paid, sometimes for decades, while continuing to work for the government. The result of

demotivated teachers is only to be expected. A consequence is that many teachers consider teaching as a secondary occupation in their lives. Their first concern is to provide for their daily needs and teaching takes second place. Corruption in the primary, secondary and university education sectors is high. In my view, corruption is a system, intended to solve some problems that have been created by an oppressive system. In many cases, instead of teaching, teachers begin lessons by collecting money. The practice is that what the government doesn't pay out is contributed by scholars and students. Whether this amounts to paying or to corrupting the teacher, quality education is lost. Pupils who finish high school are often unable to write a single correct sentence. The curriculum of the educational system has not been significantly improved for decades. The higher education sector appears to have been reformed but does not adapt to current needs. In his reflection on the pedagogy of the oppressed, Freire accentuates the importance of education as a liberative force. Nothing can replace education in the transformation of society. This implies that one of the entities destroying the DR Congo is its educational system. Freire (2005:29) argues as follows.

> In fact, those who, in learning to read and write, come to a new awareness of selfhood and begin to look critically at the social situation in which they find themselves, often take the initiative in acting to transform the society that has denied them this opportunity of participation. Education is once again a subversive force.

In children's lives, school and family are the environments where they blossom. One of the most important requirements of society is good education. The way we consider the educational issue today shows the way we want to see our society tomorrow. Education (including schooling) is one of the first rights accorded to children in the 18th and 19th century (Kosher et al., 2014:11).

As mentioned before, the educational system in the DR Congo suffers from the inability of parents to pay school fees and supplement the salaries of teachers. This practice took root in the 1990s when the government was unable to pay teachers. The system of school fees in combination with the general state of the country's economy does not allow everyone to enjoy equal education. The cost is from 10 to 40 US $ per pupil per month, depending on whether the school is in an urban or rural environment. In his work, Kosher (2014:11) insists on attaching great importance to high value education, arguing that,

'states' must recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and based on equal opportunity". Article 28 of the DR Congo Constitution states that all children have the right to free education in public schools (Assemblée, 2006:15). Associating poverty with schooling, Bequele estimates that less than half the children in Africa finish primary school (Thukral, 2011:44).

This situation is associated with the ramshackle state of school infrastructures. Building schools is also no priority of the government. There are not enough schools built to accommodate the demographic increase.

3.3.3 The economic system

The following table shows the gross domestic product from 1980 to 2015

Table 6: GDP from 1960-2015

Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4	Column5	Column6	Column7	Column8	Column9	Column10
Years	Estimated in 2005				Estimated at current prices			GDP deflator (2005 = 100)	Variation of the deflator of the GDP (in %)
	in millions CDF	millions USD	Index (2005 = 100)	Annual variation (%)	millions CDF	Index(2005 = 100)	Annual variation (%)		
1980	7,496,281.8	15,822.3	132.2	0.3	-	-	19.0	-	46.3
1981	7,676,192.5	16,202.0	135.4	2.4	-	-	100.0	-	95.3
1982	7,637,811.6	16,121.0	134.7	- 0.5	-	-	50.0	-	50.8
1983	7,745,504.7	16,348.3	136.6	1.4	-	-	66.7	-	64.3
1984	8,175,380.2	17,255.6	144.2	5.5	-	-	- 82.0	-	- 82.9
1985	8,216,257.1	17,341.9	144.9	0.5	-	-	1,233.3	-	1,226.7
1986	8,604,064.5	18,160.4	151.7	4.7	-	-	33.3	-	27.3
1987	8,836,374.2	18,650.8	155.8	2.7	-	-	81.3	-	76.5
1988	8,889,392.5	18,762.7	156.8	0.6	-	-	89.7	-	88.5
1989	8,764,941.0	18,500.0	154.6	- 1.4	-	-	109.1	-	112.1
1990	8,186,454.9	17,279.0	144.4	- 6.6	-	-	94.8	-	108.5
1991	7,497,155.4	15,824.1	132.2	- 8.4	-	-	1,975.4	-	2,166.3
1992	6,709,954.0	14,162.6	118.3	- 10.5	-	-	3,697.5	-	4,143.0

Year									
1993	5,803,258.9	12,248.8	102.3	- 13.5	0.4	0.0	1,425.0	0.0	1,663.3
1994	5,578,636.5	11,774.7	98.4	- 3.9	115.4	0.0	25,654.7	0.0	26,691.7
1995	5,618,637.8	11,859.2	99.1	0.7	659.6	0.0	471.7	0.0	467.6
1996	5,556,071.7	11,727.1	98.0	- 1.1	4,818.7	0.1	630.6	0.1	638.8
1997	5,255,549.5	11,092.8	92.7	- 5.4	12,983.8	0.2	169.4	0.2	184.9
1998	5,164,264.5	10,900.1	91.1	- 1.7	16,620.2	0.3	28.0	0.3	30.3
1999	4,943,744.8	10,434.7	87.2	- 4.3	86,223.5	1.5	418.8	1.7	441.9
2000	4,602,626.4	9,714.7	81.2	- 6.9	494,251.8	8.7	473.2	10.7	515.7
2001	4,505,970.9	9,510.7	79.5	- 2.1	2,341,846.2	41.3	373.8	52.0	384.0
2002	4,662,260.0	9,840.5	82.2	3.5	3,198,119.3	56.4	36.6	68.6	32.0
2003	4,932,264.5	10,410.4	87.0	5.8	3,824,458.7	67.4	19.6	77.5	13.0
2004	5,259,764.4	11,101.7	92.8	6.6	4,327,493.6	76.3	13.2	82.3	6.1
2005	5,670,065.0	11,967.7	100.0	7.8	5,670,065.0	100.0	31.0	100.0	21.5
2006	5,971,768.0	12,604.5	105.3	5.3	6,767,519.5	119.4	19.4	113.3	13.3
2007	6,345,569.5	13,393.5	111.9	6.3	8,648,878.5	152.5	27.8	136.3	20.3
2008	6,740,637.9	14,227.3	118.9	6.2	11,067,568.5	195.2	28.0	164.2	20.5
2009	6,933,087.5	14,633.5	122.3	2.9	15,101,187.9	266.3	36.4	217.2	32.7
2010	7,425,889.7	15,673.7	131.0	7.1	19,536,676.9	344.6	29.4	263.1	20.8
2011	7,936,395.2	16,751.2	140.0	6.9	23,759,424.6	419.0	21.6	299.4	13.8
2012	8,498,839.5	17,938.3	149.9	7.1	26,954,556.9	475.4	13.4	317.2	5.9
2013	9,219,707.4	19,459.9	162.6	8.5	30,051,179.4	530.0	11.5	325.9	2.8
2014	10,092,840.2	21,302.8	178.0	9.5	33,223,988.5	586.0	10.6	329.2	1.0
2015	10,790,880.0	22,776.1	190.3	6.9	35,111,230.0	619.2	5.7	325.4	- 1.2

Source : Banque centrale du Congo, d'après les résultats des travaux de la CESC (Nyembo, 2015:38).

Mabi Mulumba shows the fall of the economic system from 1990 onwards in respect of the GDP: -6,6% in 1990, -8,4% in 1991, -10,5% in 1992, -13,5% in 1993, -3,9% in 1994, -0,7 in 1995, -0,9 in 1996, -6,4% in 1997, -3,5% in 1998.

According to the Central Bank, as recorded by Kivilu, the inflation rate was so high that it reached 4,228.5 in 1991, 2,989.6 in 1992, 8,827.8% in 1993, 9,746.9 in 1994, 381.7 in 1995, 741.0 in 1996, 137 in 1997 and 134.8 in 1998 (Kivilu, 1999:181,182). In terms of

the inflation rate, the year 1994 was the worst. From 2010 to 2015, Vincent Ngoma Nzinga and Cedrick Tombola Muke recorded 9.8 in 2010, 15.4 in 2011, 2.7 in 2012, 1.07 in 2013, 1.03 in 2014 and 0.66 in June 2015 (Revue, 2015:51).

Among the more dangerous causes of the declining Congolese economy is the fall of the mining company Gecamines which, for example, produce a yearly average of 450,000 tonnes of copper between 1987 and 1989, but could in 1998 no longer produce. The company exported for more than 1.3 billion dollars in 1989, but only made 253.1 million in 1997 (Kivilu, 1999:182). Ngonga and Tombola believe that the mining sector, which had a monopoly on growth in the DR Congo, does not create many jobs. From 2005 to 2009, for example, 7% of assets were in the mining sector whereas from 2010 to 2012 this amounted to only 4.4%. We notice the drop in the number of workers in this sector which also indicates an increase of the general employment rate.

Comparing the income of the Congolese in later years relative to the 1960s, the per capita income of workers was, at the index of 204, in 1958 equivalent to a 69% increase in comparative real purchasing power in the 1950s. Today's income per capita of the Congolese population, however, corresponds to a quarter of what it was in 1960 (Mabiala, 2006:138).

In 1963 the government decided to increase the salary of workers from 2200 to 2 750 Francs and promised to continue with a regular raise in the near future (Jorge Beys, 1963:21). An amount of *2 750 Francs* at the time was equal to *55.22 US $.* Using the CPI inflation calculator an amount of 55.22 US $ in January 1963 equals today *444.64 US $.* The Consumer Price Index inflation calculator uses the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) U.S. city average series for all items, not seasonally adjusted. This data represents changes in the prices of all goods and services purchased for consumption by urban households (https://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpicalc.htm).

The difference with the salary of workers 55 years earlier is evident. Nowadays the salary is between 50 to 80 US $.

3.3.4 Poverty and unemployment

Generally, poverty is defined as an inability to have a minimum standard of living. Poverty is considered as a human rights issue as it may indicate that one is deprived of the basic freedom to be adequately nourished, to enjoy sufficient living conditions including adequate shelter, sanitation, and education (Vizard, 2006:3).

Having considered different scholars' discussions of poverty, I agree with Vizard that poverty is a violation of numerous human rights and that an increased emphasis on global poverty as a human rights issue is needed. This thought has been reflected in a series of resolutions by the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Commission. Vizard (2006:7-9) emphasizes the Universal Declaration, articles 3, 25 and 26, recognizing the rights to a certain standard of living, health, wellbeing, food, clothing, housing, medical care, social service and free basic education.

With respect to poverty, the Congolese Central Bank's index shows a Gross Income per inhabitant of $ 250 in 2000 and $ 444 per year in 2016 (Nyembo, 2014:30). An average of 1.2 USD per capita per day. Mabaya and Mwamba mention $ 411 in 2000 and $ 746 in 2014, which amounts are provided by the World Bank's WDI database (Revue, 2015:87). However, the daily average is still at an inhuman level, ranging from $ 1.2 to $ 2 per person per day. Meantime, more than 64.2% of the Congolese population continues living without electricity (Revue, 2015:70).

Kuvuna (2015:19) writing on food security, describes the abnormality of daily life in the DR Congo where 2.4 percent of households eats less than one meal a day, while 26.8 percent gets one meal a day, commonly referred to as *'gong unique',* meaning 'unique vacation'. 58.8 Percent of inhabitants can afford to eat twice a day and 12 percent eats three meals a day. These percentages are explained by unemployment in the country.

The table below presents the employment situation between 2005 and 2012 (Revue, 2015:56).

Table 7: Employment situation

	2005-2009	2010-2012
% Of assets in the mining sector	7	4,4
% Of assets in the agricultural sector	71,5	71,2
Average monthly income in US $ in the agricultural sector		35,8
The monthly SMIG in US $		58,8
% Of workers earning less than US $ 2 per day		82,2
% Of unemployment rate	51,8	50,2

Important for the employment situation in the DR Congo is that 71.5 percent of the working population is employed in agriculture. Unfortunately, agriculture is not very profitable due to the artisanal methods generally used and the lack of modern technology. People expend a lot of energy to cultivate a small area that provides them with little income. Another problem is the lack of marketing policy and transformation policy. All products are ready for harvesting at the same time and often in danger of rotting so that they have to be destroyed. Hence, profitability is mediocre. Considering the monthly minimum wage in dollars, 82.2% of workers are regarded as disguised unemployed. It all boils down to the fact that generally in the DR Congo people are unable to live by wages. The informal sector is more powerful than the regular sector. By adding the number of unemployed pure and disguised employed one gets to a rate of about 90% of real unemployment in DR Congo. Poverty in the country has by scholars been considered from different perspectives. Studying mass poverty experienced in the DR Congo, Galbraith (1979:3) sees it as the logical result of a community or country being naturally poor, without natural resources, with rocky and arid soil which makes it normal that people gain little profit from hard work. In the case of the DR Congo, however, this

explanation is not satisfactory because the country has all the possible resources as seen above.

Employment in the DR Congo can in part be blamed on the closing of a great number of enterprises in the 1990s. As a result, families had to look at other possibilities for their survival such as becoming active in agriculture or finding work in another country. Kuvuna (2015:19) finds, talking with farmers in Kinshasa, that 65 percent has taken up agriculture because they can't find other well-paid employment, while 30 percent wants to supplement the low wages they earn as workers. Only 5 percent has always worked the land.

3.3.4.1 Poverty factors in DR Congo

The qualitative research done by DOSS clearly reveals the link between poverty and social structures. It identifies significant mobility of people entering into, and exiting from, poverty, mostly under the influence of socio-economic, regional and psychological factors. The study of reasons why some people succeed in leaving destitution behind while others remain stuck in chronic poverty is still in its infancy. Early indications are that, rather than personal issues, social structures, or the lack thereof, play a predominant role (Rensburg, 2013: 6). In relation to the social condition of the RD Congo, Global Witness stipulates, "The DR Congo is incredibly rich in terms of natural resources but has long been under the curse of this wealth" (Witness, 2004:4).

Since the end of the nineteenth century economic activity in the region has been dominated by foreign and local businessmen. Rubber, ivory, diamonds, gold, copper, cobalt, wood and other resources were exploited. A parallel trade and extraction of resources has been conducted under Léopold and by the Belgian colonial authority, passing on, via the hands of Mobutu, to Laurent and Joseph Kabila (Witness, 2004:5). In the next section some factors characterizing poverty in the DR Congo are mentioned.

3.3.4.1.1 Instability of political system

Political system instability is one reason why the developing world struggles to overcome poverty. One understanding of the poverty issue suggests that it involves a systemized way of life created by those who aim to stay in power. It thus becomes a way of living of the weaker classes.

Political conflict and war overtook the Eastern part of the DR Congo in the early 1960s, when tensions arose between natives and Rwandophones over land rights and questions of citizenship began to play a role. Banyarwanda fought Hunde and Nande communities in North Kivu. In South Kivu the Tutsi Banyarwanda community instigated the Simba rebellion in 1964. Then the Banyamulenge sided with the *Armée Nationale Congolaise* (ANC) and, after helping the government to defeat the Simba rebels, were rewarded with access to land when the former ANC general, Joseph Mobutu, became president in November 1965. Banyarwanda in North Kivu next began to focus on purchasing large tracts of land, benefiting from new laws that in 1972 had granted them citizenship. However, on 29 June 1981, Mobutu cancelled the citizenship law (Richards, 2014:303). In the 1990s tensions between Banyamulenge and the native people of the Eastern of the DR Congo surfaced, resulting in the formation of the native Mai Mai. A few years later, the Rwandan genocide did end the lives of more than 1.2 million Hutu in Zaire and another round of conflict began.

In his study, Wiseman (2003:3,4) considers the fact that Western governments had been willing to give economic support to newly independent African countries, provided these initiated and maintained democratic systems. The linking of economic support and investment to political reform in Africa, means that the resulting democracy was to some degree imposed, and ultimately controlled, by those who made the condition. Baulch (2011:12), writing about the prevention of poverty, understands chronic poverty as caused by a set of interwoven economic, political and social forces.

3.3.4.1.2 Failure of internal production **(weak GDP)**

Why are 82.2% of workers in the DR Congo not adequately paid?

Considering production rates, it would appear that colonial societies have created extractive enterprises rather than processing factories. Raw materials sourced from the country at low prices were moved abroad and the Congolese could import the products made by transforming what were originally their own raw materials against high prices. Below see some internal production results of the DR Congo

Table 8: Examples of annual production

Wood

ANNUAL FLUCTUATIONS IN IN WOOD PRODUCTION (IN M³)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013		2014	2015
Total	147 953	228 479	216 899	220 177	227 015		275 182	293 585

The product volume of sugar is stable since 2013.

Sugar

PRODUCTION OF SUGAR (IN TONNES)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	84 452	79 069	73 593	63 321	80 457	81 134	80 579

Source: Cie sucrière de Kwilu-Ngongo

Cement

The production of DR Congo cement is for 2015 estimated at 398 749 tons. It increased by 21% as compared to 2014.

ANNUAL FLUCTUATIONS IN CEMENT PRODUCTION (IN TONNES)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	460 344	489 745	457 761	413 181	446 610	329 205	398 749

Mining production

Mining production is generally decreasing with the exception of gold, copper and cobalt.

ANNUAL FLUCTUATIONS IN THE PRODUCTION OF UNREFINED GOLD (IN KGS).

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	220	174	414	4 529	6 112	23 937	31 878

ANNUAL FLUCTUATIONS IN THE PRODUCTION OF COPPER (IN TONS)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	309 181	497 537	499 198	619 942	922 016	1 030 129	1 039 007

ANNUAL FLUCTUATIONS IN THE PRODUCTION OF COBALT (IN TONS)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	56 258	97 693	99 475	86 433	76 593	75 560	83 529

Production of petrol

ANNUAL FLUCTUATIONS IN THE PRODUCTION OF UNREFINED PETROL

(IN BARRELS)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	9 382	8 628	8 558	8 545	8 351	8 362	8 247

The production decreased in 2015 (Banque, 2015:68,69).

Table 9: Indexes of activities 2010-2015

INDEX OF ACTIVITIES (2009=100)

PÉRIODE	MINING PRODUCTION							PRODUCTION	PRODUCTION	MANUTENTION
	COPPER	COBALT	ZINC	DIAMOND	GOLD	PÉTROL	GENERAL AVERAGE INDEX	CEMENT	ELECTRICITY	PORTS
2010	160,9	173,7	47,0	94,9	80,9	92,0	156,4	108,2	97,2	99,1
2011	161,5	176,8	75,2	104,0	188,1	91,2	158,7	98,8	91,5	121,6
2012	200,5	153,6	53,8	110,3	2 057,3	92,9	160,8	89,8	98,5	118,3
2013	298,2	136,1	61,7	94,5	2 776,5	88,2	185,8	97,0	108,9	117,3
2014	331,8	134,3	64,9	83,4	10 873,6	89,1	204,5	71,5	117,8	124,8
2015	334,6	148,5	64,6	88,1	14 480,8	87,9	217,1	86,6	115,3	128,0

Source : Banque Centrale du Congo (Banque, 2015:67)

Table 10: Fluctuations in monthly courses 2010-2016

FLUCTUATIONS IN THE MONTHLY COPPER COURSE FROM 2010 TO 2016
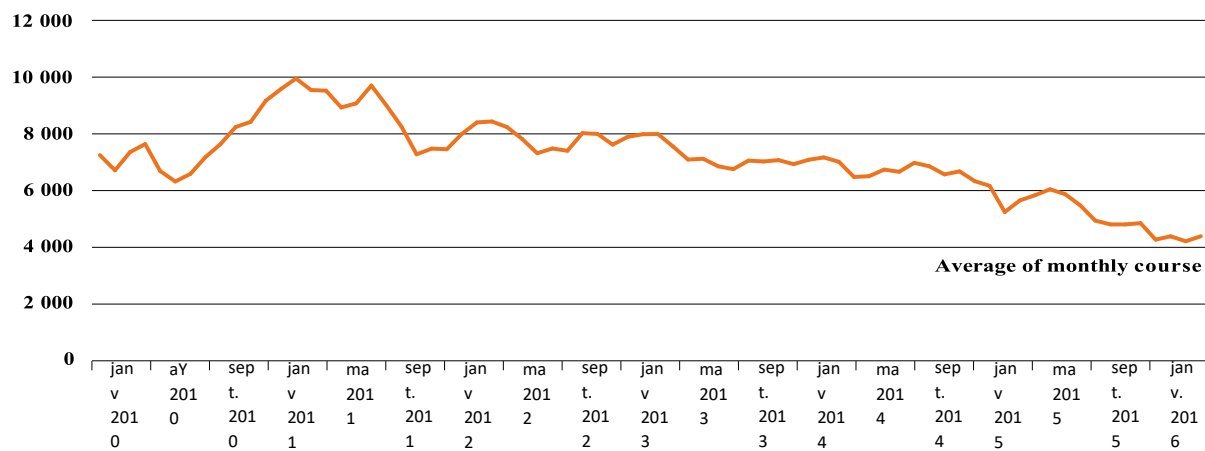
Source : INSEE - Bulletin statistique – Cuivre Grade A (Londres) - Prix en dollars US par tonne

FLUCTUATIONS IN THE MONTHLY GOLD COURSE FROM 2010 TO 2016
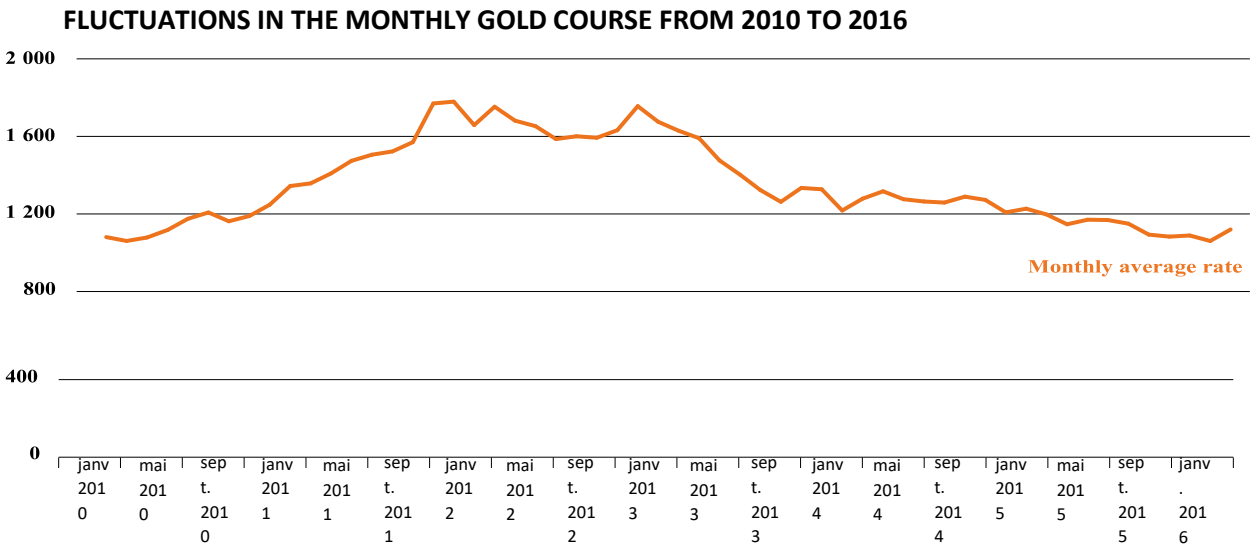
Source: INSEE-Bulletin statistique - Or (Londres) - Prix en dollars US par troy once

FLUCTUATIONS IN THE MONTHLY PETROL RATE FROM 2010 TO 2016
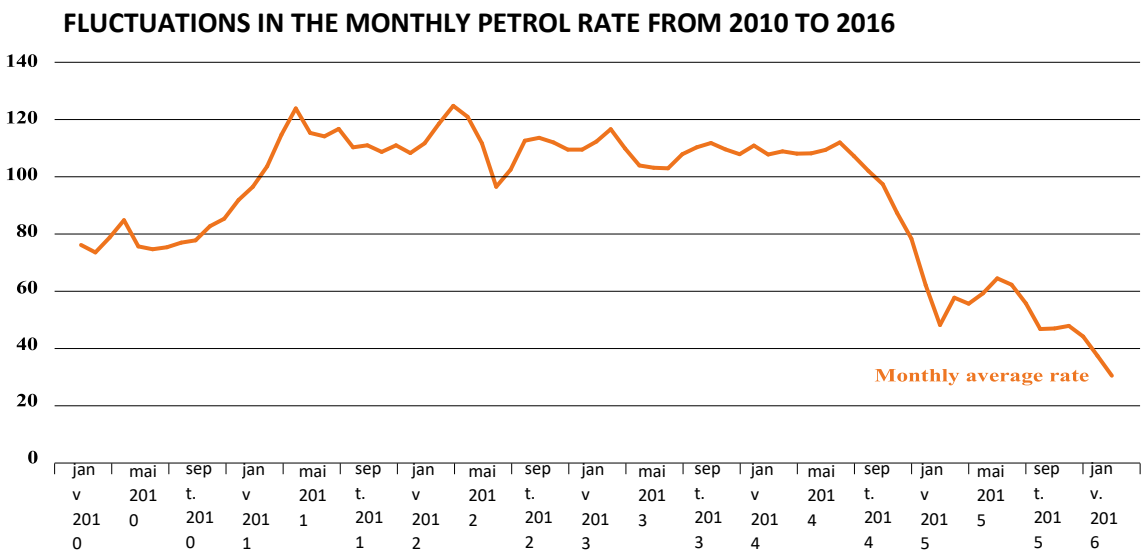
Source: INSEE-Bulletin statistique - Pétrole brut "Brent" (Londres) - Prix en dollars US par baril (Banque, 2015:65,66).

Table 11: Exports from 1991-2002

Exports of the DR Congo from 1991 to 2002 (Value)

Raw material	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
										Value (Billion USD, c.i.f,)		
Diamond	490	393	506	753	747	854	732	683	835	732	762	1,007
Petrol	183	130	133	117	143	156	165	70	103	180	114	192
Cobalt	146	138	114	109	205	196	157	127	134	167	140	105
Wood	55	53	47	73	86	75	56	48	25	24	25	27
copper	478	302	103	27	35	17	14	6	5	5	17	12
Coffee	92	62	68	104	200	102	50	52	40	29	12	5
Gold	1	3	15	12	6	1	9	7	2	7	8	5
Coltan	1	4	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	1	2
Plant extracts	14	12	12	13	21	15	9	9	6	24	5	6
Rubber	4	3	3	4	4	8	6	3	2	0	0	0
Tin	3	3	2	4	5	0	0	2	1	2	2	1
Zinc	3	5	2	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	0
Cadmium	8	9	0	3	11	0	2	5	5	0	0	0
Cocoa	3	4	3	3	4	3	2	3	2	1	1	1
Tobacco	1	4	3	5	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0

27	7	9	7	16	10						

3.3.4.1.3 Mismanagement of natural resources and corruption

Vincent and Cedrick outline the progress of inequality in income distribution shown by the change of the Gini index from 60 in 2007 to 44.4 in 2012. The scholars also take account of the fact that, according to the ratio of the 'quintiles', the average income in 2007 of 20% of the richest Congolese was 15.1 times higher than that of 20% of the poorest. As the management of the DR Congo's plentiful natural resources is a government responsibility, the indication is that poverty is a system resulting from a lack of good leadership. Studying the possibility of bringing an end to poverty, Sachs (2005:56) portrays poverty as following

from corrupt leadership and a retrograde culture that impedes modern development. He calls poverty in the poorest countries a trap. A life in extreme poverty imprisons people leaving them no way to get out. This type of poverty boils down to a lack of personal means.

In a response to the question how to end poverty, Sachs (2005:226) mentions that, even if at times poor people are poor because they are lazy, the existence of corrupt governments complicates the problem. In Sachs' words, "I have noted repeatedly that, in all corners of the world, the poor face structural challenges that keep them from getting even their first foot on the ladder of development."

Moreover, the PNUD report registers the DR Congo as having one of the lowest palma ratios in sub-Saharan Africa (the palma ratio is the gross national income of 10% of the richer and 40% of the poorer inhabitants of a country). South Africa has a palma ratio of 7.1, Zambia 4.8, Rwanda 3.2, Kenya and Congo Brazza 2.8, DR Congo 2.4, Uganda 2.3 and Angola 2.2 (Revue, 2015:58,59).

On the basis of having read many testimonies, the present researcher is led to define the presence of natural resources as the main cause of wars in the East of the DR Congo. A former soldier declares: "There was no security [in Walikale] because of the militias and rebels of all origins who invaded and stayed in the area because of the minerals and mines". Mostly, control of natural resources is a way to finance rebellions in the DR Congo. Interviewing some ex-combatants, Richards (2014:316-317) concludes that "rebel and militia groups in the DR Congo were financing their military activities through the illegal trade, taxing and looting of resources, including coltan and cassiterite". In addition, this kind of corruption facilitates the growth of the informal economy while the formal economy declines.

Table 12: Repartition of the budget from 2006-2015

Current state of expenditure budget: Repartitions by ministries and institutions.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
I. politic institutions	32,906.1	42,789.8	48,989.9	69,158.7	169,907.6	92,297.5	318,510.0	308,750.0	345,889.1	341 929,2
Presidency	14,751.2	11,185.9	13,320.0	16,542.7	29,539.0	31,370.7	50,000.0	53,000.0	63,191.5	55 654,7
National Assembly & senate	4,829.0	22,480.8	24,349.6	32,133.3	104,810.3	99,654.7	122,850.0	132,098.9	142,809.9	146 161,3
Prime minister	542.9	2,063.6	3,600.0	11,422.9	17,278.6	17,806.6	19,380.0	17,827.7	19,140.6	19 814,9
Auxiliary organisations	9,404.0	2,577.9	2,925.0	3,151.2	7,244.9	3,713.4	7,200.0	8,500.0	15,656.9	15 822,1
Others	1,484.0	1,787.5	2,389.2	2,205.9	5,461.9	23,889.5	48,080.0	27,748.0	3,273.6	15 822,1
Magistrates and courts	1,895.0	2,694.1	2,406.1	3,702.7	5,572.9	15,862.6	71,000.0	69,575.4	101,816.6	76 614,2
Director Committee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dialogue inter Congolese	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
II.Departments	65,622.1	96,638.0	76,378.8	89,363.8	225,859.5	344,006.5	525,191.9	607,837.7	628,680.3	450,843.4
Territory administration	5,275.3	10,726.1	12,179.8	13,220.0	25,190.8	59,940.0	76,416.0	92,378.4	102,571.6	108,277.9
Home affairs	2,480.9	5,152.0	3,359.6	4,216.8	11,960.1	14,404.4	14,713.0	19,928.6	2,300.0	23,300.0
Trade	50.5	283.6	192.4	261.0	541.7	631.4	700.0	635.1	3,800.0	2,128.7
Army	14,024.6	16,858.6	14,915.3	21,869.9	44,297.4	76,376.6	131,544.1	204,475.3	212,469.5	214,078.0
Veterans	33.9	163.0	126.0	217.5	487.6	515.0	621.0	744.1	800.0	801.8
Justice	451.7	1,228.9	839.9	869.9	3,683.8	6,052.2	25,000.0	18,977.8	21,750.0	23,119.1
Finances	7,010.3	9,117.8	6,808.3	6,524.7	10,743.7	15,315.2	20,000.0	23,640.8	25,517.4	25,849.6
National Economy	118.1	328.5	252.0	435.0	1,083.4	3,338.6	3,000.0	2,915.0	3,050.0	3,015.5
National Education	16,009.6	16,999.6	8,875.9	8,350.5	10,293.0	40,150.0	91,661.0	86,366.7	90,200.0	92 741,0
Information et press	70.0	472.7	839.9	869.9	2,007.5	2,047.4	2,500.0	2,235.5	2,377.0	2,036.4
Agriculture, Fishing & Livestock	87.7	942.0	1,266.0	1,565.7	3,250.4	7,816.0	10,000.0	10,164.8	10,850.0	9 745,5
Public Works and Planning	957.0	1,122.0	755.9	869.8	3,792.2	4,328.7	3,000.0	3,488.0	3,708.0	8473,8
Mining	116.1	567.2	671.9	1,000.4	3,423.0	3,818.0	7,780.0	7,942.4	8,296.0	8139,5
Transports and Communications	58.2	378.1	839.9	869.9	1,733.5	1,785.5	1,900.0	2,766.8	3,500.0	3519,5
Public function	8,182.7	945.3	1,679.8	1,739.8	3,250.6	5,367.2	7,000.0	6,248.8	6,976.0	6981,9
Social	233.7	662.2	1,416.0	1,304.6	1,625.2	1,549.5	2,000.0	2,198.2	2,500.0	2019,9
Posts, Telegraphs, Telegrams	70.0	1,421.6	839.9	695.9	1,625.2	1,650.7	1,700.0	2,440.7	2,700.0	2139,4
Public Hearth	250.3	7,102.8	2,525.9	2,609.4	8,103.9	18,201.0	27,870.0	31,219.4	30,000.0	31413,6
Culture and Art	49.7	1,370.7	839.9	698.5	2,007.5	1,999.5	1,762.5	1,625.1	2,180.0	3197,4
Energy	72.0	283.6	252.0	393.2	1,083.5	1,085.2	1,200.0	1,389.7	1,450.0	1513,6
Sports & Youth	1,889.2	2,079.7	2,099.8	2,827.0	7,042.6	7,448.1	13,256.9	11,503.8	11,909.2	11839,6
Land Affairs	89.2	283.6	420.0	448.0	1,083.5	1,115.1	1,476.9	1,353.2	1,450.0	1609,2
Work and Social Security	85.2	567.2	671.9	956.9	2,102.5	2,032.4	2,500.0	2,363.5	4,286.2	4145,6
Portfolio	96.0	378.1	420.0	435.0	1,679.4	1,713.8	2,000.0	1,740.3	1,860.0	1870,9
Environment	111.3	283.6	420.0	448.0	1,733.6	2,791.7	4,250.0	4,484.6	4,700.0	3906,3

rural Development	98.8	661.7	383.5	435.0	2,706.7	4,910.2	5,949.9	6,000.8	6,400.0	7882,7
Plan	847.3	1,228.9	1,343.9	1,913.7	3,250.4	5,650.7	6,000.0	5,114.7	5,841.3	5816,8
Scientific research	506.1	378.1	329.7	782.9	1,625.2	1,815.8	1,900.0	1,697.6	2,000.0	3235,8
Gender	75.6	283.6	563.6	1,000.0	2,166.9	1,830.2	2,350.0	1,903.5	2,100.0	1667,1
Right & Freedom of citizen	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Human Rights	71.6	309.4	178.1	500.0	1,081.8	1,109.2	1,400.0	1,204.0	1,300.0	1,122.0
Budget	3,128.8	7,099.9	4,315.3	4,349.1	10,237.9	12,134.6	25,000.0	24,114.6	23,514.6	22,960.9
Town planning and housing	53.4	425.1	545.9	522.0	4,002.8	4,598.8	4,608.7	4,389.5	4,500.0	-
Reconstruction	3.4	146.3	83.0	130.5	270.9	261.2	264.0	229.6	250.0	249.7
Internationale Cooperat	551.0	47.3	84.0	826.4	3,723.0	11,269.2	10,458.9	10,901.0	11,850.0	11,955.2
Relation with Parliament	3.3	141.8	500.0	608.9	1,255.1	1,440.4	1,500.0	1,304.2	1,387.0	2,079.4
Institutional reform	3.4	141.8	84.0	130.5	270.9	313.2	320.0	295.0	300.0	-
Relation with politic Parties	3.4	189.1	84.0	130.5	-	302.8	300.0	340.1	350.0	744.8
Small & M Business	-	379.1	311.0	435.0	1,083.5	1,963.3	1,985.0	1,849.8	1,955.0	2,880.4
Tourism and	51.5	283.6	262.0	261.0	541.7	568.2	600.0	532.9	600.0	1,788.8
Industry	53.8	283.6	252.0	435.0	1,083.5	1,220.0	1,400.0	1,235.6	2,800.0	2,105.3
Other Ministries	2,297.5	4,920.2	3,550.8	3,206.0	38,733.6	13,145.5	7,304.0	3,498.2	2,331.5	2,349.9
III. Other Services	702,392.0	1,028,591.2	1,373,068.8	1,830,771.9	2,452,217.5	3,934,420.8	3,583,607.2	3,008,937.8	3,627,879.0	3,716,632.5
Public Debt	225,048.0	376,381.0	399,371.4	389,460.6	430,233.5	643,623.1	544,794.7	612,320.1	369,067.8	341,301.5
Cities and Provinces	22,556.0	45,727.0	106,953.9	455,880.9	497,402.0	833,040.0	973,221.0	212,400.0	212,400.0	241,698.1
Common expenses	205,762.0	350,131.4	511,418.3	619,600.2	858,899.7	1,200,100.5	1,439,432.1	1,526,913.8	1,694,425.3	2,055,684.9
Subsidiary budgets	36,030.0	91,110.6	92,998.2	127,823.7	140,670.0	171,458.2	293,069.8	376,731.2	437,326.1	364,841.3
Budget for order	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exceptional expenses	178,846.0	71,441.3	68,943.9	216,236.2	332,773.8	434,555.5	285,789.6	247,272.7	864,383.7	203,637.8
Other services	34,150.0	93,799.9	193,383.1	21,770.3	192,238.5	651,643.5	47,300.0	33,300.0	50,276.1	509,468.9
Total	800,920.2	1,168,019.0	1,498,437.5	1,989,294.4	2,847,984.6	4,470,724.8	4,427,309.1	3,925,525.5	4,602,448.4	4,167,475.9

Execution of current state expenditure: Repartition by departments and institutions.

Table 13: Execution of state expenditure: 2006-2015

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
I. Political Institutions	44,190.4	59,238.1	79,625.0	93,959.3	210,691.0	319,585.1	398,452.3	374,288.6	329,974.7	306,351.8
Presidency	26,270.7	29,279.8	32,836.6	36,716.6	92,043.7	148,742.6	146,812.4	163,087.9	124,582.6	102,489.8
National Ass & Senate	9,466.8	12,522.7	13,577.9	33,314.0	84,373.6	110,146.7	129,889.8	108,832.8	114,111.8	105,938.9
Prime minister	2,827.7	7,894.4	15,696.2	21,790.6	27,879.9	34,714.8	35,948.3	4,509.8	50,705.4	42,658.5
Auxiliary organizations	5,625.3	9,541.3	17,514.3	2,138.1	6,393.8	25,981.0	5,005.6	12,662.4	17,499.8	20,435.6
Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	72,053.2	28,532.9	2,862.2	1,332.9
Technical services of Presidency	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Magistrate and Court	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,742.9	15,662.8	20,213.0	33,496.2
Ministry delegated to the Presidency	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
II. Ministries	101,543.9	229,942.5	270,597.3	186,026.8	258,063.6	340,561.1	533,796.2	513,559.7	382,815.3	425,406.9
Rights and Freedom	-		-	-	-	-		-	-	-
Human rights	115.9	82.5	181.3	125.4	655.7	618.9	589.6	324.7	59.3	301.4
Ministry of Interior	3,024.4	28,044.4	30,522.0	16,624.3	21,765.6	38,430.4	37,538.5	49,890.5	37,752.2	47,123.1
Home affairs	7,366.2	4,941.9	7,971.0	17,914.3	21,277.5	21,830.5	43,480.6	21,710.4	18,077.6	25,072.3
Army	30,597.6	67,881.8	93,700.6	47,679.2	105,141.4	116,405.7	163,481.8	161,386.1	119,240.0	136,377.0
Veterans	0.9	96.7	14.8	-	29.3	-	91.3	15.8	49.2	39.1
Justice	1,554.3	2,484.7	3,356.2	3,831.9	2,882.2	7,947.0	8,085.2	9,491.9	11,952.5	15,090.1
Finances	30,362.6	75,945.8	77,663.5	53,945.7	33,032.7	49,875.3	79,070.8	121,845.7	71,176.8	50,135.8
National Economy	386.4	527.8	233.0	55.8	680.6	363.7	339.9	2,132.7	2,018.9	2,064.7
SME	-		-	246.1	219.9	329.2	148.4	122.9	144.6	1,497.7
National Education	1,816.7	17,254.4	19,856.3	1,042.2	9,190.2	7,862.9	26,700.4	11,384.5	24,807.2	12,648.4
Information and Press	72.2	1,154.4	2,500.3	424.9	1,772.4	1,743.0	1,259.5	2,033.1	1,943.9	3,204.5
Agriculture	1,651.7	445.0	1,100.6	913.3	469.8	4,622.7	1,658.9	1,720.3	1,749.7	825.2
Public work	346.5	190.1	956.8	3,486.2	2,435.1	3,779.1	3,536.2	7,719.5	708.0	1,097.0
Mining and industry	65.7	3,542.8	1,160.8	63.3	468.0	1,257.8	1,326.7	1,430.3	1,212.8	2,376.2
Transports and Communications	716.6	27.1	40.1	96.5	161.0	399.1	14,390.7	22,710.3	2,349.8	3,524.4
Public Function	331.7	1,160.0	1,279.3	645.0	1,729.3	2,086.6	1,196.0	1,218.4	1,357.5	1,459.1
Posts, Telecom	149.8	1,870.5	2,189.1	9.3	2,613.8	484.5	672.2	990.2	950.8	1,526.8
Public Health	5,476.6	9,029.8	9,448.9	8,500.5	2,424.2	8,762.6	14,032.2	23,419.8	22,114.2	21,767.8

rural Development	106.1	120.6	132.9	11.6	412.2	294.1	735.4	595.6	783.8	1,725.7
Culture et Arts	342.7	72.9	88.0	408.6	858.0	1,247.1	1,097.5	1,274.9	695.5	3,041.5
Work and Social Security	161.5	324.6	444.5	600.0	269.1	512.6	824.6	1,855.0	1,794.1	1,040.2
Energy	486.5	585.0	541.4	14.9	76.4	201.2	812.9	1,928.8	2,317.6	2,677.0
Tourism	286.6	616.1	888.1	-	36.2	28.5	62.4	75.4	62.3	1,164.0
Sports, Leisure and Youth	1,805.6	1,873.7	1,180.1	12,228.9	13,584.3	17,798.8	16,675.5	18,989.5	11,646.4	22,801.9
Urban Planning, and Land Affairs	10.8	97.1	100.0	1,517.0	551.0	802.4	690.8	1,273.7	1,014.0	2,234.2
Plan	1,599.9	339.9	609.8	2,566.4	766.1	2,485.5	2,601.2	2,921.1	2,390.0	2,185.1
Reconstruction	85.1	-	43.6	2,274.9	12.3	8.7	6.3	3.7	16.6	34.8
Portfolio	559.8	79.9	708.7	8.6	353.4	919.0	1,349.9	633.7	467.3	265.2
Trade	372.1	17.8	22.7	1.2	136.7	116.7	258.3	808.6	78.7	675.1
Environment	397.4	353.0	384.2	258.8	266.3	427.2	890.2	952.7	1,098.7	972.5
Social affairs	1,094.2	103.0	110.3	1,088.9	390.2	292.0	1,954.2	704.1	670.4	990.9
Scientific research	2,514.7	108.6	125.1	26.5	367.5	654.8	230.3	349.9	297.5	1,315.4
Gender	132.5	74.5	-	-	1,677.3	485.2	773.6	1,011.9	773.9	961.4
Budget	4,502.1	7,123.7	11,643.8	6,051.1	15,125.9	34,092.5	49,711.4	25,546.9	25,605.4	42,744.0
International Cooperation	184.9	111.3	120.2	726.3	5,749.5	8,007.9	51,166.8	9,647.0	8,892.7	4,194.0
Relation with Parliament	47.2	-	43.7	106.8	407.7	280.9	223.1	219.6	108.0	1,349.3
institutional Reform	-	-	0.7	-	-	26.1	15.0	11.2	14.7	45.9
Realisation with political parties	-	49.8	0.3	4.6	-	104.1	82.8	90.2	99.5	150.6
Other ministries	2,818.7	3,211.2	1,234.6	2,527.4	10,124.8	4,976.8	6,035.3	5,118.4	6,328.1	8,708.2
III. Other services	525,216.3	537,495.0	776,733.7	1,299,486.7	1,074,018.9	1,959,103.8	1,905,851.5	2,792,593.8	3,284,012.8	3,267,291.4
Cities and Provinces	35,921.5	48,528.5	66,890.2	137,714.1	101,592.3	348,568.4	170,441.0	203,963.1	170,100.4	236,283.1
Public debts	95,273.2	34,396.0	59,138.9	224,840.6	111,457.4	244,088.0	160,451.0	372,917.6	255,656.2	266,267.3
Common expenses	247,742.0	314,968.0	494,017.2	603,596.0	604,270.1	1,111,170.0	1,293,459.0	1,463,767.0	1,609,074.7	2,384,279.0
Expenditure to be divided	41,037.5	19,936.5	19,196.5	53,668.7	83,879.8	91,640.7	14,204.5	492,921.0	694,497.1	152,914.7
Grants and Transfers	45,454.0	62,057.0	62,797.0	99,140.0	97,163.6	104,361.9	176,820.0	246,056.3	303,989.0	177,883.4
Budget for order	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exceptional expenses	40,399.0	45,034.0	74,694.0	180,526.7	75,655.7	59,274.8	90,476.0	12,968.8	250,695.4	49,664.0
Other services (PPTE)	19,389.0	12,575.0	-		-	-		-	-	-
Total	670,950.6	826,675.7	1,126,956.0	1,579,472.8	1,542,773.4	2,619,250.0	2,838,100.0	3,680,442.1	3,996,802.8	3,999,050.1

Execution of the state capital expenditure budget. Distribution by departments and institutions (in millions of CDFs)

Table 14: Division of budget by departments and institutions 2006-2015

	Ministries	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1	Presidency	329,7	2296,5	3221,9	3513,7	6751,4	4565,1	1814,2	27751,2	9677,2	1850,2
2	Prime minister	0	0	4437,1	13233,2	6088	1014,3	2130,1	948,3	7540,3	271,2
3	Finances	667,8	0,6	29421,6	29092,9	37576,2	44116,2	4605,4	58944,5	33855,1	10059,1
4	National education	1928,6	2996,9	3481	26760,5	3104,3	5148,1	2379,1	18925,5	30603,1	33968,4
5	Information	0	357	4399,7	0	6246,7	8510,5	23,7	0	0	1081,5
6	Agriculture	1888,8	1974,6	12427,1	43595,9	11617,9	3980,1	27082,4	33471,4	73157,2	27467,8
7	Public work	15538	1325	20060,8	269510,4	416211,2	160237	41870,7	119848	32810,3	131282,9
8	Mines et land affairs	0	0	0	0	0	0	212,8	1130,9	120	2978
9	Transports et Communications	155,9	2,8	231	20244,7	0	973,1	15599,5	32974,9	41426,8	102657,8
10	Post and telecommunication	0	0	0	1810,8	31,6	690,2	0	6518	672,1	801,8
11	Public Health	3084,4	3831,7	5739,9	20496	8579,6	1381,1	17478,2	31356,2	33324,3	10337,4
12	Energy	914,5	0	4131,7	12871,8	8120,3	51,7	192066,2	0	0	99966
13	National forces	3049,9	4843,5	2955,1	7280,8	6313,5	4801,9	31201,8	12275,2	13290,7	4975,6
14	Environment	0	0	0	938,4	0	115,3	0	0	0	5088,9
15	Plan	19,1	1034,1	1063,3	10104,8	13168,2	1104,5	7238,6	1698,5	6029,1	3575,4
16	Rural Development	1688,6	980,1	1129,6	15622,9	3709,8	0	38,3	645,7	57,1	7968,1
17	Justice	0	0	0	0	136,9	268,9	135,6	321,1	297,1	4071,7
18	Social	776,2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	Home affairs	109,9	75	899,7	53,9	1500,1	4013,1	933,2	0	120,1	537,5
20	Scientific research	0	123,2	500	0	6,1	111,8	528,2	709,6	0	0
21	National Assembly	0	0	0	0	3884,9	12847,5	0	617,5	0	905,3
22	Gender	228,4	0	0	0	0	0	66,7	0	356,7	1465,5
23	Budget	12,5	42,2	365,9	31,1	7487,5	966,7	794,5	1080	814,2	2306,9
24	Public administration	178	37,5	81,2	52,3	440,7	0	0	40,1	644,3	11835,6
25	Art and Culture	67,6	0	0	0	8	61,9	146,1	168,1	1364,5	1414,6
26	Sports	26,4	0	0	0	233,4	11	66,7	0	6170,8	4807,4
27	Ancient Combatant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
28	Urbanism et Habitat	1731,6	370,7	574,1	0	0	0	0	65,8	125	12771
29	External trading	0	0	0	0	0	22688,4	665	0	0	2184,6
30	Home affairs	268	0	0	2483,4	1578,7	2420,3	12044	3262,7	6277	19290
31	Other departments	261,7	2092,9	65634,3	2274,9	56010,6	97221,3	174519	138762,8	153040,9	117233,1
	Total	**32925,6**	**22384,3**	**160755**	**479972,4**	**598805,6**	**377300**	**533640**	**491516**	**451773,9**	**623153,3**

Sources : Ministère du budget et banque centrale du Congo

Execution of the state capital expenditure budget. Distribution by departments and institutions

Table 15: Capital expenditure budget by departments and institutions 2006-2015

	Ministries	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1	Presidency	329.7	2,296.5	3,221.9	3,513.7	6,751.4	4,565.1	1,814.2	27,751.2	9,677.2	1,850.2
2	Prime Minister	-	-	4,437.1	13,233.2	6,088.0	1,014.3	2,130.1	948.3	7,540.3	271.2
3	Finances	667.8	0.6	29,421.6	29,092.9	37,576.2	44,116.2	4,605.4	58,944.5	33,855.1	10,059.1
4	National Education	1,928.6	2,996.9	3,481.0	26,760.5	3,104.3	5,148.1	2,379.1	18,925.5	30,603.1	33,968.4
5	Information	-	357.0	4,399.7	-	6,246.7	8,510.5	23.7	-	-	1,081.5
6	Agriculture	1,888.8	1,974.6	12,427.1	43,595.9	11,617.9	3,980.1	27,082.4	33,471.4	73,157.2	27,467.8
7	Publics Work	15,538.0	1,325.0	20,060.8	269,510.4	416,211.2	160,237.0	41,870.7	119,848.0	32,810.3	131,282.9
8	Mining and land affairs	-	-	-	-	-	-	212.8	1,130.9	120.0	2,978.0
9	Transports et Communications	155.9	2.8	231.0	20,244.7	-	973.1	15,599.5	32,974.9	41,426.8	102,657.8
10	Posts, Telecom	-	-	-	1,810.8	31.6	690.2	-	6,518.0	672.1	801.8
11	Public Health	3,084.4	3,831.7	5,739.9	20,496.0	8,579.6	1,381.1	17,478.2	31,356.2	33,324.3	10,337.4
12	Energy	914.5	-	4,131.7	12,871.8	8,120.3	51.7	192,066.2	-	-	99,966.0
13	Army	3,049.9	4,843.5	2,955.1	7,280.8	6,313.5	4,801.9	31,201.8	12,275.2	13,290.7	4,975.6
14	Environment	-	-	-	938.4	-	115.3	-	-	-	5,088.9

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15	Plan	19.1	1,034.1	1,063.3	10,104.8	13,168.2	1,104.5	7,238.6	1,698.5	6,029.1	3,575.4
16	Rural Development	1,688.6	980.1	1,129.6	15,622.9	3,709.8	-	38.3	645.7	57.1	7,968.1
17	Justice	-	-	-	-	136.9	268.9	135.6	321.1	297.1	4,071.7
18	social affairs	776.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	Home affairs	109.9	75.0	899.7	53.9	1,500.1	4,013.1	933.2	-	120.1	537.5
20	scientific research	-	123.2	500.0	-	6.1	111.8	528.2	709.6	-	-
21	National Assembly	-	-	-	-	3,884.9	12,847.5	-	617.5	-	905.3
22	Gender	228.4	-	-	-	-	-	66.7	-	356.7	1,465.5
23	Budget	12.5	42.2	365.9	31.1	7,487.5	966.7	794.5	1,080.0	814.2	2,306.9
24	Public Admin	178.0	37.5	81.2	52.3	440.7	-	-	40.1	644.3	11,835.6
25	Culture and Arts	67.6	-	-	-	8.0	61.9	146.1	168.1	1,364.5	1,414.6
26	Sports	26.4	-	-	-	233.4	11.00	66.7	-	6,170.8	4,807.4
27	Ancient combatant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
28	Urbanism and Habitat	1,731.6	370.7	574.1	-	-	-	-	65.8	125.0	12,771.0
29	Trade	-	-	-	-	-	22,688.4	665.0	-	-	2,184.6
30	Home affairs	268.0	-	-	2,483.4	1,578.7	2,420.3	12,044.0	3,262.7	6,277.0	19,290.0
31	Other ministries	261.7	2,092.9	65,634.3	2,274.9	56,010.6	97,221.3	174,519.0	138,762.8	153,040.9	117,233.1
	Total	32,925.6	22,384.3	160,755.0	479,972.4	598,805.6	377,300.0	533,640.0	491,516.0	451,773.9	623,153.3

Source

Comparing DR Congo's budget with that of surrounding countries in 2017

Table 16: Comparing budgets 2017

Country	Budget	Population	Area
Rwanda	2,60 Billion $	11,9 Million	26.338
Uganda	7,90	40,3	241.038
Tanzania	13,51	54.3	945.085
Angola	30	26.1	1.246.700
RD Congo	4,5	80.5	2.345.409

Note. In 2015, the DR Congo budget amounted to 9 billion; in 2016 6 billion and in 2017 4,5 billion. As the budget decreases, the people's suffering Increases.

Underlining his view of poverty as caused by failing governments, Sachs (2005:59) writes: "Economic development requires a government oriented towards development. The government has many roles to play. It must identify and finance the high-priority infrastructure projects and make the needed infrastructure and social services available to the whole population, not just a select few".

3.3.4.1.4 External exploitation

The DR Congo was the private propriety of Leopold II until 15 November 1908 when it became a Belgian colony. Its fertile soils attracted Europeans to the Kivu highlands in the Eastern part of the country, where they profited from export-oriented plantation agriculture. In 1926, the Belgian administrator began to import workers from Rwanda (the Banarwanda). But even before the arrival of this new group of Hutu and Tutsi, the East of the Congo had already become the adopted homeland of many Rwandophones. The new arrivals in 1926 led to tensions with native inhabitants (Nande, Hunde and Nyanga) who saw them as competitors for land (Richards, 2014:303).

The DR Congo has experienced exploitation, as many Third World countries have. Local people were – and are - marginalized by rich countries. These statements can be substantiated by, firstly, the existence of international firms and lobbies contributing to the people's miserable living conditions. That the country's legal systems have no control over mining enterprises encourages the increase of corruption. The country assists in the survival of a considerable amount of informal trading. Resources are abusively consumed by rich countries. International firms when working in the DR Congo, do most of them not respect workers' rights.

According to Matti (2010:401):

> 'Gecamines' got in serious financial problems and could not pay its agents. Workers were for 36 months without salaries and for 56 months without food allocation. When 10 655 lost their jobs and became unemployed they received only one fifth of what was due to them. The DR Congo has made a deal with 'Sicomines', a mining group consisting of Chinese enterprises. Two main clauses in the contract signed by the DRC and the Chinese mining companies are the following. The first clause concerns the allocation of US$ 9.25 billion and the stipulation that the Chinese enterprises will undertake a number of infrastructure projects which will be financed through a joint mining business enterprise. The second clause states that in the post-conflict period the "source of easily corruptible revenue shifted from resource rents to foreign aid without fundamentally altering [the] political structure".

Another problem of the least developed countries is the amount of their external debt and the resulting exploitation. High levels of foreign aid are the main reason why, from 2002 onwards, there has been some development in the DR Congo's economy. The country has received an abundance of foreign aid in the post-conflict period. Generally, countries receiving official development aid (ODA) to GDP ratios exceeding 10%, are classified as heavily dependent on foreign aid. In the DR Congo, this ratio was 25.7% in 2005. The country depends on this aid for conducting democratic elections, building infrastructure and stabilising the economy, in addition to financing the activities of the state (Matti, 2010:6). True economic stability is not usually built by foreign aid dependence. Corruption and patrimonialism increased in the DR Congo because of the foreign aid and Matti (2010:7) notes that "the multitude of aid-projects "provides for the allocation of all sorts of discretionary goods to be politicised and *patrimonialised*, while the large sums involved

enable corruption". The bad news is that most of the huge 'aid projects' operating in the DR Congo have placed burdens on many Congolese who are outsiders to these projects, and on their institutions. Matti (2010:7) affirms that a huge part of the budgets of such projects circulates within the projects themselves. High salaries are offered to functionaries in donor projects and low salaries to employed citizens. The steep levels of foreign aid end up by making no real impact on the lives of Congolese people.

External exploitation also follows from the state of the world economy and banking policies. Generally, the functioning of global economic and banking systems is not favouring the poor. War has come to be seen as an opportunity for making money. Guerrillas or rebels represent a promise of material gain.

3.3.5 Justice system and national forces

3.3.5.1 The justice system

The role of the judiciary may be concerned with respect for the law, human rights and the equality of those seeking their rights. This mission can be correctly fulfilled by functionaries who maintain their independence from the political powers that be and who are impartial in respect of those looking for justice.

Justice is a pillar of true and strong democracy. Unfortunately, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the foundation of the justice system has been tampered with in various ways since the Second Republic came into being. The judiciary in the DR Congo is today perceived as undeserving of trust. A corrupt justice system produces a corrupt nation. Joseph Mvioki lists several failings of the Congolese system of justice (Mabiala, 2006: 176-180). Political authority habitually interferes with those supposed to decide on justice. Consequently, the justice system has become an instrument of the powerful and there is no longer any respect for legal texts. An example is the matter of the two terms allowed to the Presidency which has been discussed and finally accepted, bypassing the constitution without raising a huge protest at, what is no less than a national betrayal. Another example is the case of the prosecutor of the city of Lubumbashi who fled to Europe before denouncing the pressure she had been under to condemn Moise Katumbi, former governor of the Katanga Province. She had been called upon by political

authorities to affect a condemnation. After she had escaped from the country, she asked for her signature to be withdrawn from the trial, as she had acted under pressure and been threatened with jail if she didn't cooperate. When questioned, her response was: «*J'ai signé le jugement de condamnation sous la menace »,* or, "I signed the judgment of sentence under pressure" ([Le nouvel Afrik.com 05 January 2017](#)).

One of the causes of corruption in the justice system is the lack of good salaries. In this context Mvioki argues as follows.

> *"Depuis l'époque de la deuxième République, l'état Congolais a démissionné de son rôle d'employeur ; Le statut de magistrate qui fixe les conditions salariales et les divers avantages sociaux reconnus aux magistrats n'a plus qu'une valeur déclaratoire. (…) En outre, les magistrats devraient bénéficier des avantages suivants : allocation familiale pour enfants à charge, soins de santé, indemnité de logement, pécule de conge, allocation d'invalidé, frais funéraire, frais de transport. (…) En réalité, aucun magistrat congolais ne bénéficie de tous ces avantages"* (Mabiala, 2006:183).

> Translated as: "Since the Second Republic, the Congolese state has resigned its role as employer; The statute of magistrate which fixes the salary conditions and the various social benefits recognized as due to the magistrates have only a declaratory value. In addition, magistrates should receive the following benefits: family allowance for dependent children, health care, housing allowance, holiday allowance, invalidation allowance, funeral expenses, transport costs, etc. In reality, there exists no Congolese magistrate who benefits from all these advantages ".

The justice system in the DR Congo suffers, besides, from a lack of courts of justice in large parts of the country. Being such a large country, the lack of jurisdiction is an important issue. Today, many courts of justice have been established but without any infrastructure. Magistrates who are sent to remote areas without infrastructure, usually abandon their postings, preferring to remain in big towns where living is affordable.

3.3.5.2 National forces

The Congolese army has always consisted of two institutions in one. During Mobutu's rule, he organized the DSP (*Division spéciale Présidentielle,* or, 'special Presidential division'). It was an army to serve specifically the President. The constitution of the DR

Congo stipulates that the army's duty is to act impartially for the sake of peace and protection of the citizens.

Article 183 of the constitution reads : *« La police nationale est apolitique. Elle est au service de la nation Congolaise. Nul ne peut la détourner à ses fins propres»* (Assemblée, 2006:44), meaning, «The National Police is apolitical. It is at the service of the Congolese nation. No one may divert it for its own purposes".

Article 188 states that *« Les Forces armées sont républicaines. Elles sont au service de la Nation tout entière. Nul ne peut, sous peine de haute trahison, les détourner à ses fins propres. Elles sont apolitiques et soumises à l'autorité civile ».* In English : The armed forces are Republican. They are at the service of the whole nation. No one can, divert them to his own ends without it being considered as high treason. They are apolitical and subject to civil authority ".

In spite of these disposals, the Congolese authorities still divide the armed forces for the sake of their own protection and to stay in power. Discussing military justice, Open Review states: "For some time, military courts were presided over by officers appointed by the military command but who were not qualified judges" (Initiative, 2009:7).

3.3.6 Human rights abuses in DR Congo

In respect of human rights in general, the DR Congo is in trouble. As discussed below, many basic human rights are not respected.

3.3.6.1 Freedom of expression

According to UNJHRO (United Nations Joint Human Rights Office), journalists and media workers in the DR Congo have since long been subjected to intimidation or harassment. Arbitrary arrests and illegal detentions of journalists are widely reported in the country (Monusco-OHCHR, 2016:17).

Yet, the DR Congo has signed several international agreements concerning freedom of expression which the country is supposed to respect. Among these agreements are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights adopted by the General Assembly, resolution 2200 A (XXI) of 16 December 1966, the convention against torture, adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1984, entering into force on 26 June 1987,

and the African Charter on Human Rights adopted on 26 June 1981 in Nairobi, Kenya (Monusco-OHCHR, 2016:6).

The DR Congo's 2006 constitution subscribes in its article 215 to these agreements promising to respect them:

« Les traités et accords internationaux régulièrement conclus ont, dès leur publication, une autorité supérieure à celle des lois, sous réserve pour chaque traité ou accord, de son application par l'autre partie» (Assemblée, 2006).

This means: "Treaties and international agreements duly concluded shall, as soon as they are published, have an authority superior to the laws, subject to each treaty or agreement being applied by the other party".

Rights of physical integrity as guaranteed by internationally accepted tools are protected by article 16 of the Congolese constitution. The article refers to the sacralisation of the human person and protection thereof by the state.

The rights of the liberty and security of the person are guaranteed by the constitution in art. 17 and 18.

The rights to freedom and peaceful assembly are guaranteed by art. 25 and 26 of the Congolese constitution.

The rights to freedom of expression set down in art 23 and 24 of the Congolese constitution stipulate that everyone has the right to express his or her convictions and opinions.

Article 23 : *« Toute personne a droit à la liberté d'expression. Ce droit implique la liberté d'exprimer ses opinions ou ses convictions, notamment par la parole, l'écrit et l'image, sous réserve du respect de la loi, de l'ordre public et des bonnes mœurs ».*

Article 24 : *« Toute personne a droit à l'information. La liberté de presse, la liberté d'information et d'émission par la radio et la télévision, la presse écrite ou tout autre moyen de communication sont garanties sous réserve du respect de l'ordre public, des bonnes mœurs et des droits d'autrui. La loi fixe les modalités d'exercice de ces libertés. Les médias audiovisuels et écrits d'Etat sont des services publics dont l'accès est garanti de manière équitable à tous les courants politiques et sociaux. Le statut des médias d'Etat est établi par la loi qui garantit l'objectivité, l'impartialité et le pluralisme d'opinions dans le traitement et la diffusion de l'information ».*

Article 25 : *« La liberté des réunions pacifiques et sans armes est garantie sous réserve du respect de la loi, de l'ordre public et des bonnes mœurs ».*

Article 26 : *« La liberté de manifestation est garantie. Toute manifestation sur les voies publiques ou en plein air, impose aux organisateurs d'informer par écrit l'autorité administrative compétente. Nul ne peut être contraint à prendre part à une manifestation. La loi en fixe les mesures d'application".*

In English: Article 23: Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right implies freedom to express one's opinions or beliefs, notably by word, in writing and images, subject to respect for the law, public order and morality.

Article 24**:** Everyone has the right to information. Freedom of the press, freedom of information and broadcast by radio and television, print media or any other means of communication are guaranteed, subject to respect for public order, morality, the rights of other persons. The law lays down the procedures for the exercise of these freedoms. State-owned audio-visual media and writings are public services whose access is guaranteed equally to all political and social currents. The status of state media is established by the law which guarantees the objectivity, impartiality and pluralism of opinions in the processing and dissemination of information.

Article 25: Freedom of peaceful and unarmed meetings is guaranteed, subject to respect for the law, public order and good morals.

Article 26: Freedom of manifestation is guaranteed. Any demonstration on public roads or in open-air spaces requires that the organizers inform the competent administrative authority in writing. No one may be compelled to take part in a demonstration. The law shall lay down the implementing measures.

In spite of these constitutional provisions many cases of human rights abuse have been reported since the beginning of the Third Republic. It has been shown that public freedoms have been denied to the Congolese people in many ways, including freedom of expression. The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office raises concerns that people in the country are as a rule deprived of freedom of expression, information and peaceful assembly.

Among human rights abuses in the DR Congo were at the end of 2016 according to UNJHRO the killing of around 40 civilians, the injuring of 147 and the arrest of 917. Many more were arrested and detained on suspicion of intended participation in demonstrations (Monusco-OHCHR, 2016:10-12). In addition, the country experienced the discovery of

mass graves. According to the UN mission in the DR Congo, until July 2017, at least 80 mass graves had been identified (UN: Another 38 probable mass graves found in DR Congo).

In a summary of the cycle of violence that followed on the independence of the DR Congo, Acker (2005:79) estimates that the cost in lives of the war in the East of the country amounts to around 3 of the 20 million civilian inhabitants between 1998 and 2001. Generally, people focus on death by gunshots without taking account of other consequences of the war. In addition to those who die in combat, there are others who perish from lack of food, clean water, medicines and shelter. Acker (2005:79) estimates that in some areas, around three quarters of children died before their second year of age. He traces sources of the Eastern conflict as far back as the early 1920s when conflicts regularly erupted.

The DR Congo's conflict has been perceived as the most ignored and deadliest war since World War 2. International institutions have never declared the killing in this warfare a genocide, comparing it to other such conflicts. In his paper Stewart (2006:44) summarises the numbers of people that have died in conflicts. In the years between 1998 and 2002, the DR Congo has, according to the International Rescue Committee (IRC), seen the death in war of an estimated 3.3 million people. No other crises have led to the loss of so many lives. The total number of victims of all the world's crises in the same period does not exceed 3.3 million dead. Bosnia had an estimated 250 000 dead, Rwanda 800 000, Kosovo 12 000, and Darfur in Sudan 70 000.

The cycle of violence perpetrated in the DR Congo since independence consists in the following incidents.

1. Soon after independence in 1960, a war Kasaian and Katangese secessionists broke out. The fighting involved as opponents the *Force de la République* and Belgian parachutists (1960-1962).
2. The second instance is the Mulele's rebellion which began in the Bandundu Province and set the Kivu, Maniema and the Province Orientale on fire (1963-1965).
3. In 1966 a mutiny took place by Katangese gendarmes in Kisangani.

4. In 1977-1978 there was a war, beginning on 8 March 1977, in Moba and lasting 80 days. This war constituted the first attack of the FNLC against the Mobutu regime and against what was perceived as neo-colonialism.

5. In 1991 and 1993 looting occurred throughout the country. The pillages meant, that the multi-party system of which the introduction had been announced in 1990, did have a difficult start.

6. In 1996-1997 the war of the Alliance of the Liberation Forces (AFDL) took place. It overthrew the Mobutu regime that took refuge in Morocco.

7. In 1998-2002 the DR Congo was invaded by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, resulting in the formation of several rebel movements.

8. In 2004-2007 General Laurent Nkunda Batuare led a war in North and South Kivu.

9. The years 2008-2009 saw the insurrection in the national army of the Tutsi military group, the CNDP (*Comité National pour la Défense du Peuple,* or, National committee for the Defence of the People).

10. In 2012-2013 the rebel movement M23 went public with the claim that the agreements signed on 23 March 2010 between the government and the CNDP were not respected (Revue, 2015:231).

11. In 2016 there was a militia uprising in Kasai. The group claimed to belong to the Chief Kamuina Nsapu who was in August 2016 killed in a police operation after he had challenged the authority of the central government.

A cycle of violence such as summarized above, encouraged the illegitimate extraction of raw materials as well as illicit arms trafficking in Congolese border areas. It is clear that there are many possible causes of political instability and warfare in the DR Congo. It would seem that each period of a few years had its own version of war. Writing on conflict in the DR Congo, Koko (2011: 140-143) mentions other causes of persistent conflicts. Firstly, on the regional level there is the non-existence of a regional perspective on post-conflict peacebuilding, for example in the Great Lakes region. Secondly, the endemic weakness of the country's state institutions is a problem. In the third place, the economic decay affecting the country for several decades now, may be an instigator of violent conflict, as is true also for the social dislocation precipitated by state failure and the chronic downward trend of the economy.

There have been serious attempts to overcome the threats of violence and evil in the country, for example by peace building. Some consultations and attempts to reconciliation that have taken place since 1990 are listed below.

Summarising consultations for peace and reconciliation since 1990

Among the consultations that have taken place are:

1. The agreement of Outenica
2. The national sovereign conference, August 7, 1991
3. The Lusaka agreement, 10/07/1999. It was signed by Angola, DR Congo, Rwanda, Namibia, Uganda and Zimbabwe and aimed at stopping the second war in DR Congo. Added signatures were from Jean Pierre Bemba on 1st August 1999 and by 50 founders of the RCD (*Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie*) on 31 August 1999. Note that the second war had started in 1998 involving 9 African nations and more than 30 army groups.
4. The Acts of National Consultation, 24/02-11/03/2000, held in Kinshasa by the religious confessions.
5. The inter-Congolese dialogue held in Addis Abbaba, Ethiopia, 15/10/2001. Joined by almost 80 people from the government, rebel groups, political opposition and civil society.
6. The global and inclusive agreement of Pretoria signed on 16/12/2002.
7. The agreement of Sun City in South Africa on 19/04/2003. It was the result of the Inter-Congolese dialogue.
8. The transition constitution of the DR Congo in 2003.
9. The transition government of 'One President plus four vice-presidents', on 30/06/2003.
10. The agreement of 23 March 2009.
11. The agreement of the '*Cité de l'Union Africaine*' in Kinshasa on 18/10/2016. It coincided with the ending of the last term of President Joseph Kabila. The agreement was facilitated by SEM Edem Kodjo. Many parties were however not in agreement with decisions taken, including the Catholic Church.
12. The Saint Sylvestre agreement came last, on 31/12/2016, under the leadership of the Catholic priests of CENCO (*Conference Episcopale Nationale du Congo*).

CONCLUSION

Chapter Three discusses aspects of the socio-political situation of the DR Congo from the early days of democracy onwards and starting further back in 1879 when Leopold II, king of the Belgians, established authority over the Congo Basin and 400 local chiefs signed 'treaties' ceding land ownership to the International Association of Congo (AIC) under the control of the king. A free State of Congo was created in 1885. Although Leopold II ceded the Free State of the Congo in 1907 to Belgium, the lives of people did not change much. Railway lines were constructed to complement the existing transport network for the exporting of gold, coffee, sugar and so on. Unfortunately, from Leopold II through Belgian administrations onward, and continued by Mobutu, Laurent Desire Kabila and Joseph Kabila, the country has been managed as if it were a private possession.

As far as natural resources and wealth are concerned, the DR Congo is one of the richest countries globally, with over 1100 types of minerals, in value equivalent to the GDPs of the US and EU combined.

When the country started on its democratic journey in 1990 with the introduction of a multi-party system, it appeared as if Mobutu, by accepting the need for transition, was responding to a perception of the *Kairos*.

The DR Congo experienced an extremely long transition period from being a colony to becoming a practising democracy, namely 16 years. The first part of the transition period was characterized by scenes of pillage, leading to the worst GDP experienced between 1990 and 2015. The amount in the state budget set aside for education was 30% in 1960 and shrunk to 0.6% in 2014.

The statistics show that today 82.2% of workers are regarded as disguised unemployed persons, unable to live of their wages. Overwhelmingly, the main cause of poverty in the DR Congo is the mismanagement of natural resources under pressure of corrupted stakeholders. Besides, there are the growing problems of external exploitation and manipulation of the justice system, thus facilitating human rights abuses.

Not the least of these problems is concerned with the inability to bring political careers in the DR Congo to a peaceful conclusion. If it was like that at the closure of Mobutu's

regime, it appears to be no different today. Chapter Four focuses on the Protestant Church and its stance regarding socio political matters.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE DR CONGO AND SOCIO-POLITICAL ISSUES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four is concerned with the establishment and presence of the Protestant Church in the DR Congo. The chapter studies if, in which manner, and to what degree, the Protestant Church did consider and accept responsibilities of a socio-political nature at a time when the DR Congo was succumbing to maladministration, corruption and violent conflicts while the population was reduced to deep poverty and all hopes for a dignified existence in a truly free, independent country had come to nothing.

Commonly, the Protestant Church in the DR Congo is referred to as ECC (*Eglise du Christ au Congo,* or, Church of Christ in Congo). The DR Congo is alone in having, a Protestant umbrella institution, covering and gathering all the Protestant churches in the country. Each Protestant community is autonomous with its President, local churches and organisation but all are linked together under the umbrella of the ECC.

The ECC is established by the Protestant confessional associations, called 'communities' in the DR Congo, based on their wish in full freedom to create such an umbrella body. They put together their resources, wanting to testify to the world the unity of their faith in Jesus Christ, their Lord and Saviour.

A community that wishes to become part of the ECC has to fulfil 17 requirements among which are a belief in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, trusting in the bible as the only authority and acceptance of the ECC constitution.

4.2 THE BEGINNING OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE DR CONGO

The ECC was founded on March 19, 1941, in Luebo. The institution has since then been called by many different names. It was referred to as '*Conseil Protestant du Congo'* (Protestant Council of Congo, from 1924 to 1934), '*Eglise du Christ au Congo'* (Church of Christ in Congo, from 1934 to 1942), '*Conseil Protestant au Congo* '(Protestant Council

of Congo, between 1942 and 1970), '*Eglise du Christ au Congo*' (Church of Christ in Congo, between 1970 and 1972), '*Eglise du Christ au Zaire*' (Church of Christ in Zaire between 1972 and 1998), and '*Eglise du Christ au Congo*' (Church of Christ in Congo), from 1998 up to now.

At the creation of the CPC (*Conseil Protestant au Congo*) its objective was clearly stated:

> The '*Conseil Protestant au Congo*' is an organization serving all the Protestant Missions in Congo, its objective is to unify and develop the work of Protestant Evangelical Missions. Its motto is 'all one in Christ Jesus' as it seeks to foster one church of Christ in Congo. It seeks also to relate the Protestant Christian Community effectively to the authorities and to Christian bodies in other lands. The Council seeks to serve all the Congo missions and missionaries in innumerable ways, not the least of which, in recent years, has been to seek to protect the Protestant Community from Roman Catholic domination and to stand for fair play and religious liberty. It seeks to help the missions to collaborate with the Government in all that is best for the people of Congo, never forgetting that in all educational, medical and social betterment work, Christ must be uplifted, and in all things, he must have the pre-eminence. The '*Conseil Protestant du Congo*' stands for Christian fellowship and co-operation (Bibi-Bikan, 2002:178).

The '*Conseil Protestant au Congo*' thus set out to gather all the Protestant missions to face the civil authority and deal with the opposition against the Protestant missions instigated by the Catholic mission. The ECC strove for religious freedom while working with the indigenous people.

Explaining the perspective of the Church of Christ in Congo, L.J. Taylor states:

> The Church of Christ in Congo must be a united church. A united church does not mean, nor can it ever mean, uniformity of belief or outlook, (…) elimination of the local church group, or of its attitude or importance, or of its type of worship. But a united church means that we examine together, first of all the things which divide us, (…) that we repent of our proud and scornful attitude to other members of [the] Christian community, that we regard the united body of Christ's followers as the ideal for which he worked and died (Bibi-Bikan, 2002:181).

In 1970, the Catholic Bishop Malula, preaching in the Cathedral of Sainte-Marie in Kinshasa in the presence of King Baudouin, was extremely critical of the Mobutu government. Mobutu did not tolerate such criticism and accused the Catholic Church of

interfering in political affairs. It is possible that at the time the thought arose in Mobutu's camp of moving closer to the Protestant Church.

It might be true that the establishment of the Protestant Church organisation could be seen as, in a sense, 'made by Mobutu'. On December 31, 1971, a decree was issued to all communities of Protestant churches to be assembled into one church, the ECZ ('*Eglise du Christ au Zaire'*, or, Church of Christ in Zaire). The Mobutu leadership wanted the church to embrace the thinking of the MPR ('*Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution'*, Popular Movement of the Revolution), the one and only political party at the time. It came down to using the church to strengthen political power.

In 1972 the political party decided to install in every single religious training institution (Protestant, Catholic and Kimbaguist) a committee of the JMPR ('*Jeunesse du Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution',* Youth of the Popular Movement of the Revolution). The Catholic Church's opposition to this decision led to a conflict between President Mobutu and the Catholic Bishop Malula.

The Protestant Church did not seem to share the view of the Catholic Church. Some historians explain the negative reaction of the Protestants to the Catholic position as the result of their historical marginalisation by the Catholic Church which in the colonial past had been considered as the state religion, according to the convention of 26 May 1906. In this context Komi writes :

> *Si on se réfère à l'évolution de l'Eglise catholique depuis la colonisation, on se rend compte de la situation privilégiée dans laquelle elle a vécu. Elle avait tellement de force qu'on pouvait la confondre avec le gouvernement colonial. Leurs intérêts se confondaient. Elle fut considérée comme un Etat dans un autre Etat.*
> *Dès le lendemain de l'indépendance, l'Eglise catholique mit tout en œuvre pour se défaire du régime de Lumumba car elle croyait pour deux raisons majeures que ce dernier constituait un danger réel à sa suprématie. Il fallait combattre* Lumumba *d'abord parce que, semblait-il il fut d'origine protestante et ensuite à cause de sa vision nationaliste* (Diakubikua, 1984:105)**.**

> In translation: If we refer to the evolution of the Catholic Church since colonization, we realize the privileged situation in which it found itself. It was so strong that it could be confused with the colonial government. Their interests were intertwined. The church was considered a state inside another state.

After independence, the Catholic Church made every effort to get rid of the Lumumba regime because it believed for two major reasons that he constituted a real danger to its supremacy. Lumumba had to be fought, first because, it seemed, he was of protestant origin and next because of his nationalist vision (Diakubikua, 1984:105).
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The Protestant Church meantime willingly supported the regime and its professed ideal of restoring authenticity. The position of the church was made abundantly clear in a declaration of its National Executive Committee, meeting between 2 and 9 February 1972, and in the Christmas message of the National President the same year.

The National Executive Committee declared:

> *Nous soussignés, membres du comité exécutif national de l'Eglise du Christ au Zaïre, réunis en session extraordinaire à Kinshasa, capitale zaïroise, du 2 au 9 février 1972, déclarons solennellement notre ferme soutien au Président-Fondateur du Parti National, le MPR, chef du gouvernement et général d'armée, le citoyen Mobutu Sese Seko. Nous appuyons avec soulagement la lutte combien noble pour l'authenticité.*

> In translation: We, members of the National Executive Committee of the Church of Christ in Zaire, meeting in extraordinary session in Kinshasa, capital of Zaire, from February 2 to 9, 1972, hereby solemnly declare our firm support for the President-Founder of the National Party, the MPR, head of government and army general, citizen Mobutu Sese Seko. We support, our hearts light, the so noble struggle for authenticity *(Muntu-Monji, 2013:75)*

In his Christmas message, the National President of the ECC stated:

> *Ainsi beaucoup de nos frères ont posé la question, « Quelle est la position de l'Eglise vis-à-vis de la politique de l'authenticité zaïroise ? » D'abord, ce n'est pas notre rôle de définir la politique de l'authenticité zaïroise que nous connaissons tous, car le chef de l'Etat, qui est Président-Fondateur du MPR et qui est l'auteur même de cette politique, l'a bien expliquée partout dans ses meetings et dans ses discours (…) Pour l'Eglise du Christ au Zaïre, sa position vis-à-vis du MPR est claire et nette. En effet, pour elle, le MPR est un mouvement de tous les Zaïrois. Selon les paroles même du Président-Fondateur du MPR, à l'heure même où un Zaïrois nait, à la même minute, il est automatiquement du MPR.*
> *L'Eglise doit donc se poser une grande question ici : « Qu'est-ce que l'Eglise ? » La réponse est que l'Eglise est le corps du Christ, c'est-à-dire tout le peuple de Dieu. Or, tous nos Chrétiens (hommes et femmes, vieux, adultes et enfants) sont tous membres du MPR qui tire sa politique dans le recours à l'authenticité (…) Car là où est le peuple, c'est là où se trouve*

l'Eglise. Tout le peuple étant dans le MPR, l'Eglise n'a pas de choix (…) »
(Muntu-Monji, 2013:75-76)

Translated as: So many of our brothers asked the question, 'What is the position of the Church vis-à-vis the policy of the Zairian authenticity?' First, it is not our role to define the policy of Zairian authenticity which we all know because the Head of State, who is the President-Founder of the MPR and who is the author of the policy, has explained it well, everywhere in meetings and in his speeches (...) To the Church of Christ in Zaire, her position vis-à-vis the MPR is very clear. Indeed, to her, the MPR is a movement of all Zairians. In the very words of the President-Founder of the MPR, once a Zairian is born, he belongs at that very time and automatically to the MPR.

The Church therefore has to a crucial question here: 'What is the Church?' The answer is that the Church is the body of Christ, that is, all the people of God. But our Christians (men and women, old people, adults and children) are all members of the MPR which moves in its policy towards authenticity (...) For where the people are, that's where the Church is found. All the people being in the MPR, the Church has no choice (...)"

The Protestant Church acted the good boy and, one day, Mobutu declared in a speech: "*Jamais je n'ai eu de problème avec les protestants, ni avec les kimbanguistes, parce qu'ils ne reçoivent pas de mot d'ordre de l'étranger*» (Diakubikua, 1984:111). This means, "Never have I had any problems with the Protestants or the Kimbanguists, because they do not get their instructions from abroad".

Thus, the Protestant Church came close to be an instrument of the state. In an effort to gain the confidence of national church leaders, Mobutu granted them during the synod of Kinshasa the highest civilian award, the '*Ordre du Léopard* (Order of the Leopard). It was a clear sign that the government wanted to curry favour with the Protestant Church leaders and, even, make them beholden to the head of state by, in a sense, incorporating the church in Mobutu's revolution, ensuring that from that side, there would be no opposition (Garrard, 2013:136).

4.3 ORGANIZATION CHART OF THE ECC

Figure 3: Chart of the ECC

```
                            PRESIDENCE
                             NATIONALE
                                                                                    CJPSC

          AUDIT                          DIRECTION
         INTERNE                         DE CABINET                                  PIPKIN

                                                                               COMMUNICATION


  DEPARTEMENT      DEPARTEMENT      DEPARTEMENT      DEPARTEMENT      DEPARTEMENT      DEPARTEMENT
    DEVEM           EDUCATION        ADM & FIN         SANTE          DIACONIE       FEMME&FAMILLE


  EVANGELISATION      EPSP           ADM &RH         HOPITAUX &          DOD         FAM & PROTECT
                                                   CENTRE DE SANTE                      SOCIALE


 VIE DE L'EGLISE &    ESUP          FINANCE &       PROJET DE SANTE      MERU         FORMATION &
     MISSION                       COMPTABILITE                                          PROJET


   AUMONERIES:       CEFORMAD        CONSEIL            DEPOT            BATIR
  ESU+HOP+PRIS                      JURIDIQUE       PHARMACEUTIQUE


                    JEUNESSE                          FORMATION          DMR


                  ED. CHRETIENNE
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4.4 PICTURE OF WHAT THE ECC LOOKS LIKE

Figure 4: What ECC looks like
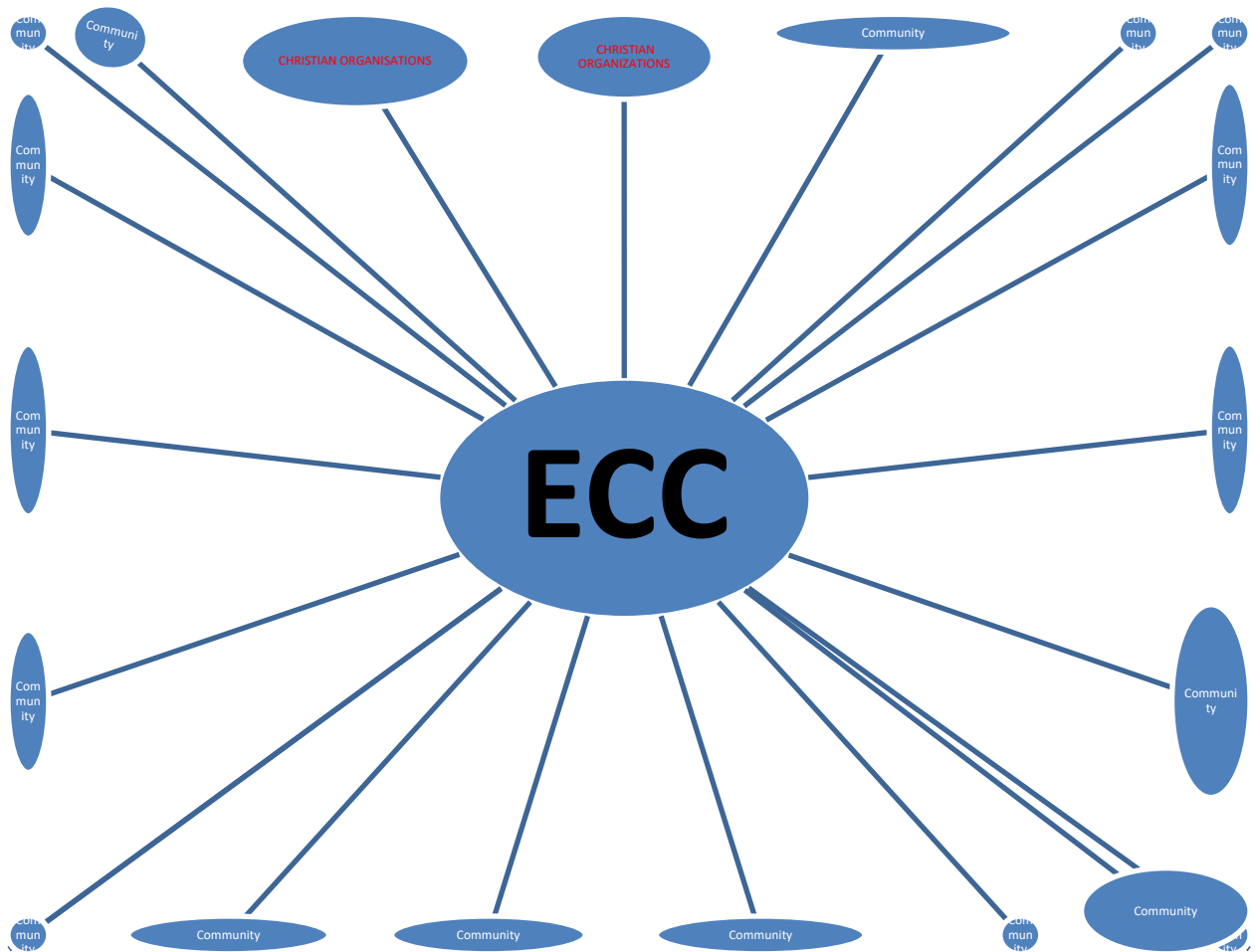
4.5 PERCENTAGE OF COMMUNITIES BY PROVINCE

Figure 5: ECC: Percentage by Province
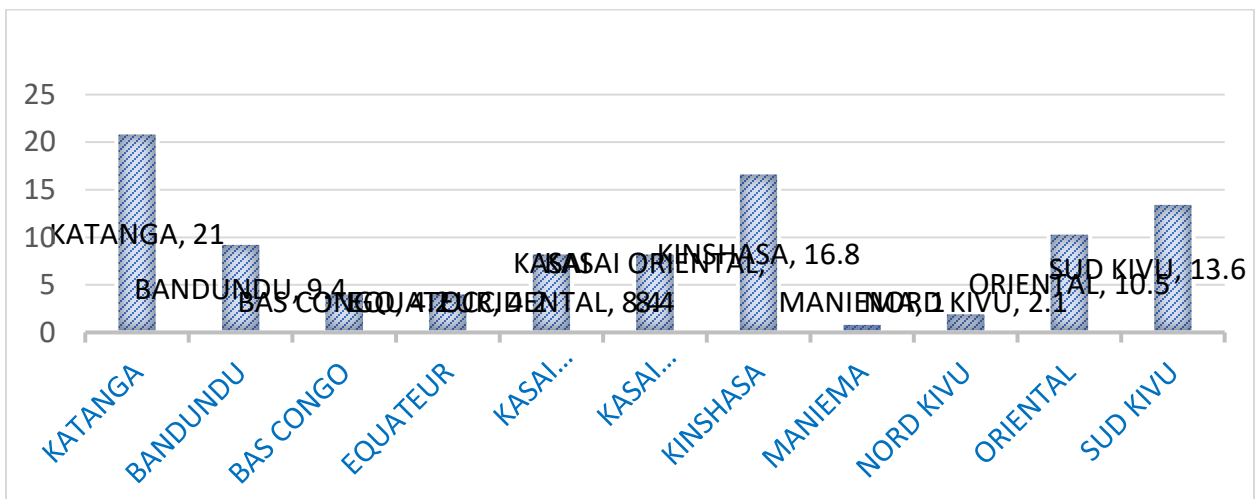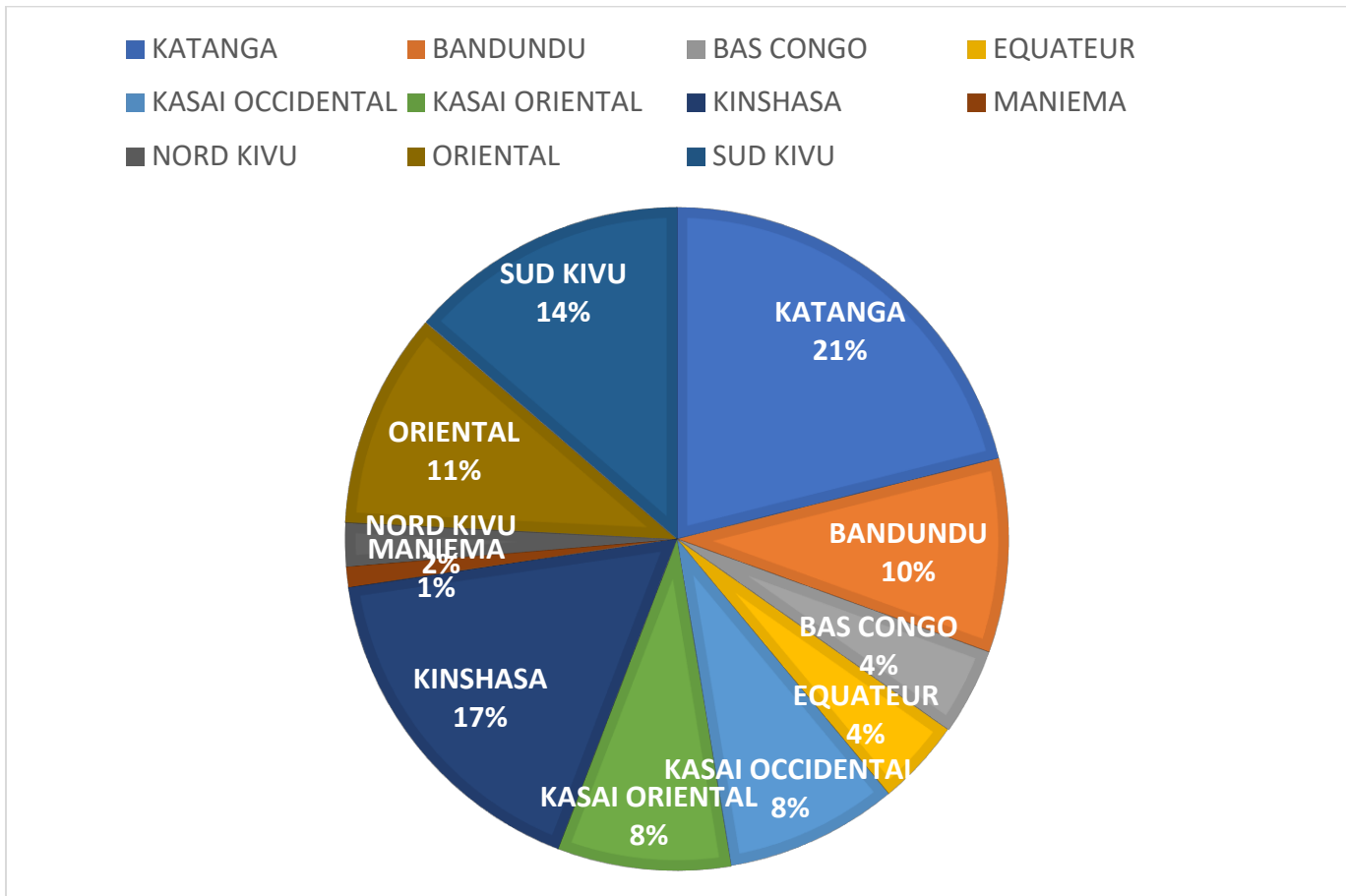
4.6 LIST OF 95 COMMUNITIES

(ECC, 2014c:113-122)

PROVINCE SEAT	NUM	COMMUNITY
BANDUNDU (9 Communities)	1	25^e Communauté Evangélique du Kwango (CEK) B.P. 36 KASONGO-Lunda/Bandundu
	2	35^e Communauté Union des Eglises Baptistes au Congo (CUEBC). B.P.78 Kikwit/Bandundu
	3	41^e Communauté des Eglises Chrétiennes Indépendantes Evangéliques (CEBIE) B.P. 18 Kikwit/Bandundu
	4	43^e Communauté Evangélique Congolaise (CECO) B.P.9 Idiofa/Bandundu
	5	48^e Communauté Baptiste Autonome Entre Wamba – Bakali (CEBAWB) B.P. Bandundu
	6	50^e Communauté Chrétienne Evangélique au Congo (CCEC) B.P. Mwela-Lemba/Bandundu
	7	53^e Communauté Baptiste du Kwango (CBK) B.P.4 Kasongo - Lunda/Bandundu
	8	78^e ECC/Communauté Confédération des Frères Evangéliques au Congo (COFEC) Bandundu
	9	93^e ECC/Communauté Confédération des Frères Evangéliques Bandundu (CCFE)
BAS CONGO (4 Communities)	10	18^e Communauté Evangélique de l'Alliance au Congo (CEAC) B.P.10 Boma/Bas-Congo
	11	23^e Communauté Evangélique au Congo (CEC) B.P. 36 Luozi/Kongo Central
	12	63^e Communauté du Saint - Esprit en Afrique (CSEA) Siege Social Mission Nzieta. B.P. 2 Luozi/Kongo Central
	13	65^e Communauté Reformée du Congo (CRC) B.P. 763 Matadi/Kongo Central
EQUATEUR (4 Communities)	14	10^e Communauté des Disciples du Christ au Congo (CDCC) B.P. 178 Mbandaka/Equateur
	15	17^e Communauté Evangélique du Christ en Ubangi (CECU) B.P. 145 Gemena/Equateur
	16	22^e Communauté Association des Eglises Evangéliques de la Lulonga (CADELU) B.P.30 Basankusu/Equateur
	17	51^e Communauté Evangélique de l'Ubangi Mongala (CEUM) B.P. 140 Gemena/Equateur

KASAI OCCIDENTAL (8 Communities)	18	27e Communauté Mennonites au Congo (CMCO) B.P. 18 Tshikapa/Kasaï-Occidental
	19	28e Communauté Méthodiste Unie au Congo Central (CMUCC). B.P. 560 Kananga/Kasaï-Occidental
	20	31e Communauté Presbytérienne au Congo (CPC) B.P.117 Kananga/Kasaï-Occidental
	21	33e Communauté Région Sankuru (CRS) B.P. 1673 Kananga/Kasaï-Occidental
	22	56e Communauté Evangélique du Kasaï - Occidental (CEK- BOOKE). B.P. 2 Kole/Boke Kasaï Occidental
	23	57e Communauté Presbytérienne au Kasaï - Occidental (CPKOC) B.P. Kananga/Kasaï Occidental
	24	79e ECC/Communauté des Pentecôtiste Reforme au Congo (CPRCO). Kasaï – Occidental
	25	94e ECC/Communauté Pentecôtiste Reforme au Congo (CPRCO) Kasaï – Occidental
KASAI ORIENTAL (8 Communities)	26	9e Communauté Evangélique Mennonites (CEM) B.P. 440 Mbuji-Mayi/Kasaï-Oriental
	27	42e Communauté des Eglises évangéliques du Congo Au Kasaï-Oriental (CEECO). B.P. Lodja/Kasaï-Oriental
	28	58e Communauté Presbytérienne au Kasaï - Oriental (CPKO) B.P. 1430 Mbuji - Mayi/Kasaï – Oriental
	29	60e Communauté Reformée Presbytérienne (CRP) B.P.1025 Mbuji - Mayi/Kasai – Oriental
	30	68e Communauté Mennonite Reformée au Congo (CMRC) Kasaï Oriental
	31	84e ECC/Communauté Méthodiste Moderne (CMM) Lodja/ Kasaï – Oriental
	32	86e ECC/Communauté de l'Ecole des Ambassadeurs du Christ (CEAC). Kasai – Oriental
	33	87e ECC/Communauté de l'Eglise Morave au Congo (CEMC)
KATANGA (20 Communities)	34	1e Communauté "Africa Inland Church Congo" (CAICC) B.P Lubumbashi/Katanga
	35	2e Communauté des Assemblées des Frères au Katanga (CAFKAT). B.P.2961LUBUMBASHI/KATANGA
	36	29e Communauté Méthodiste au Sud-Congo (CMSC) B.P. 522 Lubumbashi/Katanga
	37	30e Communauté Pentecôtiste au Congo (CPCO) B.P.380 Kamina/Katanga
	38	36e Communauté Centrale du Christ en Afrique (CCCA). B.P. 4769 Lubumbashi/Katanga

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	39	38ᵉ Communauté des Frères en Christ Garenganze (CFCG) B.P. 1768 Lubumbashi/Katanga. B.P. 291 Manono/Katanga
	40	45ᵉ Communauté évangélique de Pentecôte (CEP) B.P. 2397 Lubumbashi/Katanga
	41	46ᵉ Communauté Protestante au Katanga (CPK) B.P.400 Lubumbashi/Katanga
	42	49ᵉ Communauté Episcopale Baptiste Africaine (CEBA) B.P.3866 Lubumbashi/Katanga
	43	54ᵉ Communauté Méthodiste Unie au Nord - Katanga (CMUNK). B.P.89 Kamina/Katanga
	44	59ᵉ Communauté évangélique Africaine (CEA) B.P. 8175 Lubumbashi/Katanga
	45	62ᵉ Communauté Branche du Christ au Congo (CBCCO) B.P. 999 Lubumbashi/Katanga
	46	67ᵉ COMMUNAUTE évangélique de la Pentecôte (CEPE). Katanga
	47	72ᵉ ECC/Communauté Pentecôtiste Autonome du Congo (CPAC) Kipusha
	48	74ᵉ ECC/Communauté Church of God in Christ (CCGC). Katanga
	49	76ᵉ ECC/Communauté des évangéliques de la Vérité du Saint Esprit (CEVSE). Katanga
	50	77ᵉ ECC/Communauté évangéliques Pentecôtiste Source de Vie (CEPSV) Katanga
	51	82ᵉ ECC/Communauté des Frères en Christ Garengaze Manono Nord /Katanga
	52	85ᵉ ECC/Communauté évangéliques de la Liberté du Saint – Esprit (CELSE) Katanga
	53	95ᵉ ECC/Communauté Nouvelle Jérusalem en RDC (SNJ-RDC) Katanga
KINSHASA (16 Communities)	54	4ᵉ Communauté des Eglises des Frères Mennonites au Congo (CEFMC) B.P. 4714 KIN II
	55	6ᵉ Communauté des Eglises Baptistes Unies (CEBU) B.P. 16098 KINSHASA I
	56	13ᵉ Communauté Baptiste du Fleuve Congo (CBFC) B.P.205 Kinshasa I e-mail: cbfc@maf.org
	57	15ᵉ Communauté Baptiste du Congo Ouest (CBCO) B.P. 4728 Kin II
	58	32ᵉ Communauté Presbytérienne de Kinshasa (CPK) B.P. 91 Kinshasa
	59	37ᵉ Communauté des Assemblées de Dieu au Congo (CADC). B.P. 11758 Kinshasa I

	60	52e Communauté évangéliques Luthérienne du Congo Ouest (CELCO). B.P.70 Kinshasa
	61	61e Communauté de Jésus - Christ au Congo (CJCC) B.P.1276 Kinshasa I
	62	64e Communauté Chrétienne de Pentecôte au Congo (CCPC) Siege Social: Quartier Kimbangu/Kinshasa - Kalamu
	63	66e Communauté évangéliques Libre du Congo (CELC). Kinshasa
	64	69e Communauté Pentecôtiste Christ-Roi (CPCR). Kinshasa
	65	70e ECC/Communauté de la Fraternité évangélique au Congo (COFEC). Kinshasa
	66	71e ECC/Communauté Baptiste du Sud - Kwango (CBSK) Kinshasa
	67	73e ECC/Communauté Mennonite de Kinshasa (CMK). Kinshasa
	68	75e ECC/Communauté des Eglises Luthériennes Confessionnelles au Congo (CELCO). Kinshasa
	69	83e ECC/Communauté Missionnaire et évangéliques de la Résurrection (EMER). Kinshasa
MANIEMA (1 Community)	70	81e ECC/Communauté Méthodiste Unie au Congo Est (CMUCE) Lokole/Kindu
NORD KIVU (2 Communities)	71	3e Communauté Baptiste au Centre de l'Afrique (CBCA) B.P.485 GOMA /NORD-KIVU e-mail: cbca@busnet.net
	72	55e Communauté des Eglises Baptistes Congo - Est (CBCE) B.P. 202 Goma/Nord-Kivu
ORIENTAL (10 Communities)	73	11e Communauté Anglicane au Congo (CAC) B.P. 154 Bunia/Province Orientale
	74	12e Communauté "Assemblies of God" (COG) B.P.99 Isiro/Province Orientale
	75	14e Communauté Baptiste du Bas-Uele (CBCN) B.P. 82 Buta/Province Orientale
	76	16e Communauté évangéliques du Christ au Cœur d'Afrique (CECCA). B.P. 500 Isiro/Province Orientale
	77	20e Communauté évangélique au Centre de l'Afrique (CECA). B.P. 143 Bunia/Province Oriental
	78	21e Communauté Nations du Christ en Afrique (CNCA) B.P. 216 Kisangani/Province Orientale
	79	39e Communauté Assemblée des Frères Evangéliques au Congo (CAFECO). B.P. 350 Bunia/Province Orientale

	80	44ᵉ Communauté des Fidèles Protestants (CFP) B.P.20 Bondo/Province Orientale
	81	47ᵉ Communauté des Assemblées des Frères en Christ au Congo (CAFCC). B.P. 24 Mambassa/Province Orientale
	82	80ᵉ ECC/Communauté "Africa In land Church" en République Démocratique du Congo (AIC – RDC) Bunia/Province Orientale
SUD KIVU (13 Communities)	83	5ᵉ Communauté des Eglises Libres de Pentecôte en Afrique (CELPA) B.P BUKAVU/SUD-KIVU
	84	7ᵉ Communauté des Eglises de Grace au Congo (CEGC) B.P. 2658 BUKAVU/SUD-KIVU
	85	8ᵉ Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale (CEPAC) B.P. 266 BUKAVU/SUD-KIVU
	86	19ᵉ Communauté des Eglises évangéliques Berreenne au Congo (CEEBCO). B.P.2654 Bukavu/Sud-Kivu
	87	24ᵉ Communauté Libre de Maniema-Kivu (CLMK) B.P. 71 Shabunda/Sud-Kivu
	88	26ᵉ Communauté Libre Méthodiste au Congo (CLMC) B.P. 2110 Bukavu/Sud-Kivu
	89	34ᵉ Communauté Assemblée de Dieu à l'Est du Congo (CADAF). B.P. 2329 Bukavu/Sud-Kivu
	90	40ᵉ Communauté des Eglises Chrétiennes en Afrique (CECA) B.P. 1559 Bukavu
	91	88ᵉ ECC/Communautaires Eglises de Pentecôte de Dieu au Congo (CEPDCO) Sud Kivu
	92	89ᵉ ECC/ Communauté des Eglises Bibliques Indépendantes en Afrique (CEBIA) Sud Kivu
	93	90ᵉ ECC/Communauté des Eglises Pentecôtistes d'Expression Africaine (CEPEA - Porte Ouverte). Sud Kivu
	94	91ᵉ ECC/Communauté évangélique Luthérienne au Congo – Est (CELCE) Sud Kivu
	95	92ᵉ ECC/Communauté du Ministère de Réveil Pentecôtiste (CMRP). Sud Kivu

4.7 MISSION OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE DR CONGO

Early on in the post-independence development of Protestantism in the DR Congo, the Congolese were in the frontline of insisting that the constitution should declare the country to be a secular state. A proposal along these lines was debated in the

General Assembly held in Stanleyville in 1963. It was motivated by the wish to cut loose from the policies of the Belgium colony and it had been adopted from the *EIC ('Etat Independent du Congo',* Independent state of Congo).

In this section we consider the involvement of the Protestant Church in social action. As stated below,

> *"Le Protestantisme, pas plus que le catholicisme ou que toute autre instance religieuse, ne saurait s'isoler du processus ainsi mis en route ; sinon, il devient super structure idéologique, servant ainsi à la société ou perdant toute effectivité sociale »*(Bibi-Bikan, 2002:246).

> In English: "Protestantism, no more than Catholicism or any other religious body, could have isolated itself from the process that had been set into motion. If it had, it would have become an ideological superstructure, serving society as such, or it would have lost all effective social significance".

As Laurent states, Christianity is both spiritual and social. The Protestant missionaries declared that the church must speak out against the wrongs committed by the state against the people. The *Conseil Protestant Du Congo* insisted on the prophetic role of the church in public affairs (Bibi-Bikan, 2002:247-248).

The current constitution of the Protestant Church in its chapter 2, article 4, presents the triple mission of the church, of which the three parts are discussed in the following section (ECC, 2014a).

4.7.1 Evangelical mission

The evangelical mission is concerned with responding to the supreme order of the Lord.

> Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always to the very end of the age (Matthew 28.19-20).

The ECC has not updated its statistics for a considerable time so that no reliable recent statistics are available. The last provided information dates from the 1990s and specifies 25.505.220 church members, 320.101 local churches and 16.730 pastors. Sourced from the ECC website (ecc.faithweb.com, 1990).

4.7.2 Educative mission

The church must provide education leading to the Christian growth of people so that they may testify their faith and their unity as Christians in Congo and beyond. In this mission, the church professes the love of God, of neighbour and country. In its educational role, the church must equip people to be trained in all aspects of society.

4.7.3 Diaconal mission

This church mission is about searching for the integral welfare of human beings through performing philanthropic, religious deeds (for example, education, or the medical field). Hence, the Protestant organisation includes some departments as described below:

Education department. Primary and high schools are organised by the '*Coordination nationale des Ecoles Conventionnees Protestantes*' (National Coordination of Conventional Protestant Schools).

Table 17: Protestant department of education

Primary and high schools			
Schools	Pre-school	606	25.359
	Primary	16.498	
	High school	8.255	
Pupils	Pre-school	47.957	5.673.636
	Primary	4.265.661	
	High school	1.360.018	
Classes	Pre-school	1.795	186.462
	Primary	118990	
	High school	65.677	

		Pre-school	1.891	225.850
Teachers		Primary	125.165	
		High school	98.798	
Workers		Pre-school	96	2.843
		Primary	1.023	
		High school	1.724	
Universities and colleges				
Protestant Universities				10
Schools of theology				11
Technical colleges				15
Pedagogical colleges				07

Health department (*Département des Œuvres Médicales* 'DOM'). Relevant statistics have not been updated for years. Statistics provided in the 1990s list 63 hospitals, 606 clinics, 23 leproseries, 1.000 surgeries.

The ECC is as organisation partners with a number of associated organizations such as:

Alliance Biblique de la RDC (ABRDC) ;

Centre d'Accueil Protestant (CAP) ;

Centre Médical Evangélique de Nyankunde ;

Centre Protestant d'Editions et de Diffusion (CEDI) ;

Compassion Internationale (CI) ;

Habitat pour l'Humanité (HPH) ;

Institut Médical Evangélique de Kimpese (IME-Kimpese) ;

Ligue pour la Lecture de la Bible (LLB) ;

Ministère du Campus pour Christ International (MCCI) ;

Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF);

Université Protestante au Congo (UPC).

Among services directly attached to the Presidency are:

The Protestant Cathedral;

Finances and budget;

Internal audit;

The permanent secretariat of the national office of the Protestant

educational level;

Communication and press;

Commission of justice, peace and creation care;

Theological Commission;

Commission of HIV.

4.8 THE PROTESTANT CHURCH ON THE POLITICAL SCENE FROM 1990-2016

How would an engagement with socio-political issues fit in the context of the church's constitution and which of the church's commissions could be tasked with such matters?

The church's organisational set-up determines that the political commission of the church is not a permanent body. Some political involvement is inevitably also found in the activities of other commissions, for example the commission of peace and creation care. There is, besides, in the Executive National Committee an entire commission carrying political responsibility. The church has, however, no permanent department that continuously monitors and reflects on socio-political issues in the country. In my view, the lack of such a permanent body has a negative effect on the church's potential impact in the socio-political sphere.

The voice of the Protestant Church in the 1990s

On 25 February 1990 the prophetic voice of the Protestant Church was heard for the first time in the DR Congo, when the Regional Executive Committee in Kasai Oriental addressed its first memorandum to the President of the republic severely criticizing his governance. The message opened with Ezekiel 3.17-20 and closed with Isaiah 65.17-25. It was the first known positioning of the church (Kabongo,

1994: 75-78). On March 30 that year, the National President of the ECZ (*Eglise du Christ au Zaire*, Church of Christ in Zaire), addressed a memorandum to President Mobutu and so the Protestant Church became the first institution to suggest the introduction of a multi-party system when the failure of mono-party governance became evident.

The church repeated its suggestion in its pastoral letter of August 1, 1990, in Goma, insisting on a national sovereign conference.

> *(…) le président de la République devrait autoriser l'existence de 2 formations (partis) politiques au minimum ou 3 au maximum dont le cadre d'action devrait être défini par la Constitution (…) l'Église estime propice l'instauration d'un syndicalisme corporatif pluraliste* (Kabongo-Mbaya, 1994:79).

> In English, the President of the Republic should authorize the existence of at least 2 political parties, or at most 3, whose framework of action should be defined by the Constitution (…)The Church believes that the establishment of a pluralist trade union is opportune (Kabongo-Mbaya, 1994:79).

The second statement followed not long after, possibly even under the influence of the stance publicly taken by the Executive Committee of Kasai Oriental. Meanwhile, on April 24, 1990, President Mobutu had announced the return to a multi-party system limited to three political parties. Was the decision at this moment in time a coincidence or had Mobutu heard about, and taken note of, the church's proposition?

As Hoffman (1992 :75) notes, even in its memorandum, the church kept clinging to the theology that Mobutu was God's choice.

> "Convinced that it is God who has called you to take the country out of the impasse where it has found itself; given that you have risked your life on many occasions for this country and for the people; we encourage you as a Christian and request that you place the situation of our country in prayer'.

Address of the church in 1991

After the looting of September 1991, when the situation in the country was going from bad to worse, the ECC raised its voice once again. Referring to the earlier pastoral letter, the church addressed the nation as follows.

> *L'Eglise du Christ au Zaïre avait déjà signalé l'évolution néfaste du jeu politique observé au cours des dernières années : « Le Zaïre, notre pays, traverse une période difficile. La détérioration de la situation sociale et économique est arrivée à son comble. Une grande effervescence règne sur le plan politique. Tout risque d'exploser à tout moment. Bref, notre pays traverse une crise multisectorielle ».*

> *Le blocage du processus de démocratisation, les émeutes et pillages de Septembre et Octobre de cette année, la violence d'en haut et celle d'en bas portée sur des personnes et des biens annoncent une crise encore plus profonde. Le pays est dans l'abime. La guerre civile menace d'éclater. Dans l'entretemps, le petit peuple en subit les conséquences* (ECC, 1991:75,76).

> In translation, The Church of Christ in Zaire has already pointed out the harmful development of the political game observed in recent years: Zaire, our country, is going through a difficult period. The deterioration of the social and economic situation has reached its peak. Effervescence is rife on the political level. Every risk of an explosion, any time. In short, our country is going through a multi-sectoral crisis.

> The blockage of the process of democratization, the riots and looting of September and October this year, the violence from above and from below committed against people and their property indicate a deeper crisis. The country is in an abyss. Civil war is threatening to break out. The ordinary people in the meantime suffer the consequences (ECC, 1991:75,76).

The sovereign national conference

It seems that the Protestant Church was not asked for its input in respect of the sovereign national conference that started in 1991. This exclusion can be

explained by a lack of information channels and contacts between the ECC and the government. As the Protestant Church declared:

> " *Etant donné le manque d'information et de liaison entre le Secrétariat National de l'ECZ et la commission préparatoire (de la conférence nationale souveraine), notre apport n'a pas été consistant* »(ECC, 1991:77).

> In English, "Given the lack of information and contact between the National Secretariat of the ECZ and the preparatory commission (of the sovereign national conference), we have not been kept informed consistently".

A letter sent to the government informed it, that the ECC needed to be represented at the sovereign national conference by 300 members for 60 communities of about 14.000.000 Protestants around the country. The government, however, allowed participation in the conference for only 59 Protestants from the ECC.

A crucial moment in the conference came when the Catholics expressed disagreement by quitting whereas the Protestants chose to stay. Kabongo rightly remarks that, since the serious clashes with the colonial order in the 1900s and throughout the 1930s, the leading authorities of Protestantism had not significantly and publicly expressed any concern at the major problems in society and at, in particular, political issues. The more recent pronouncements of the ECZ (Church of Christ in Zaire) were surprising indeed (Kabongo-Mbaya, 1994:72).

Reading the signs of the times (*Kairos*), it would appear that the national head of the Protestant Church was put under pressure by other church leaders and made to reconsider his political viewpoint. One example of such pressure is the National Executive Committee meeting in Goma on July 29 to August 1, 1990. Debated was the position of the church in regard of the killing of students in Lubumbashi and on other campuses in the country. Reverend Mbiya Mulunda (Regional President of Kasai Oriental at the time) was the spokesperson for those who wanted the church to raise its voice and condemn the massacre. Many argued that in such circumstances the church's neutrality could not be maintained, lest it become compromising. It is clear that particular provinces played an important role trying to boost the prophetic responsibility of the church.

The President of the ECZ must, however, also have realised that the unanimity of Protestant leaders in respect of the MPR (*Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution*), the only political party, had become untenable.

All the Protestant leaders understood that the regime was collapsing and had no wish to go down with it. But their repositioning was not without its problems (Kabongo-Mbaya, 1994:72).

> *"Les positionnements nouveaux que peut avoir la direction de l'ECZ paraissent ainsi plutôt à la traîne des événements. La stratégie présente de l'ECZ nous semble portée par cette ambiguïté. Autrement dit, il s'agit d'une stratégie en crise, qui se cherche devant un avenir tout à fait incertain ».*

> In translation, "In its new positioning the ECZ (In the 90s) thus seems to be dragging behind the events. The present ECZ strategy appears driven by ambiguity. It is, in other words, a strategy in crisis, trying to define itself while facing an entirely uncertain future".

The process of determining new positions would have had more of an impact if it had been based on a theological view that offered a structural way of leadership, not waiting to follow the events, but advancing into the unknown future.

Address of the church, August 6, 1993

After the sovereign national conference, the National Executive Committee of the ECC issued a declaration, dated 6/08/1993 and calling the socio-political crisis damaging for the nation and its people.

> *Face à la crise socio politique actuelle et particulièrement depuis le déclenchement, le 24 Avril 1990, du processus de démocratisation du système dictatorial qui nous régit depuis 1965, elle n'a pas manqué, seule ou avec d'autres confessions religieuses, d'élever sa voix pour condamner ledit système* (ECC, 1991:83-84).

> Translation. Faced with the current socio-political crisis, and more especially since the unfolding on April 24, 1990 of the process of democratization of the dictatorial system that has governed us since 1965, the ECC has not refrained from, on its own or with other religious denominations, raising its voice to condemn the system.

The church seems to be withdrawing from the Mobutu scene by accusing it of having been, since 1965, a dictatorship. The church can't however claim that it has been critically watching the regime from its earliest dictatorial tendencies in 1965 onward. Only in the 1990s does the church begin to encourage a move towards democratisation and, even at that late moment, it confirms the need for the leadership of the founder of the MPR. When the church attempts to convince its critics that it has continuously eyed the regime's dictatorial tendencies with alarm, it is time and again the 1990, 1991 and 1992 declarations that are brought up (ECC, 1991:83-84). On the occasion of the same colloquium, Leonard Masu-ga, in a presentation entitled '*L'ECZ et la justice sociale au Zaire*' (The ECZ and social justice in Zaire), explains that those responsible for the misery and marginalisation of people in Zaire are directly linked to the powers that be. These powers have erected a structure of social injustice. Masu-ga exclaims: "Why does the Church remain silent before such a social situation?" (ECC, 1991:90-92).

At least, in its criticism following the sovereign national conference, three points are underlined, namely

- lack of respect for the commitment accepted in the conference
- lack of application of the political compromise
- and lack of reconciliation.

The problems are perceived as consequences of the deteriorating socio-political environment, including the highly conflicted political transition, the economic collapse and poverty.

Acts of national consultation

After the sovereign national conference, the church kept silent when the AFDL came to power by forcing out Mobutu. In search of peace and reconciliation, a national consultation was organised by all religious denominations from 24 February to 11 March 2000 in the *Cathédrale du Centenaire.* The consultation regrouped the army and the pacific apposition, the civil society, confessionals and laity, CETA (*Conférence des Eglises de Toute l'Afrique*), and COE (*Conseil Œcuménique des Eglises*). It also regrouped scientists, and Congolese from

diaspora. The consultation was conceived as a pastoral action to contribute to peace and reconciliation in the DR Congo. It was also appointed to prepare for the inter-Congolese dialogue planned for 2001 (Masiala-ma-Solo, 2000:7). It is clear that this consultation was not initiated and realised by the Protestant Church alone.

Inter-Congolese dialogue

The Inter-Congolese dialogue began on October 15, 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Pursuing the search for reconciliation and peace in the country, Bishop Pierre Marini, President of the ECC, became President of the senate from April 2003 to 2007. It was the end of the transition period. He was appointed as a consensual neutral figure, representing the organised religion section of civil society. On many occasions during his term, the church was accused of refusing to part ways with the governing power, as in the following interview.

Question. *« Certains disent qu'on ne sent pas l'Eglise Protestante prendre position, exercer des pressions dans certaines questions brulantes du pays ».*

In English, "People say that they don't see the Protestant Church taking position and exercising pressure in respect of certain burning questions in the country"

Bishop Marini's answer :

« Ils peuvent continuer la critique…Mais la prudence. Il faut d'abord suivre les choses ».

In translation: Let them carry on criticizing. But we need to be careful. We first of all need to follow up on the events". (Interview from Okapi radio, 18/01/2008).

Declaration of the church, 2010

 the fifteenth session of the church synod, twelve commissions were formed, among these a commission of justice, peace and safeguarding of the creation, and a commission of politics (ECC, 2010b:30). These two commissions had to work separately, each according to its own agenda while these agendas were probably not dissimilar. Soon there was confusion. When the time came to report on the outcome of the commissions, only the commission of justice, peace and creation care brought out a report with a few political recommendations (ECC, 2010b:94).

In the 2014 synod of the church, only the commission of politics appeared to be active (ECC, 2014b:59).

However, some of the recommendations made by the commission of justice, peace and creation care, were highlighted during the synod such as the need to encourage the national bureau to speak out clearly and impartially on political affairs, to encourage Protestant church members to get involved in political affairs, insist on Protestant ethics and reinforce the commission of JPSC (justice, peace and safeguarding creation), making it useful to the communities.

Declaration of the church, 2013

The theme of the 2013 declaration of the church was:

"Les hommes qui se livrent au mal ne comprennent pas ce qui est juste, mais ceux qui cherchent l'Eternel comprennent tout »

In translation, "Evil men do not understand what is right, but those who seek the Eternal understand all things" (according to Proverbs 28.5) (ECC, 2013:65).

From this declaration, some recommendations for the government resulted, for example that the justice system should be reinforced by putting the human being in its centre, and that bad governance should be mitigated in every stage of its exercising power.

Declaration of the church, 2014

At the end of the 2014 synod the usual declaration was issued, reflecting on different dimensions of discussions that had taken place. In the context of socio-political considerations, we underline the following recommendation of the synod.

> *Demande à toute la classe politique et sociale de respecter les textes légaux de la RDC en vue d'aboutissement heureux de ce processus électoral (…) Exhorte la classe politique et sociale de la RDC à respecter la constitution de notre pays dans toute son entièreté* (ECC, 2014b:107).

> In translation: Recommend the entire political and social class to respect the legal texts of the DRC for a successful conclusion of this

electoral process (...). Urge the political and social class of the DRC to respect the constitution of our country in its full entirety.

The above pronouncement of the church, insisting on respect for constitution and law, cannot but imply that the church will have to speak prophetically if the requested respect is not accorded.

A highly sensitive point in the country's governance was the revision of the constitution to allow the current President another term. In an interview, touching on precisely that point, the President of the church seems to add his support to a revision of the constitution so that the President can remain in office.

> *« Parfois on parle de certains articles qui sont bloqués, on ne peut pas les toucher. Mais là, nous sommes en train de museler la population qui est souveraine. Acceptons notre faiblesse. Ne pas bloquer le développement d'une société qui évolue ».*
> *(*National President of the ECC on 07/08/2014, sourced from radio Okapi : 'Mgr Marini Bodho, *favorable à la revision de la constitution')*.

> In English: "Sometimes we talk about certain subjects being blocked, we cannot touch on them. But then we are muzzling people who are sovereign. Let us accept our weakness and not block the development of a changing society".

Such a confusing comment must have emphasized the ambiguous positioning of the church in socio-political matters.

It is important though to distinguish the position of the church on socio-political issues from that of the church leader. It seems that there was at the time a tendency to mix up the personal view of the church leader with the outlook of the church in general.

Overview of the Executive Committee, 2015

In this committee, seven commissions had been appointed, among these the politics and legal commissions. The 2015 declaration of the Executive Committee spoke out on the problematic election process and the impoverished people (ECC, 2015: 55-60).

Implication of the church, 2016

In 2016, tensions in the DR Congo rose sky-high as the socio-political situation had become desperate and there was as yet no questions of elections being held as was constitutionally required. The church attempted to calm the situation and to promote peace by accepting to participate in a dialogue facilitated by Edem Kodjo who was there mandated by the AU.

My participation in the National Executive Committee of the Protestant Church in the DR Congo, held at '"Lycée Shaumba' betweem 18 and 21 September 2016, centred on a meeting mostly devoted to certain political issues. At the time the country was boiling with rebellious tendencies, resulting from various unhappy situations but most of all by the approach of a date for elections that might never be held. The opposition parties began to organise meetings directed against the majority party. An inclusive national dialogue had been initiated by President Kabila but boycotted by the opposition. A mediator was chosen by the African Union to facilitate the dialogue. The opposition, however, also rejected the mediator in the person of Edem Kodjo whom they accused of being partial to the majority party. At the same time there were continuously reports of arrests and killings all over the country.

During a session of the National Executive Committee as part of an ECC meeting from 18 to 21 September 2016, different political actors were invited to face each other.

The first one invited was Mamadou Dialo (second representative of the UN in the Grand Lake Region). His view was, according to the Monusco (UN mission), that the dialogue initiated by the President of the republic, should materialize.

The second participant consisted in a group of the opposition. A profoundly disturbing moment followed when they complained that the Protestant Church was always siding with the majority party. The opposition spokesman, Olenga Nkoy, reproached the Protestant Church, using the French expression of *'torpiller le pays'*, meaning that the Protestant Church was completely destroying the country.

The following day the church received Edem Kodjo, the mediator of the African Union. He shared the view with of the UN representative that the dialogue could be held even without the opposition and he rejected the accusation that he was siding with the majority party. The last invited group was represented by Mr. Néhémie, the Cabinet Director of the President of the republic. He expressed the view of the majority party that the dialogue should be organised before even thinking of holding elections.

By the end of the day the church had not yet announced an authentic position. The dialogue was finally organised, and, at its conclusion, President Joseph and the religious leaders issued a statement.

Les chefs des confessions religieuses notent que l'accord politique conclu à l'issue du dialogue dénote « d'un sens réel de responsabilité de la part des acteurs ». Dans une déclaration faite samedi 29 octobre, ils indiquent que ce compromis permet « d'aller vers l'organisation des élections transparentes, crédibles et apaisées, appelées par tout le monde ».

A la fin des travaux du dialogue national ouvert le 1er septembre, les participants ont signé un accord le 18 octobre dernier, sanctionnant la fin de ce forum national. Ce texte prévoit l'organisation de la présidentielle en avril 2018.

Selon les chefs religieux, cet accord proclame l'engagement des parties à respecter la constitution et l'accord lui-même. Il consacre aussi l'option de la gestion consensuelle de l'Etat.

Les chefs religieux rappellent que ce compromis reconnait l'impossibilité d'organiser des élections apaisées et crédibles d'ici la fin de l'année 2016 et lève l'option de régler définitivement la question de l'identification et de l'enrôlement des élections, « en recommandant l'inclusion de tous les électeurs potentiels dans le fichier électoral ».

Le sens de responsabilité de cet accord est aussi démontrable en ce qu'il laisse l'ouverture aux acteurs politiques et aux forces sociales qui n'ont pas pris part au dialogue, se réjouissent les chefs religieux.

De ce fait, ils félicitent le sens de dépassement de soi des participants ainsi que la qualité de médiation du facilitateur, Edem Kodjo, tout en déplorant que certains acteurs n'aient pas pris part à ces assises.

Des recommandations

Les chefs des confessions religieuses souhaitent que cet acquis soit préservé et consolidé et recommandent aux participants au dialogue de

« cultiver l'esprit de compromis ayant prévalu au dialogue et veiller à sa mise en œuvre sans faille ».

Ils demandent aux acteurs qui n'ont pas pris part au dialogue de « joindre leur voix à celle des autres pour parfaire l'accord politique issu du dialogue ».

Les chefs des confessions religieuses recommandent également aux autorités publiques de « prendre des mesures appropriées pour éviter des débordements dans les manifestations publiques ».

Les instances internationales sont appelées à soutenir cet accord qui, d'après les confessions religieuses, consacre le rapprochement entre des acteurs « que l'on ne pouvait concilier autrement ».

In English the main points of the declaration read: The leaders of religious denominations note that the political agreement reached at the end of the dialogue remarks on "a real sense of responsibility on the part of the actors". In a statement made on Saturday, October 29, they indicate that this compromise allows "to go towards the organization of transparent elections, credible and appeased, called by everyone".

At the end of the work of the national dialogue opened on September 1st, the participants signed an agreement on October 18th, sanctioning the end of this national forum. This text provides for the organization of the presidential election in April 2018.

According to the religious leaders, this agreement proclaims the commitment of the parties to respect the constitution and the agreement itself. It also notes the option of consensual management of the state.

Religious leaders recall that this compromise recognizes the impossibility of holding peaceful and credible elections by the end of 2016 and removes the option of definitively settling the question of the identification and enlistment of elections, "By recommending the inclusion of all potential voters in the electoral roll".

The sense of responsibility of this agreement is also demonstrable in that, to the rejoicing of the religious leaders, it leaves the door open for political actors and social forces who have not taken part in the dialogue.

Therefore, they congratulate the participants on passing beyond selfish interests, and the facilitator, Edem Kodjo, on the quality of his mediation, while regretting that some actors had not taken part in the meeting.

Recommendations

Heads of religious denominations hope that this achievement will be preserved and consolidated and recommend to the participants in the

dialogue to "cultivate the spirit of compromise that has prevailed in the dialogue and ensure its unfailing implementation".

They ask the actors who did not take part in the dialogue to "join their voices with those of others to perfect the political agreement resulting from the dialogue".

Heads of religious denominations also recommend that public authorities "take appropriate measures to avoid excessive public demonstrations".

International bodies are called upon to support this agreement which, according to religious denominations, consecrates the rapprochement between actors "who could not be reconciled otherwise".

Seven religious denominations signed this declaration which are, *L'Eglise du Christ au Congo (ECC), La Communauté Islamique en RDC, L'Eglise Kimbaguiste, L'Armée du Salut, L'Eglise du Réveil du Congo (ERC), L'Eglise Orthodoxe, L'Union des Eglises indépendantes du Congo (UEIC).* But the Catholic Church refused to sign. (Sourced by radio Okapi on 29/10/2016: '*Accord politique du dialogue*').

In the aftermath of the dialogue, following on the agreement of 18 October 2016 and the resulting declaration, the Catholic organization CENCO (*Conférence nationale épiscopale du Congo,* National Episcopal Conference in Congo), initiated another meeting, regrouping all the political parties, aiming for the inclusivity that had been missing from the first agreement where the Protestant Church had participated. The initiator, the Catholic Church through CENCO left out denominations that had already signed the agreement of 18 October. The division between Catholic and Protestant Church was evident. The Protestant Church was supporting, and the Catholic Church opposing, the government.

Meanwhile, in the Congo Central Province for example, some efforts were made from Protestant side to get involved in socio-political matters. In the 2015 declaration, the National Executive Committee had painted the country as suffering from reduced salaries, a worsening educational system, a high crime rate, the failure of state-linked manufacturers, the collapse of the judiciary system and a lack of freedom of expression. The four recommendations made were, to encourage local church members to enrol for elections; remind the government to

take care of the education system and to respect freedom of expression as well as allow the judiciary to function independently.

4.9 THE PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC CHURCHES AND THEIR POLITICAL DECLARATIONS

The following table gives a picture of positions taken by the Protestant and Catholic Churches in the DR Congo in response to government failure and as expressed in some of their declarations.

YEAR	PROTESTANT declarations	CATHOLIC declarations
2003		The church speaks out severely: "I have seen the misery of my people, enough is enough". The church realises that the Sun City agreement has not changed the situation. Belligerent participants don't respect the agreement and keep their promise. A few persons keep the entire nation in a state of slavery. Politicians work for their own interest and we assist them through the 1+4 system. Civil society is weakened. We assist the looting by foreigners. Truth, justice, love and freedom are pillars of peace. We are worn out by the belligerence in the country. People will no longer tolerate evasiveness. The Catholic Church will use appropriate ways to advance peace (CENCO, 2003)..
		"For the love of Congo, I will never be silent". Without complacency the bishop evaluates the country's transition. This message appeals to the conscience of political leaders (CENCO, 2004).
2006		The church warns people ahead of the elections to behave responsibly. The church is aware that the people are in need of civic education. The church reminds society that in political matters

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		the church is above people and political parties (CENCO, 2006).
2009		Rightness exalts a nation. The church reprimands people for 'evil' permeating society. Everyone complains, corruption is a cancer worsening the dysfunction of the judiciary. The state weakens when people are not well paid and human dignity is abused. External forces weaken the nation. Religion does not make people understand their social responsibility. The priority of values is ignored. We must seek social justice (CENCO, 2009)
2012		The church denounces the corruption of elections effected by the national election commission, as well as the state ensuring its power by cheating, lying, forcing, militarisation and denying the people freedom of expression (CENCO, 2012:5-14)
2013	*"Les hommes qui se livrent au mal ne comprennent pas ce qui est juste, mais ceux qui cherchent l'Eternel comprennent tout »* (Prov 28.5)	The church denounces the balkanisation plan, the capture of Goma and every greedy act committed by political actors without exception. The church did advocate the M23 (CENCO, 2013:3-13)
2014	*« Parfois on parle de certains articles qui sont bloqués, on ne peut pas les toucher. Mais là, nous sommes en train de museler la population qui est souveraine. Acceptons notre faiblesse. Ne pas bloquer le développement d'une société qui évolue »* (Interview of National President of the ECC on 07/08/2014). In English: "Sometimes we talk about certain issues as being blocked, we cannot touch on them. But then we are muzzling the people who are sovereign. Let us accept our	The church is set on the non-modification of the constitution which could endanger the search for peace and national cohesion. The church has promised to mobilise people and make them understand art. 220 of the constitution (CENCO, 2014:3-14).

	weakness and not block the development of a changing society"	

4.10 IMPACTS OF, AND GAPS IN, PROTESTANT INVOLVEMENT IN THE NATION'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL WELLBEING

It needs to be stated that the existence of a political commission in, or socio-political involvement of, the church does not necessarily lead to organizing political activities or occupying posts in political life or government. The following section assesses impacts made by Protestant actions in the context of politics, as well as gaps that need to be filled.

4.10.1 Has Protestant socio-political involvement made any impact in the DR Congo?

As regards the church's involvement in politics, a few points may give the issue some general background.

The church, in its early years, did push its views on socio-political issues. Early during the Mobutu regime, the politically powerful captured the church with great urgency, aiming to make it work in Mobutu's interests. The voice of the church when raised was often aimed at allowing the President to remain in power and strengthen his position. Personal voices were often heard, opposing the unjust system of governance, but not having much of an impact. When the church tried to speak objectively on socio-political matters, it made no considerable impact. Why was the voice of the Protestant Church not heard? The personal positions of church leaders concerning socio-political issues were not clearly distinguished from the church's, or synodal, positions, nor from the leaders' views when speaking in their quality of executives.

4.10.2 Gaps in the Protestant Church's dealings with its political responsibility

One reason why the Protestant Church's socio-political involvement in the DR Congo was doomed to weakness is that it took the form of an attachment to the President of the church. It never functioned as a department in its own right, but at most as an occasional commission that could sometimes be made to act as an annual executive committee as we have seen above from some executive reports. This means that the executive committee takes in scrutinizing governance is not enough to reflect on political, social and economic ills in order to impact the actual lives of people.

The church counted two services, similar to each other. The one, attached to the Presidency, occupied itself with justice, peace and safeguarding creation (*Commission de justice, paix et sauvegarde de la creation*). Bekofe (1999:68) suggested that this commission should seriously focus on the matter of human rights since this is also the prophetic mission of the church. Thus, through this commission, the National Secretariat could become the voice of the voiceless. In addition, it was the commission's calling to denounce and fight injustice and defend the oppressed.

Next to these tasks, the commission was expected to organize a colloquium, training of church leaders and theological reflection on socio-political matters.
The second commission, called Diaconia, functions in cooperation with the [Congolese Protestant Relief Agency (CPRA)](#), [*Ministère de l'Eglise pour les Réfugiés et les Urgences* (MERU)](#), and *Centre Protestant d'Approvisionnement en Médicaments* (CEPAM). Bekofe has explored the organisational structure of the ECC since 1999. Having interviewed Mushila and Munduku on this subject, he states:

> *Le Secrétariat National doit développer une ecclésiologie Christocentrique devant se soumettre à des reformes ; une ecclésiologie plus eschatologique qui permet de jouer sa mission ou rôle prophétique. Il lui faut une structure qui favorise l'exercice d'une diaconie libératrice.*

> *Ensuite, en nous référant à connaitre sa propre analyse situationnelle du Secrétariat National nous pouvons dire que les questions éthiques et dogmatiques qui se posent dans l'Eglise et qui doivent trouver des solutions, la mission de l'Eglise en faveur des droits de l'homme, l'efficacité de la participation des chrétiens dans le processus de transformation sociale, l'épanouissement de l'identité de l'église sont autant des facteurs qui influencent le révision de la structure organisationnelle* (Bekofe, 1999:64-65).

> In English: The National Secretariat must develop a Christocentric ecclesiology before submitting to reforms; a more eschatological ecclesiology that allows it to fulfil its mission or prophetic role. A structure is needed that is favourable for the exercise of a liberating *diaconia*.

> Next, referring to our knowledge of the situational analysis of the National Secretariat itself, we may say that the ethical and dogmatic questions that arise in the church and that must find solutions, the mission of the church in favour of human rights, the effectiveness of Christian participation in the process of social transformation, the flourishing of the identity of the church, all of these are factors that influence the revision of the organizational structure (Bekofe, 1999:64-65).

Another gap in the church's involvement in socio-political concerns is presented by the fact that most declarations of the church are not heard by the people. They feature in the reports of national synods and Executive Committees. The church needs to deal with this by establishing a powerful and competent communication service to spread its message among the people.

CONCLUSION

Chapter Four discusses the Protestant Church and its involvement with socio-political issues. One of the strengths of the Protestant Church in the DR Congo is that it has a structured organisational body in which 95 communities around the country are gathered. The body was created in 1941 with the aim to unify and develop Protestantism sharing one motto: "all one in Jesus". Following on the establishment of this body, the church strove for an awareness of civil society and

to attain religious freedom of the people. The 1970s were the scene of an apparent split between Mobutu and Malula. Mobutu now needed another platform to strengthen his position. He turned to the body of Protestantism that became a supportive force and acted the good boy for the government.

According to its constitution, three social objectives are the concern of the church. These are the evangelical mission, the educative mission and diaconal mission. The church accomplishes its diaconal mission by social activities.

In the context of its political concerns, the church releases declarations as part of synods and usually referring to each of its executive commissions. The church began to modify its position in relation to the government, forced by the events of the 1990s, when socio-economic policies led to the collapse of the country.

Since 1990 the church has made many declarations on issues of a socio-political nature and participated in combined actions. One problem in this political involvement remains the lack of clear separation of the church leader's personal position from the church's view of specific socio-political issues. The risk posed by the mission of socio-political involvement of the church to its integrity is that of aspiring to political posts.

Before the 1970s the socio-political impact of the church was strong. After the 1970s the church came to serve the government to some extent. There were a few awakenings in the church during the 1990s. But the tendency didn't persist, and the church's impact was weakened by minor declarations that referred to socio-political issues but made little impression. Chapter Five reports on field work, aimed at verifying the church's contemporary position on socio-politics.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Five presents the data and discusses the use of interviews after data collection. It refers to data relevant to developments in the positions taken by Protestant Church leaders in the DR Congo in respect of socio-political issues in the country. The chapter is divided in three parts, assessing the roles of church leaders in the DR Congo. The parts are concerned with the research approach, presentation of the data analysis, and the data interpretation.

5.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.2.1 Research approach

The research uses the mixed (quantitative and qualitative) method. Considering the difference between quantitative and qualitative research, Denzen (2003:13) reasons that qualitative research stresses the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and that which is studied, and seeks to provide answers to questions stressing the creation of social experience in order to determine its meaning. The quantitative approach, on the other hand, emphasizes the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables.

Quantitative research generally requires randomly selected large representative samples for research results to be generalized from the population. It allows a researcher to obtain a broad and generalisable set of findings and presents these succinctly. The researcher's role is a neutral one, but a qualitative study allows him or her an understanding of process, context, interpretation and meaning through inductive reasoning (Yilmaz, 2013:313).

Scholars agree that qualitative methods are often used to explore and understand the meaning that individuals and groups assign to their lived experience. Data collection is usually done by applying a variety of methods (observation, interviews, the reviewing of relevant written materials). The collected data can then be reviewed using methods of coding and identifying themes and patterns that become apparent (Jacob, 2016:54).

The quantitative method is useful in the testing of conceptual models and to understand the relationships between variables. It establishes the effectiveness of a treatment. The method is also useful for measuring the opinions or views of a group and can, besides, be used to assess and quantify participants' thoughts, emotions and behaviours for use in statistical analysis (Jacob, 2016:56).
In summary, the quantitative research is used to quantify the research problem, to measure and count issues and then to generalize findings to cover a broader population. In contrast, the qualitative method is used to understand or explain behaviour, belief, and identify processes as well as the context of people's experiences.

The method is used in the present study to quantify the involvement of church leaders of the Protestant Church in the DR Congo in socio-political affairs. The finding is then generalized to the Protestant Church in its entirety. It will also lead to an understanding of the behaviours of Protestant church leaders.
Some scholars are of the opinion however, that the findings presented by qualitative researchers may be due to chance as without significance tests, it is impossible to eliminate the null hypothesis. On the other hand, qualitative researchers criticize quantitative research by arguing that the null hypothesis can have a low or a high probability of being true, even when p is less than .05. (Trafimow, 2014:16).

Considering the differences between quantitative and qualitative research, the general opinion is that qualitative research wants to understand behaviour, is subjective, depth data collection, but its findings cannot be generalized. The method is holistic and has dynamic reality whereas quantitative research looks for

the fact, the cause of social phenomena, is objective, reliable, generalizable, particularistic, and offers stable reality (Blaxter, 2006:65).

The present study is based on mixed method research. It involves combining various approaches in a single research project. As observed by Maseh (2015:81), "the term mixed method has developed as an umbrella term applying to almost any situation where more than one methodological approach is used in combination with others, usually, but not essentially, involving a combination of at least some elements drawn from each of the qualitative and quantitative approach".

The nature of this study requires exploratory research. The results obtained in explanatory research are mostly determined by the soundness of the design of the study from which the data are collected. One design issue of special importance is the question of what measured variables to include in the study (Fabrigar, 1999:273).

5.2.2 Data gathering

This research gathers primary and secondary data.

5.2.2.1 Primary data

Data was collected among Protestant church leaders in the DR Congo, across ten out of eleven provinces. An authorisation letter was written by the church's bishop for conducting the research among church leaders (see appendix).

5.2.2.2 Secondary data

The research makes use of some secondary data obtained from books, primary documents, and academic journals, as well as reports of national meetings held by the Protestant Church in the past years. Some pictures have been taken when conducting the research.

5.2.2.3 Target population

The target population consists of 95 church leaders of the 95 communities forming the Protestant Church in the DR Congo which, being an umbrella body, is usually called the ECC, or 'Church of Christ of Congo'. The 95 communities are working independently from each other. The study focuses on the leaders of each community. In total, 83 church leaders were interviewed of whom 82 are males and 1 female. They hail from ten provinces out of a total of eleven, according to the past configuration of administrative provinces in the country. The eleventh province, Maniema province, has been omitted from the study, because accessing the region among security issues would have led to serious delays.

5.2.2.4 Sampling size technique

The participation criteria in this research consist in the simple random sampling to the population, aiming to include every church leader of all the communities. Each leader has the same probability of being selected at any stage of the selection process. This sampling technique guarantees an equal probability of selection. It ensures the researcher of a representative sample of the population (Turner, 2011:153). Considering the population size of 95 church leaders, the acceptable margin of error of .05 and an alpha value of .05 gets us to 77 as the minimum sample. Fifteen percent should be added to make up for respondents who might leave out some questions or choose not to answer them. Thus, a sample size of 88 is possible. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) in their table for determining sample sizes, indicate a sample of 76 as appropriate for a population of 95. Hence, the present researcher's sample of 83 out of a population of 95 is representative.

5.2.2.5 Questionnaire

The questionnaire, among the most popular instruments in social research, is applied in the present study.

The questionnaire is made up of 23 questions divided into three sections. It is attached as an appendix to the research. The first section is concerned with demography, considers factors of possible influence on the study such as gender,

experiences in the ministry, the location of communities, respondents' positions in the church and in their communities. The second part deals with aspects of the investigation of the Protestant Church's commitment to political issues. In the last part the feelings of participants when responding to the questionnaire are assessed. Each question is constructed in such a way that responses may be expected to help answering research questions and to clarify aspects of the study objectives. A professional statistician has analysed the questionnaire before it was distributed to the respondents.

Based on relevant discussions by scholars, the questionnaire uses five types of questions: a list of multiple choice, scale, ranking, complex grid or table, and open-ended questions (Blaxter, 2006: 181).

5.2.2.6 Ethical clearance

In accordance with academic rule, ethical clearance was sought and issued before conducting the field work.

5.2.2.7 Distributing the questionnaire

Participants received the questionnaire, prior to the date scheduled for interviews. Data was recorded for analyses. In the case of those participants who were gathered in meetings in Kinshasa, for example of provincial and national committees, the questionnaire was distributed then and there, explained, and thereafter completed. The questionnaire was translated into French as the language that respondents are familiar with.

5.2.2.8 Data coding

The statistical tools employed in the present study consist in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 24 (SPSS 24). Each question was coded in SPSS for the purpose of analysis and interpretation.

5.2.2.9 Data analysis

Data collected is analysed using both descriptive and inferential analysis methods.

Descriptive analysis in quantitative research is based on the principle of a panellist's ability to verbalise his or her perception of a product in a reliable manner. The method embodies screening and training procedures, development and use of sensory language and the scoring of product in repeated trials to obtain a complete, quantitative description (Hootman, 1992:15). Many scholars qualify descriptive statistics as dealing with a set of data called 'data set'. Descriptive statistics is used in understanding and summarizing the key numerical characteristics of the data set. The process is aimed at describing and summarizing the research data (Turner, 2011: 391). It is also defined as the systematic collection of quantitative information along lines specified by the rule of inductive logic (Moses, 2012:71) and looks at the mean, the standard deviation, the maximum and minimum values of data.

Inferential analysis consists in making inferences about populations based on the sample data (Turner, 2011:391). The two major parts of inferential analysis are estimation and hypothesis testing. The sample data is used to generalize the population. The use of random sampling is important in inferential statistic because the researcher cannot reach all of the population in which he is interested. Inferential statistics allows the researcher to make warranted claims about the population parameters (Turner, 2011:425).

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) is one of the parametric statistics. This analysis is applied to determine the degree, the observed value, the significance level and the effect size (Tyler R. Harrison, 2002:55). It allows one to compare the mean score of a continuous variable between a number of groups, by testing the null hypothesis that several group means are equal to the population (Muijs, 2011:175).

5.2.2.10 Variable scale of measurement

The measurement is the act of measuring, conducted by assigning symbols or numbers to something according to a specific set of rules. (Turner, 2011:140). According to Stevens, four scales of measurement can be distinguished. Three of these are used in this research, namely nominal, ordinal, and interval scales.

Questionnaires and rating scales are commonly used to measure qualitative variables.

The nominal scale is a non-quantitative scale of measurement. It uses symbols such as words or numbers to classify the value. The research questionnaire uses this scale for example for gender which is either male or female. Svensson (2001:47)argues that the scaling of responses can vary from the dichotomous alternatives 'yes' and 'no' to a mark on a line, as in the visual analogue scale (VAS).

The ordinal scale is a rank-order scale. This scale is used in the present research to distinguish the degree of acceptance by respondents, from strong to weaker. Some scholars are of the opinion that the median level and the quartiles or, in the case of small samples minimum and maximum (range), are appropriate measurements to describe the distribution of ordinal data. Bar charts point plots of VAS assessments and box and whisker plots are recommended for the graphical display of the distribution of ordinal data (Svensson, 2001:47).

The interval scale used in the present research serves to determine the difference between the equal adjacent points of interval. This study makes use of continuous variables.

Scholars suggest numerical labels as being commonly used for the recordings (Svensson, 2001:47). The study purpose, the properties of study groups and whether assessments or self- or observer-reported are important factors in the choice of research instruments. The structure of the instrument should be described, for example the dimensions of the variable, the number of items and the types of item responses. The joint frequency distribution of paired assessments could be presented in contingency tables or, in the case of VAS assessments, in scatter plots.

5.2.3 Tests used in the study

Tests that have been applied in this study are mentioned below.

5.2.3.1 Chi-square goodness-of-fit test

The chi-square goodness-of-fit test is a univariate test used on a categorical variable to test whether any of the response options are selected significantly more or less often than others. Under the null hypothesis, it is assumed that all responses are equally selected. The test is referred to as a single sample chi-square test determining whether frequencies across categories of variables are distributed in relative manner (Tyler R. Harrison, 2002:36). It is also considered as one of the most useful statistics for testing hypotheses when the variables are nominal. The test can give information, either on the significance of any observed differences, or provide details of exactly which categories account for any differences found (McHugh, 2013:143). The model ought to be lower than 0.5.

Accepting the null hypothesis H_0 means that the model fixes the data. For a p value greater than 0.05 one accepts the null hypothesis. The alternative hypothesis means that the model does not fix the data (Hansen et al., 2015:89).

Goodness-of-fit procedures are tools in data analysis and used for the detection of model misspecification. They are also employed as formal test statistic corresponding to a particular null hypothesis or might, alternatively, offer a graphical display. Scholars argue that most statistical models are based on some assumptions. Goodness-of-fit procedures are necessary to ensure that conclusions are drawn from the model (Hansen et al., 2015:89).

5.2.3.2 Binomial test

The binomial test determines whether a significant proportion of respondents selects one out of a possible two responses. This test can be extended when data with more than two response options is split into two distinct groups. For categorical questions, the binomial test is used when there are 2 categories and the chi-square goodness-of-fit test when there are 3 or more categories.

5.2.3.3 Independent t-test

The research uses the independent samples t-test which serves to determine if the means of two independent sets of data are significantly different from each other.

These two sets of data are mutually exclusive. The null hypothesis for mean differences is presented as: Ho: $\mu 1 = \mu 2$, where $\mu 1$ and $\mu 2$ are the means of the first and second populations respectively. In the case of the null hypotheses being rejected, it means that there is a difference between the means of both samples, which forms the basis for accepting the alternate hypothesis ($H1$: $\mu 1 \neq$). In making the decision rule, the significant value (p-value) is compared to the alpha level (α) set prior to the test by the researcher. If $p < \alpha$, the null hypothesis is rejected implying there is a significant difference between the means of both samples. The current study employs the independent sample t-test. It determines whether subordinates who behave in an assertive fashion receive a fairer treatment than those who display low-assertiveness behaviour (Tyler R. Harrison, 2002:54). In this research a one-sample t-test is applied to all Likert scale questions for significant agreement or disagreement, or extent or impact.

5.2.3.4 Descriptive statistics with means and standard deviations

The mean is the arithmetical average. The standard deviation is an approximate indicator of the average distance that the data value is from their mean. For the variance and the standard deviation, the larger the value, the greater the data are spread out, and, the smaller the value the less the data are spread out (Turner, 2011:400,402). Moses (2012:77) defines it as a measure of dispersion used to capture the spread of scores in a distribution of scores.

5.2.3.5 Factor analysis

Factor analysis is a technique that essentially reduces a set of variables to a smaller number of underlying factors and that detects structure in the relationship between variables. It looks for combinations of variables that may represent an underlying latent variable that the researcher has not directly measured but that the variables that have been collected represent (Muijs, 2011:199). It makes sense of a large number of correlations between variables and is an exploratory tool (Robson, 2002:433).

5.2.3.6 Thematic analysis applied in qualitative analysis

Thematic analysis is applied for dealing with the second objective of this research, namely the provision of a theological foundation for the political responsibility of

the prophetic voice. (Further study objectives are to propose some theological perspectives to the church and to assess the risks run by the church if it engages in the political prophetic way.

Hennink *et al.* (2011:16,17) define qualitative research as an approach that allows the researcher to examine peoples' experience in detail by using a specific set of research methods such as interview, focus group discussion, and observation. The researcher can identify by qualitative research issues from the perspective of the participants in the study and understand their interpretation of, and the perceived meaning they ascribe to, behaviours, events and objects. Qualitative research can also imply studying people in their natural settings to discover how their experiences and behaviours are shaped by their lives' contexts (Hennink, 2011:9). Conducting qualitative research is thus helpful in developing an understanding of church leaders' views on the involvement of the church in political responsibility and of the way in which they experience the insistence on the need for such involvement.

The researcher interprets the meanings given by participants themselves to their views and experiences.

Thematic analysis can be defined as a method to identify, analyse and report on patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes data set detail. Thematic analysis is widely used, but there is no clear agreement about what it exactly entails and how to go about applying it (Braun, 2006:79).

A theme is something captured within important data in relation to the research question and it represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set (Braun, 2006:82).

Braun and Clarke distinguish six phases in conducting thematic analysis. The researcher first has to become familiar with the data, after which he or she must generate initial codes, search for themes, review themes, define and name those themes and finally produce the analysis report (Braun, 2006:87).

Scholars emphasize that the codes in such a study are inductive codes and that some concurring of them is applied. The content analysis must be done manually to identify key themes and patterns in the data (Ahmadnezhad et al., 2013:485).

5.2.4 Validity and reliability of the measurement instruments

Validity and reliability are the main criteria by which research is judged. The presence of these qualities ensures that measurement error is kept to a minimum. They serve as instruments to determine properties of the measurement that give us confidence that it is doing its job properly. Validity is an instrument measuring what is set out to be measured. Reliability is an instrument that can be interpreted consistently across different situations. Another property of the reliability instrument is its ability to measure and produce the same results under the same conditions (Fiel, 2009:11,12). Reliability is the consistency or stability of scores. Its coefficient is a type of correlation that should be as strong and positive as 0.70 to indicate the consistent strength of a relationship (Christensen, 2011: 143). Gomm defines validity as something close to truth. He distinguishes between internal and external validity. Internal validity refers to the truth of claims made about the research itself. External validity is concerned with the question whether what the research has found can be generalized to include other persons, places and times (Gomm, 2008:13). Gomm understands reliability as consistency which is most essential for research instruments. Questions must lead to the same result if asked and explored in the same circumstances (Gomm, 2008:13). Validity refers to the accuracy of inferences, interpretations or actions made on the basis of test scores. Christensen and various other scholars mention different types of validity. Internal validity is named as the one concerned with the inference that the independent and dependent variables are causally related. The external validity refers to the inference whether the causal relationship holds in respect of people, setting, treatment variables, measurement variables, and time (2011:145, 169).

5.2.5 Ethical consideration

The purpose of this study is to explore the role of the Protestant Church in the DR Congo in respect of socio-political involvement. The benefit of participating in the study consists in the fact that respondents potentially contribute to a deeper

understanding of the church and its thinking on the one, and of political issues in the DR Congo on the other hand. Completing the questionnaire does not pose any risk to participants. The anonymity of participants is ensured. Strict confidentiality is observed. Names of participants are not included in the research report. All questions will be coded when the responses are interpreted. Research data are kept in a secure place to protect the identity of the participants. A DVD file is made in an Excel format of all collected data. Participation in the completion of the questionnaire is completely voluntary. Participants have the right to withdraw from the research any time they are uncomfortable with any of its aspects, without negative consequences.

5.2.6 Limitations of the study

There are challenges in working with church leaders. It is often not easy to reach them. Having been authorized to conduct the research, I had to adapt to their time schemes and fit in with their programmes.

One of the church leaders kept the questionnaire for a long time after which, instead of completing it, he sent me the following message.

> "*Pasteur Kuvuna. Je vous supplie de ne vous adresser qu'à mon Vice-Président pour vos préoccupations. Je suis trop pris personnellement pour les besoins que la Suède me demande chaque jour par internet. Merci. Oubliez-moi* ».

> In English: "Pastor Kuvuna, I beg of you to address only my vice president about your concerns. I personally am too busy dealing with the requests I receive daily via the internet from Sweden. Thank you. Count me out me".

5.3 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.3.1 Demographics

The present section considers how such components as age, number of years in the ministry, studies, size of community and province may influence the Protestant church leaders when making decisions relevant to an engagement of the church in socio-political issues.

5.3.1.1 Gender

Figure 6: Gender
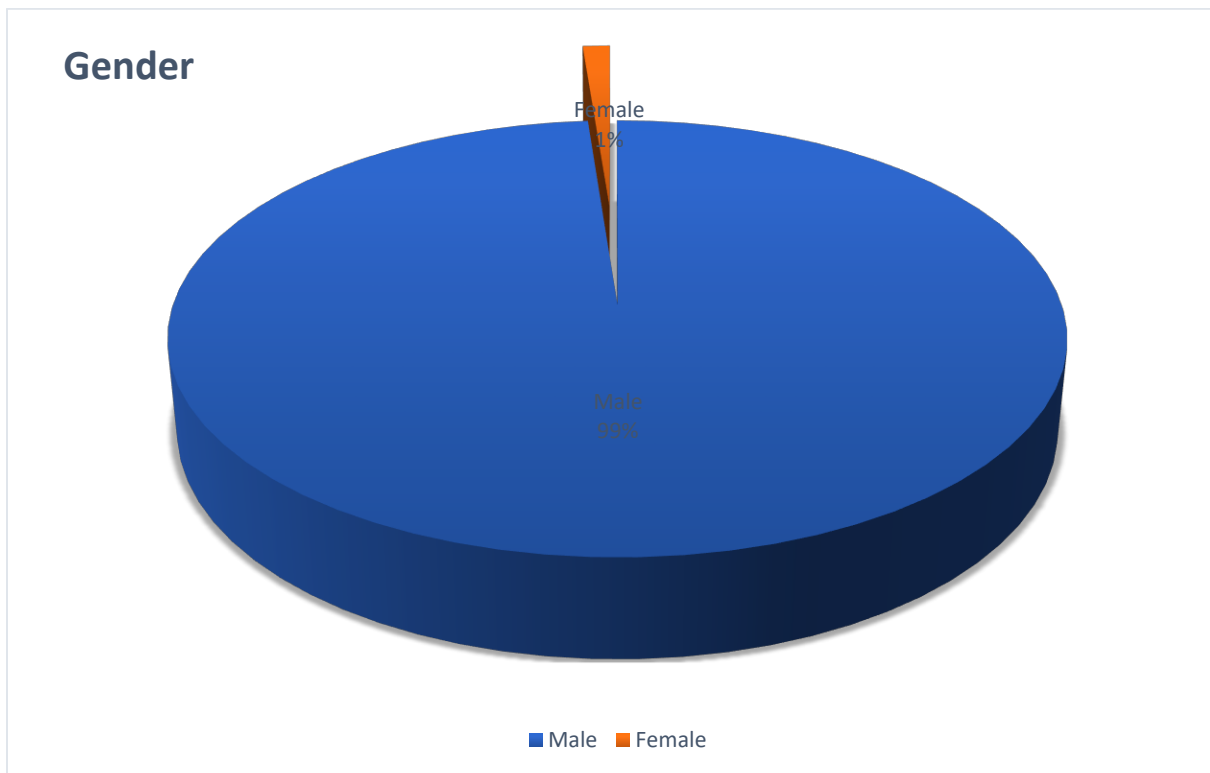
Source: Author's computation

The present study shows that the gender issue is still in need of attention in the church leadership in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Of those who participated in the simple random sampling, one per cent was female and 99 per cent male.

5.3.1.2 Theological studies

Figure 7: Theological studies

Studies

Legend: Bible school | Graduate | Licence | Masters/PhD | No theological studies

Pie chart values: No theological studies 5%, Masters/PhD 14%, Bible school 6%, Graduate 18%, Licence 57%
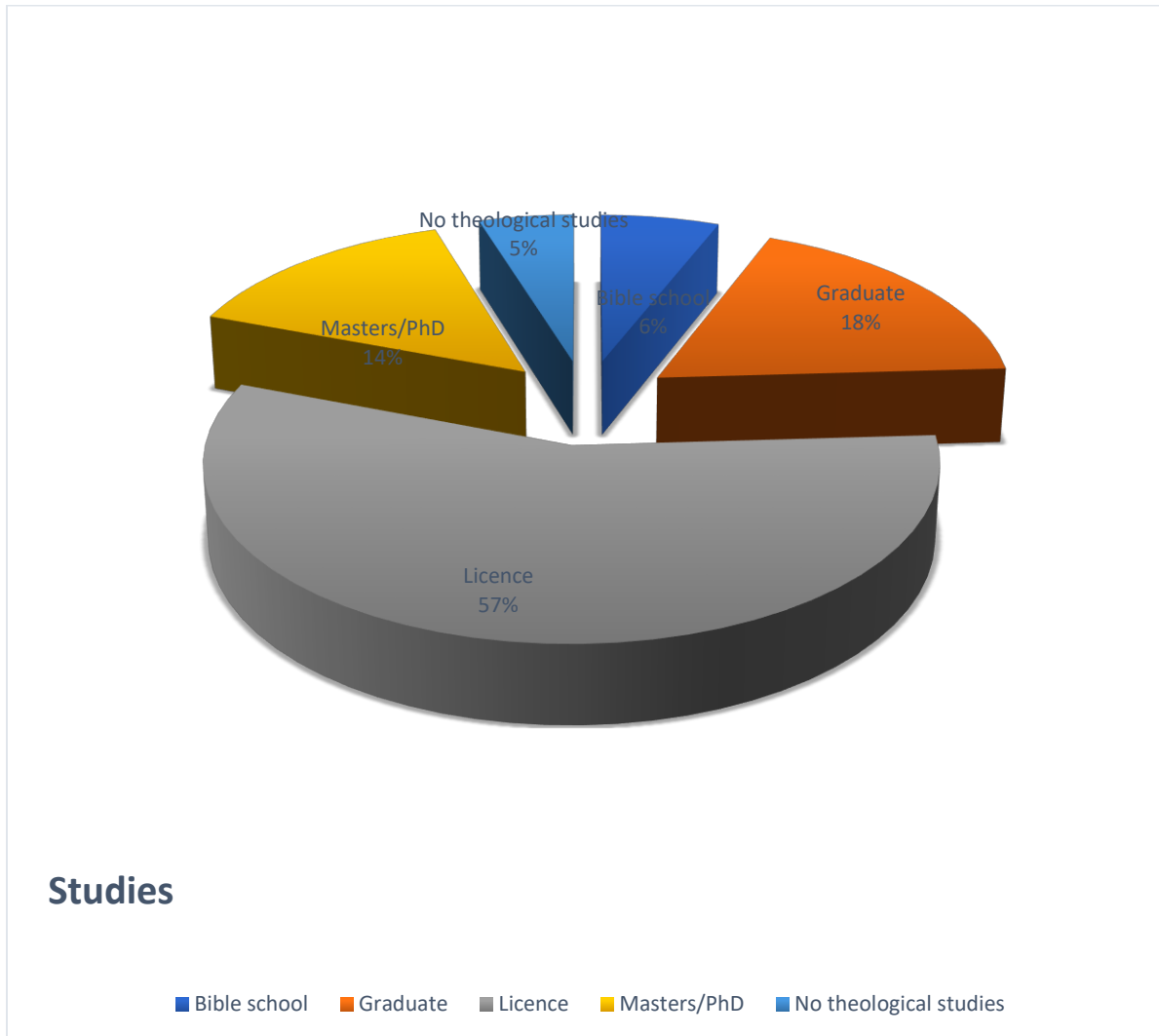
Source: Author's computation

In respect of theological studies, data indicates that 57 percent of the church leaders involved in the research have an Honours degree while 18 per cent are under-graduates, 14 per cent are post-graduates, Masters and PhDs, and 6 per cent did the Bible school. Only 5 per cent of our respondents did not do any classical-theological study. Hence, most church leaders involved in this study are qualified.

5.3.1.3 Number of pastors in the community

Figure 8: Number of pastors in the community
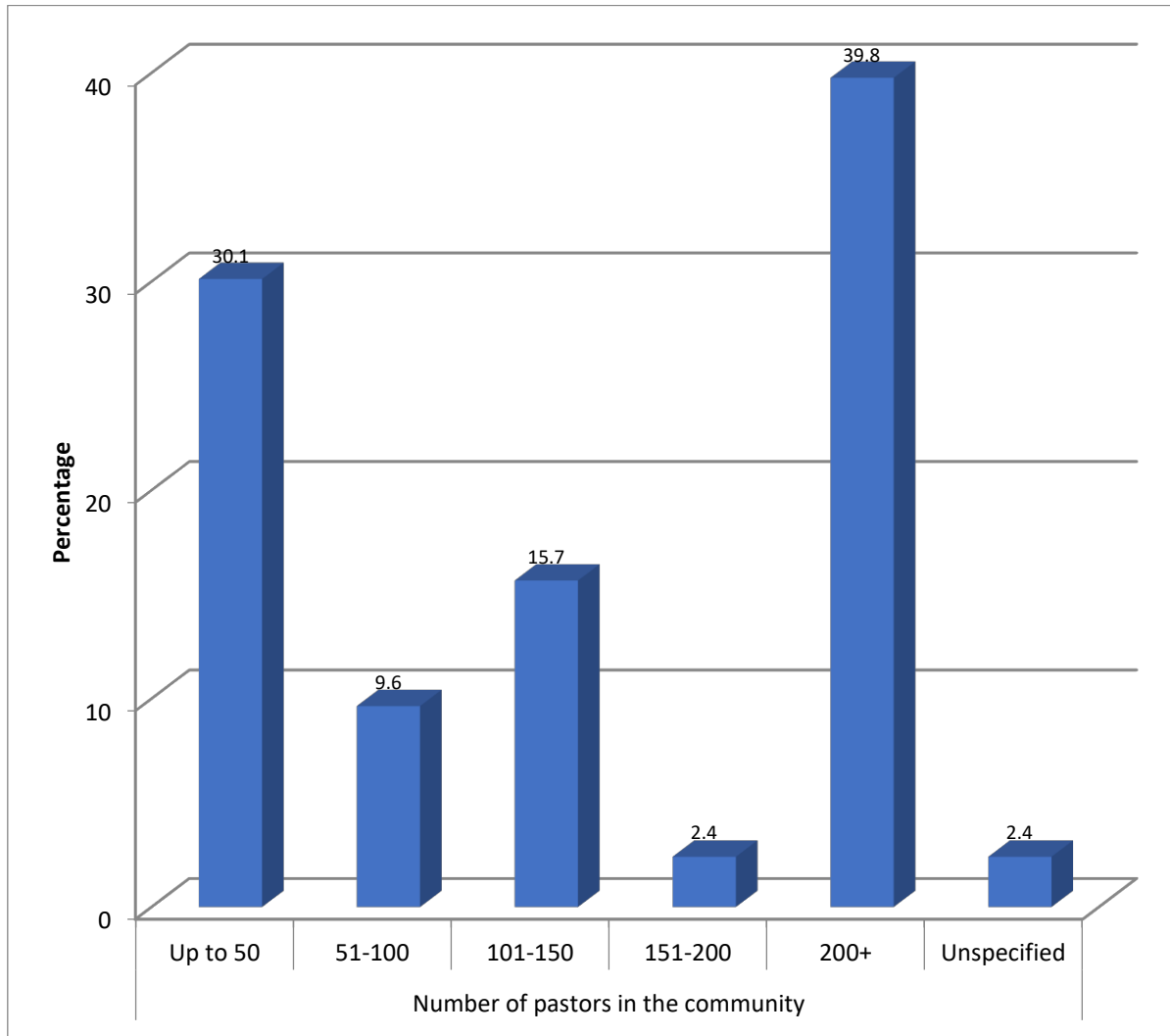
Source: Author's computation

Concerning the number of pastors in the different communities, 39.8 percent of communities have more than 200 pastors serving the congregations, 30.1 communities have up to 50 pastors, 15.7 have 101 to 150 pastors, 9.6 have 51 to 100 pastors, 2.4 have 151 to 200 pastors and 2.4 are unspecified. It means that the number of pastors in ECC communities features in the two extremes as estimated in the research. Many have the highest number of pastors estimated and the second score covers the lower number estimated.

5.3.1.4 Experience in the ministry

Figure 9: Experience in the ministry
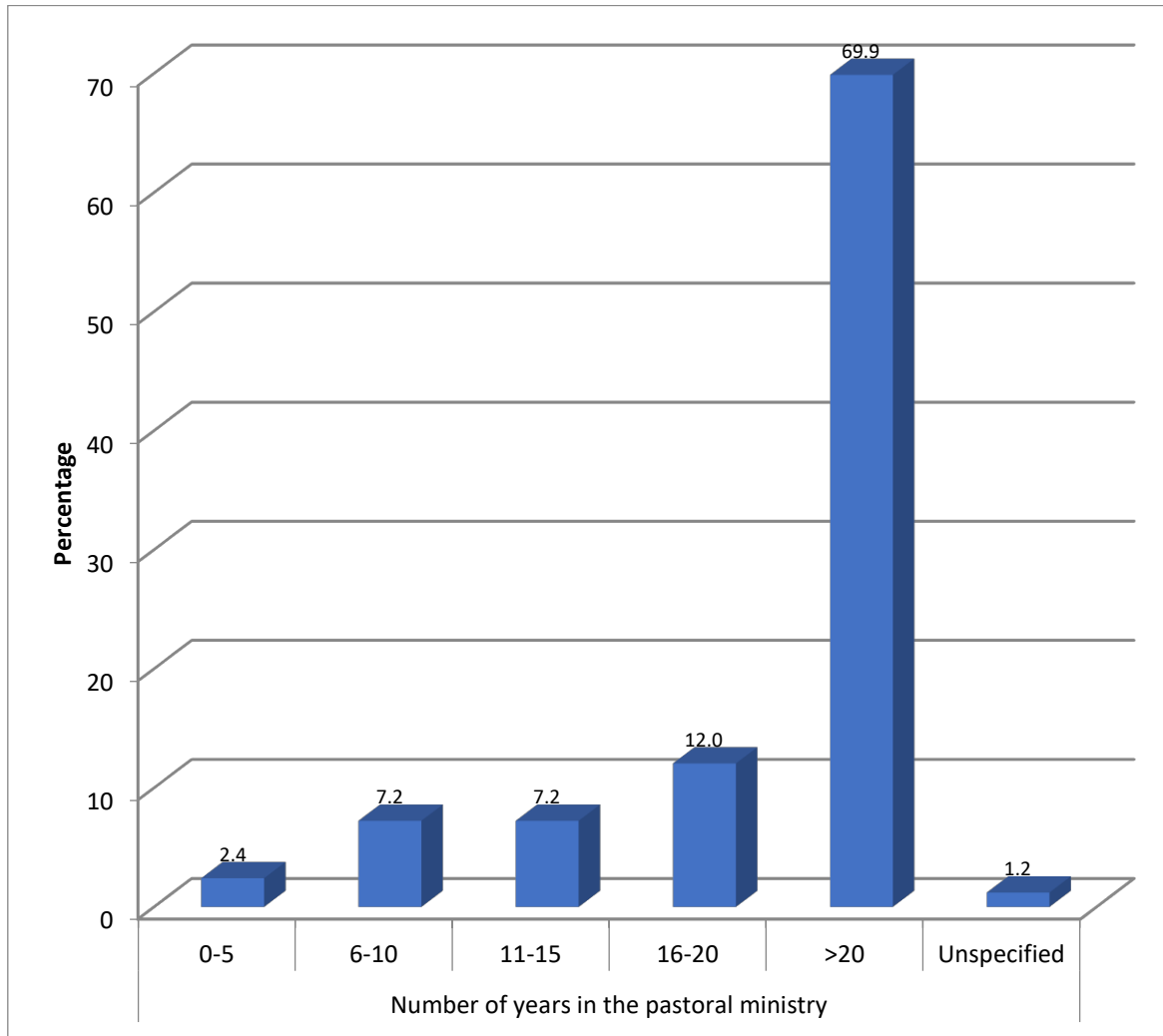
Source: Author's computation

As regards experience in the ministry, 69.9 percent of the participating church leaders has more than twenty years of pastoral ministry experience. Only 2.4 percent has done at least 5 years of ministry. The table informs us that most communities consider experience in the ministry as the most important condition for joining church leadership. Only 5 percent of the communities did allow pastors with less than 5 years of ministry under their belts to access the leadership body.

5.3.1.5 Position in the ECC (Church of Christ in Congo)

Figure 10: Position in the ECC
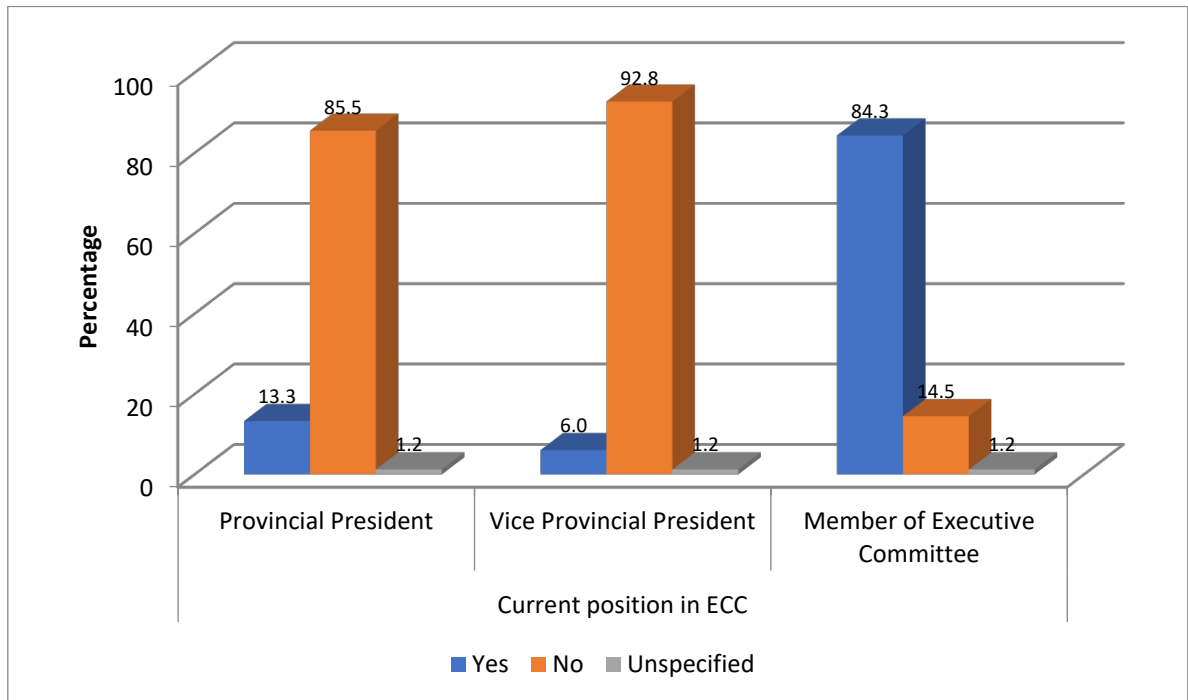
Source: Author's computation

As regards their positions in the ECC, 84.3 church leaders involved in the study are members of the executive committee of the ECC, 6 percent are vice presidents and 13.3 percent are provincial presidents of the ECC, while of only 1.2 percent the positions are unspecified. This means that most of the respondents have positions of influence and are decision makers in the Protestant Church of Congo.

5.3.1.6 Position in the communities and years of occupation

Figure 11: Position in the communities and years of occupation
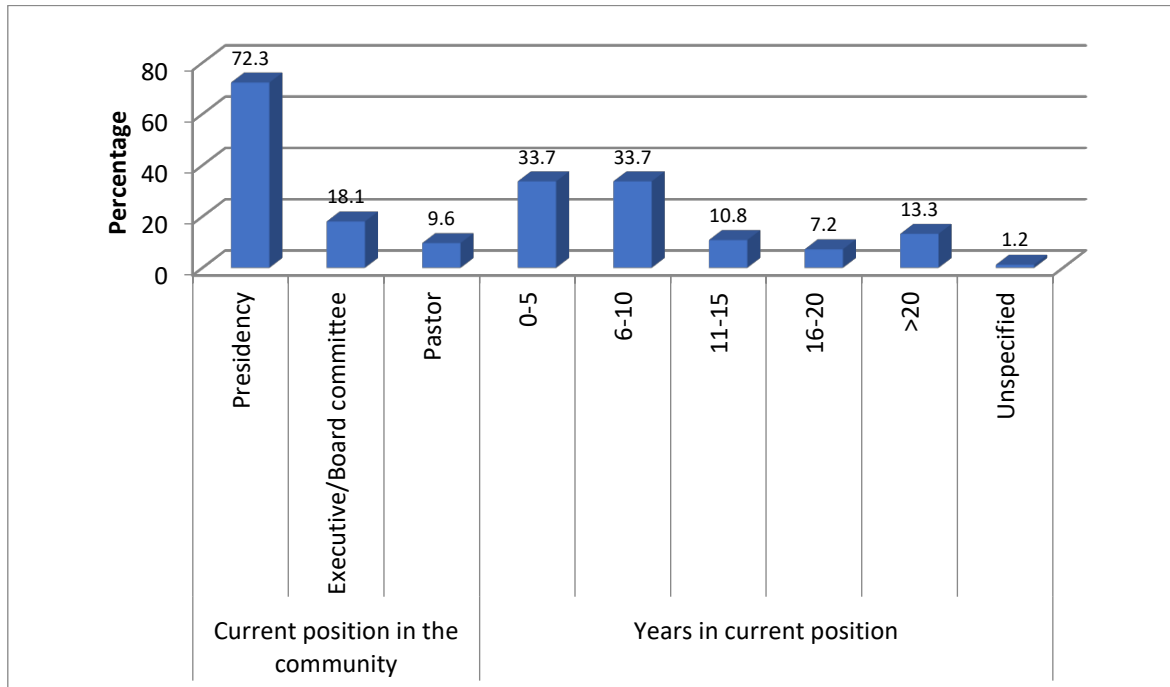
Source: Author's computation

Furthermore, 72.3 percent of respondents have positions in the Presidency in their communities, 18.1 percent function on the executive board and 9.6 carry pastoral responsibility. Regarding the number of years that they have held positions of advanced responsibility, 39.7 percent of community leaders have at least 5 years, and 39.7 percent at least 10 years below their belts, while 13.3 percent have been in their positions more than 20 years, 10.8 percent from 11 to 15 years, and 7.2 percent from 16 to 20 years. The lengths of these periods are associated with each community's culture of term. Depending on the particular community, a term may last 4, 5 or 6 years.

5.3.1.7 Provinces reached by the community

Figure 12: Provinces reached
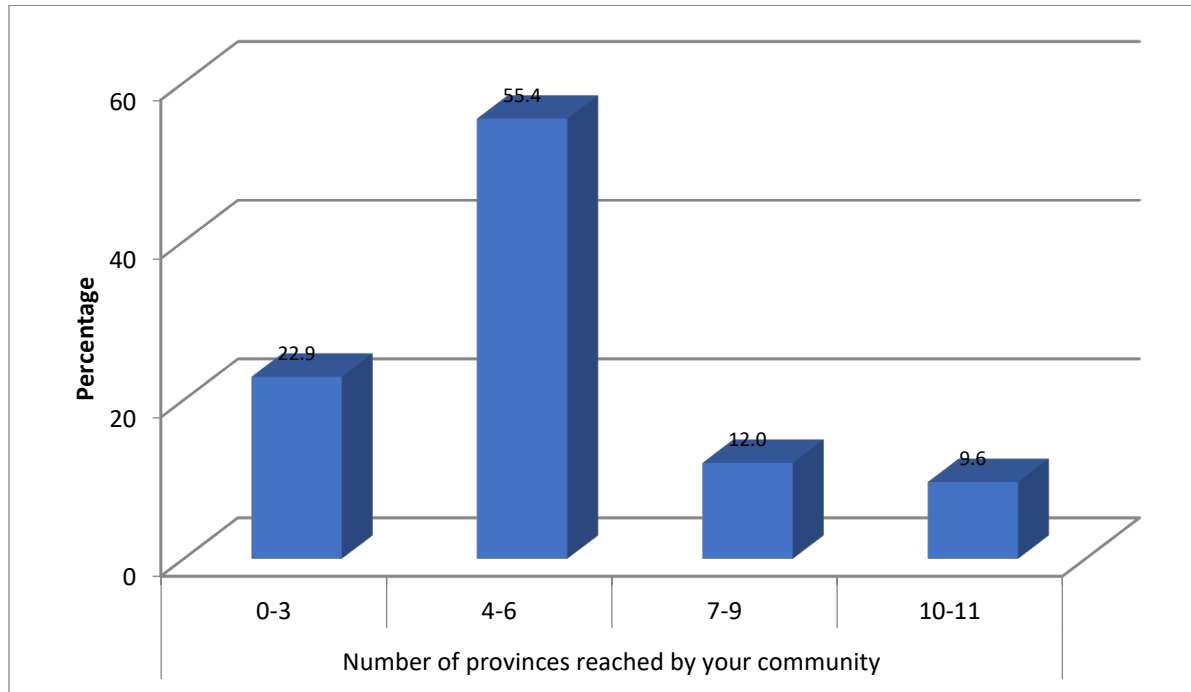
Source: Author's computation

The study shows that 55.4 communities reach at least the half of the number of provinces in the country.

5.3.2 Findings on church and political issues in the DR Congo

The research has set itself five objectives. The present section presents the findings of the research by interpreting the data in accordance with the objectives which, as a reminder for the reader, are listed below:

i. To understand the relevance of a prophetic voice in the context of political turbulence in the DR Congo.

ii. To consider the theological foundation of a political responsibility in the prophetic voice.

iii. To assess the political responsibility of the ECC in its prophetic way.

iv.   To propose a theological perspective through the *Kairos* tradition to the church in the DR Congo assessing the socio-political situation of the people.

v.   To assess the risks that the church runs by engaging in the political prophetic way.

5.3.2.1 Objective one: The relevance of a prophetic voice in the context of political turbulence in the DR Congo

Five questions in the questionnaire were aimed at obtaining results for the first objective, namely, to understand the relevance of a prophetic voice in the context of political turbulence in the DR Congo.

The first of these questions asks the church leaders "to indicate their agreement that the Protestant Church must be involved in political issues". The study uses a T-test to assess the following hypotheses.

H_0: Church leaders should not be involved in political affairs in the DR Congo.

H_1: Church leader leaders should be involved in political affairs in the DR Congo.

Table 18: T test of involvement of the church in politics

	Indicate your agreement that the Protestant Church in Congo must be involved in political issues	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	4	4.8	4.9	4.9
	Disagree	4	4.8	4.9	9.8
	Neutral	15	18.1	18.3	28.0
	Agree	37	44.6	45.1	73.2
	Strongly agree	22	26.5	26.8	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

Source: Author's computation

Table 19: One simple statistic of church involvement in politics

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B1 Indicate your agreement that the Protestant Church in Congo must be involved in political issues	82	3.84	1.036	.114

Table 20: One simple test on involvement of the church in politics

One-Sample Test

Hypothesis	Test Value = 3				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
B1 Indicate your agreement that the Protestant Church in Congo must be involved in political issues	7.355	81	.000	.841	.61	1.07

Source: Author's computation

The result shows the mean score >3 (3.84), with standard of deviation 1.036 and standard error of .114. The one-sample test indicates the t of 7.355, the df of 81 and a sig of .000. The mean of the difference is .841. According to the above result there is significant agreement (M=3.84, SD=1.036). That score means that the Protestant Church in the DR Congo should be involved in political issues, t (81) =7.355, p<.0005. In other words, one rejects the null hypothesis that church leaders should not be involved in political affairs in the country. Moreover, the cumulative percentage of the descriptive table 1 confirms that 73 percent of the respondents supports that church leaders should be involved in political affairs in DR Congo. This is in accordance with such scholars as Zwingli who approved of church involvement in social life, although this viewpoint drew some criticism from, among others, Calvin. At the time of Zwingli, the corpus *christianum* was a unified, single Christian society. Courvoisier (1963:79) writing about Zwingli's position on church-state

relationships, stresses that conceptions of church and state today are not necessary the same as in the 16th century.

As shown in figure 4, almost 70 percent of church leaders in the ECC have a minimum of twenty years of experience in dealing with social issues. In regard of the first objective of this study, a further test is done to determine if church leaders' willingness to be involved in political issues differs across categories of experience. ANOVA was applied (see table 1, 22) and indicated that responses differ significantly across categories of experience, F (4,76) = 5.134, p=.001. Those with 0-5 years of experience agree significantly less with church involvement in socio-politics than those with more years of experience. The more experienced the church leaders are, the more they welcome the concept of the Protestant Church fulfilling a role in socio-political affairs in the DR Congo. Why does the amount of experience in the ministry influence church leaders' perceptions of socio-political responsibilities? Perhaps they have seen in their ministry too much of what poverty and war do to people and become sensitized to the connection between ministry and the outside world.

The second question posed in the context of the first objective is: "To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction is politically involved in a prophetic way?". The one sample test was applied to test for a significance extent. The test reports a mean of 2.54 and the std deviation at 1.509 with the std error means of .170, t is -2.684, df 78 and the Sig .009 with the mean difference of -.456. The mean in this case being <3, the Protestant Church is of lesser significance in the prophetic way. This shows that the Congolese Protestant Church is not involved in political issues in a prophetic way. The prophetic voice has been explained as the fact of standing up and speaking out, impartially, according to the will of God, for the well-being of the people. The prophetic theology speaks of, and speaks to, a particular time to a particular place about a particular situation (Maduro, 1989:433). This confirms the public view of the Congolese who perceive of the Protestant Church as being one-sided in its support of government and as lacking in criticism. Concerning this point, I am of the view that the task of church authorities is not to make laws, but to secure the obedience of Christians and rulers and ensure that they

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act according to the gospel (Thompson, 1984: 127). The study results explicitly show the lack of a prophetic mission in the Protestant Church of the DR Congo.

A third question states: "Is the ECC engaged in political issues in your province?" The binomial test used in this question demonstrates that the church leaders are divided on this point. 57.8 Percent of respondents opine that the ECC is not engaged in political affairs in their provinces (figure 7). Is that result sufficiently significant to be generalized in the study? Based on the Z approximation, the result is not significant ($p=0.187>0.05$), because the proportion responding 'yes' is not significantly different from the proportion that answered 'no'.

Another question asks the respondents "to Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country".

The one-sample t- test shows that the mean is 2.15 and std deviation is 1.246. It shows a mean < 3. This indicates a lesser impact. It leads to the conclusion that the way in which the Protestant Church in Congo is involved in matters of political stability and turbulence in the country does not impact society. This poses an enormous challenge to the church which is supposed to be the salt and the light of society. The Church is seen as a guard of society. So, why does the work it is supposed to do have no impact to speak of in society? One reason is that there is in the Church no organised system for dealing with political issues. Often isolated voices are heard, calling for political responsibility. Question 13 provides more insight into ways in which Church involvement might become more effective. It is important not to focus only on acting but to assess how actions affect society. The sense of public theology lies not so much in its meaning for the Church but in what it does for oppressed and marginalised people. This impact requires outsider judgment.

When doing the bivariate analysis considering the position of Church leaders in the ECC and the impact of ECC involvement in socio-politics, both provincial and non-provincial presidents were significantly agreed on the lesser impact of the church's involvement (see table 3).

The fifth question is: "Has your community ever been involved in political issues?" The question is dealt with using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Table 21: Has your community been involved in politics?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	35	42.2	42.2	42.2
	No	48	57.8	57.8	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author's computation

57.8 Percent of Church leaders stated that their communities are not involved in political issues whereas the communities of 42.2 percent of Church leaders are.

The result of the question, based on Z approximation, does not allow us to conclude that the majority population claims their communities are not involved in socio-politics.

The table indicates the non-commitment of the local churches in the matter.

The second part of this question presents the various ways in which respondents perceive involvement in political issues.

How are the churches of different communities throughout the DR Congo involved in political affairs? What means involvement in socio-politics to these leaders? Five key themes were identified in responses.

i. The first theme concerns advocacy. Some churches are involved in solving social conflicts. One case involves a community in the province of Kongo Central which made various declarations and attempted to solve conflicts over the mystic-religion '*Bundu dia Mayala',* whereby they opposed the provincial government and the mayor of the city of Boma. A similar case was reported from Kasai province. One church leader writes: "We fought against tribal conflicts between Katangais and Kasaiens". Such advocacy is also applied by other churches who make themselves available, through their leaders, to contact and discuss problems of a political nature with the authorities. The Church leaders in question act as

advisers to some politicians, building inter-dependent relationships with them. One of the Church leaders states: "We usually are asked by politicians to give our points of view in different situations".

ii. A second form of involvement is by direct implication (for example, participation in parliament). Church leaders whose communities engage with socio-politics, mostly advanced this type of involvement as prominent. Those leaders who are of the opinion that involvement should entail direct participation in political structures, argue that they have to motivate people to enlist for elections and we encourage laity to make themselves available for membership of parliament. The leaders also declare they are involved in electing members of parliament while their churches fulfil many political responsibilities. Many members of the church are members of government and opposition structures. Leaders argued that they are ready to apply as deputies at national and provincial levels and participate in certain national meetings while they are often consulted when church members are willingly involved in political affairs. If they are elected as national or provincial deputes, they are consulted in cases where laity is involved. In the words of respondents: Our pastors apply as deputy and we have several in the two chambers of parliament or functioning as prosecutors and in other institutions. There are among our laity provincial and national ministers; as well as members of parliament although, unfortunately, these have deserted the church. We organise meetings for peace, for purposes of education and to encourage people to participate in elections. We motivate our young brothers to present deputations." Another question associated with direct involvement in political structures is concerned with the impact of faith commitment on such involvement. And, in addition, how to interpret the declaration by one church leader that a particular community has some parliament members but that, "unfortunately, they deserted the church? In the view of respondents, political structures are also formed by some church leaders. In general, a minimum of participation in politics is seen from a sense or another.

iii. Training activities. Another way of being involved is by focusing on training and educating church members on the practice and significance of elections and on the engagement of Protestant leaders in political responsibility.

iv. One can raise one's voice by making public declarations. Some leaders of other churches stipulate that as Christians, one must raise one's voice so that the light of Christianity may shine in the country. Such declarations sometimes take the form of admonishing evil.

v. Prayer. Communities are also involved by praying for the country. In most churches, prayers are held for the country in general, for peace, or to plead for good governance and security.

These five kinds of involvement in socio-politics were found by Church leader-respondents to match best with modes of engagement practised in the church and which are described as prophetic, narrative, technical, individualist and participative.

In regard of objective one, assessing the relevance of the prophetic voice in the Protestant Church, the research has shown that the Church is expected to be engaged in socio-political matters. However, this position differs across categories. Those who have a good deal of experience in the ministry agree more significantly with the need for engagement than those who have less pastoral experience. The National Direction of the Protestant Church is not seen to be involved in a prophetic way. In cases where there is a semblance of Church involvement, impact remains limited. Some communities have meanwhile chosen and organised their own ways of engaging with matters of a socio-political nature.

5.3.2.2 Objective two: To consider the theological foundation of a political responsibility in the prophetic voice

Two questions are used to elicit meaningful responses to the second objective.
The first question asks respondents "indicate the agreement that the church's engagement with socio-economic and political issues is also a mission of the church".
One sample test is used to test the responses.

Table 22: One sample test on political involvement as mission of the church

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	1.2	1.2	1.2
	Disagree	2	2.4	2.4	3.6
	Neutral	8	9.6	9.6	13.3
	Agree	27	32.5	32.5	45.8
	Strongly agree	45	54.2	54.2	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author's computation

Table 23: One sample test statistic on politics as mission of the church

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B5 Indicate your agreement that the church's engagement with socio-economic and political issues is also a mission of the church	83	4.36	.849	.093

Source: Author's computation

The one-sample test results in confirmation of significant agreement. The mean is 4.36 and the deviation .849. The meaning is that Church leaders strongly agree that engagement in socio- economic and political issues in the country is also the mission of the Church. Doing holistic mission consists in being concerned with the full dimensions of being human. In his reflection on transforming mission, Bosch (Bosch, 1992:34) analyses the mission of Jesus on earth. Even the manifestation of God's reign in Jesus is eminently political. Furthermore, Jesus declares the lepers, tax collectors, sinners and poor to be children of his kingdom. Jesus needed to see them transformed and their victimization by society brought to an end. "Mission from the perspective of God's reign

implies putting poor, neglected and despised people on their feet again and recover before God and people their full humanity" (Bosch, 1992:34). When Church leaders claim that the socio-political role of the Church is also its mission, they need to include recovering the dignity of the human being. Chapter Seven discusses the prophetic voice of the Church in greater detail and in the context of the *Kairos* tradition.

In its dealing with the problem of poverty, the Church can point out that social compassion is stressed in the bible when Jews take care of the poor the strangers and the weak, who are enslaved by the society. The early church in the New Testament was built on the charity of Judaism. So were the missionary movements based on charity, building schools, hospitals and, generally, working for the good and positively influencing many lives. However, social systems are faced with their own challenges as expressed in the following statement:

> "(…) It is important to grasp that mere social development can (end up) in a bottomless pit. Development experience in Africa and other places shows that incessant political conflicts, tribal wars, bad government and other such systemic ills result in unsettled demographics and perpetual instability. Painstaking development gains in grassroot communities can get easily wiped out by political disasters" (Walls, 2008:49,50).

Changing political and social systems is of importance if eventually we hope to see change in society. The role of the Church to share the good news is not optional but a compelling necessity (Nicholls, 1996:1-3). Working on social transformation is to immerge oneself in the holistic mission of the Church. It thus signifies a crucial advance in Church leaders' perceptions in the DR Congo to recognise socio-political involvement of the Church as one of its missions.

A second question in the context of this research objective is: "Can political involvement of the Church be justified by the bible? If yes, explain". The first part of this question is by the researcher approached using the quantitative method while in respect of the second part the qualitative method is applied to giving biblical arguments on political engagement of the Church.

Table 24: Frequency of justification of politics in the bible

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	79	95.2	96.3	96.3
	No	3	3.6	3.7	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

Source: Author's computation

Based on table 24, about 95 percent of church leaders considers the bible as an effective tool for justifying their involvement in political affairs. The justification was found to be significant at p<.0005. One can, therefore, deduce that, statistically, political involvement of the Church is justified by the bible.

Is this result sufficiently significant to be generalized to all the country's Church leaders? Based on the Z approximation, the significant percent is 94 %, indicating that political engagement of the Church is justified by the bible, p<.0005. The bible provides therefore strong arguments for Christians to participate in socio-political affairs.

In their answers to question 2 respondents mention various relevant biblical arguments. Church leaders are of the opinion that almost all leaders in the bible did engage in political issues. Five major themes can be distilled from the responses: Kings are in the service of God; there is strong engagement of men of God in political affairs in the bible; men of God were often used as guides and advisors of kings or political leaders; temporal authority comes from God. Among respondents' reflections on these themes are the following. Kings are in the service of God. The Church must remind kings that they are called to serve God. God worked with kings to serve his people. The stories in Kings, 1 Samuel 8.20 tell us how God looked for the wellbeing of humankind by using kings. In Luke 4.18-19 Jesus himself proclaims to be liberator of the people. Old Testament kings received instructions from God to lead the people according to His will. God wants the restoration of humanity. Good governance is a gift from God. Church, governors and prophets will be judged and sentenced by the ways in which they act. The Church is responsible for admonishing any power that abuses human beings who are created in the image of God. Everyone has to submit to the word of God. An example is that of the

Proconsul who believed the teaching about the Lord in Acts 13.7.12. Kings in the bible serve the law of God and the people. Since ancient times politics has seen its ways as indicated by the bible. Governments are 'God introduced' and 'servants of God' according to Romans 13.1-4. An appropriate engagement with politics can strengthen a Christian testimony and Christianity's meaning as the salt of the earth (Matthew 5.13-16).

Church leaders stress an awareness of the strong engagement with political issues of men and women of God in the bible. As the bible inspires Christians in every aspect of their lives, it also motivates the church to fulfil its prophetic mission for the social wellbeing of the people. The bible counts many examples of people of God who were also political leaders. Several respondents in the study suggest that our understanding of biblical socio-political involvement depends on how we read the bible. In the Old Testament, religious power was mixed with state power. In the New Testament the relationship between the powers is generally not explicitly clarified. The church has to play its prophetic role (2 Timothy 4.2). Men of God engaged in politics were commissioned to lead the chosen people towards their destiny at their chosen destination. In the Old Testament men of God functioned as both religious leaders and members of their country's legislative committee. Moses was tasked with delivering the people of God from slavery and stood before Pharaoh representing the people of God. Daniel used his important position in the empire to encourage the pagan nation to recognize the true God. Joseph, slave in Egypt, became a prince and could save the country's economic system from collapse. Nehemiah established as Governor of Judea a number of social reforms. At the time of failure of the wall, he stood strong and got the people to rebuild it (Nehemiah 4.19-20). When Ezra introduced reforms, he was authorized to appoint those judges who would do justice according to the law of God. Saul, the first king of Israel, was anointed by the prophet Samuel but deposed for not executing the will of God. David was a leader in political affairs in Israel, following the will of God without committing any abuses. Another example is Esther, the Jewish orphan who became Xerxes' queen and who influenced the politics of her time when the destruction of the Jewish people appeared imminent. She managed to turn the political tide. The book of Samuel and the books of Judges and Kings report and justify political commitment of Christians. Even the prophets Isaiah, Daniel and Jeremiah were concerned with politics. The prophets spoke on behalf

of God, pleading for good management (Samuel, Nathan, Jeremiah). The bible recommends people to pray for their city (Jeremiah 29.7). The Church must however persist in its prophetic mission, even among political leaders, taking Jesus and the bible as supreme models. And Christ said: "To Caesar what belongs to him…" This implies that socio-political engagement and commitment to God must cooperate in the interest of society. The church's socio-political activity is part of its objective role as ambassador for Christ, reconciling the world. The Church has the responsibility to serve its country (Galatians 2.9; 6.10; 1 Corinthians 13.1-3; Matthew 23.23). In that responsibility it is challenged by the socio-political conditions of people and continue to function as Christ' ambassadors, speaking to and influencing political actors. Most of these political actors are Church members. The socio-economic conditions of the DR Congo challenge the Church to confront management policies applied by the government. To improve the wellbeing of society the Church is duty-bound to engage in politics. To fulfil its prophetic role, the Church, referring to the Old Testament kings anointed by God, has to make socio-politics one of its concerns. The Church accepting a role in politics thus becomes a sign of faith and gets enabled to be the light and salt of the earth (Matthew 5.13). As politics is concerned with the management of public affairs, the church's engagement with it is the expression of its participation in public affairs. The cosmos and human beings are created by God who bequeathed power to the state authority (Romans 13). Politics as management of the nation has to be of interest to the church in the context of its prophetic mission so that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven. The church must follow the example of the bible with its political concerns. The bible justifies the church in its prophetic and worldly roles. The Old Testament prophets of God were used to guide kings (Samuel, Jeremiah, Micah), and Samuel, as spiritual leader in Israel, had anointed Saul, the king, and told him the will of God. Prophets played in the bible an important role in the choice of kings, and, generally, in important decisions, for example, whether or not to go to war. They were expected to advise kings in accordance with the will of God. Examples are Samuel, Elijah and Elisha. In the New Testament, John the Baptist is an example. Kings used to consult prophets for the wellbeing of the people. Without the support of God (through prophets), kings could not accomplish much. Temporal authority comes from God, as do all other forms of authority and power. Christians have to submit

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to this authority. The Church is established as a guard. In Romans 13.1-7, Paul says that every authority comes from God and is working towards perfection of human beings.

The bible contains Important political themes that are in accordance with the nature of God who is God of justice. If honourable persons, for example the Church, participate in politics, its possible evil aspects may be mitigated. In the bible, men of God who were involved in politics, showed a commitment to justice, peace and wellbeing of the people. In Micah 3.9-12, the prophet condemns the social injustice of the chiefs of Israel. God empowered his people to conquer Canaan, the promised land (Jeremiah 27.7, Hebrews 12.14, 2 Chronicles 7.14). Many Old Testament prophets denounced the evil that threatens their society. In the New Testament, Jesus stands up against the injustice in his society and so did the apostles (Ephesians 6.1-9). Similarly, today the Church's duty is to admonish evil and to take a stand against injustice.

In respect of the second objective of this study, concerning the theological foundation for the Church's political involvement, leaders are of the view that an engagement in socio-political concerns of the country is the mission of the Church. Church leaders consider the bible as effectively justifying participation of the Church in socio-political activities.

5.3.2.3 Objective three: To assess the political responsibility of the ECC in its prophetic way

Four questions were used to elicit responses to the third objective.
The first question concerns the search for the wisest choices to make when the socio-political situation is bad". The same question is also applied to the fourth objective. The test used for this question is the chi-square goodness-of-fit test.

Table 25: Wisest choice: Chi-square goodness-of-fit test

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	B (pray)	9	10.8	11.1	11.1
	C (raise one's voice)	2	2.4	2.5	13.6
	D (raise one's voice and pray)	70	84.3	86.4	100.0
	Total	81	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.4		
Total		83	100.0		

Source: Author's computation

Table 26: Test statistics: Wisest choice of a clergy

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
B	9	27.0	-18.0
C	2	27.0	-25.0
D	70	27.0	-43.0
Total	81		

Table 27: Chi-square: Wisest choice of clergy

	B6 When the socio-political situation is not good, the wisest choice is
Chi-square	103.630[a]
df	2
Asvmp.sig.	-000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 27.0

Source: Author's computation

Four possible alternatives may be chosen in case the socio-political climate is not favourable. The choice is between: Silence, prayer (talking to God), raising one's voice to denounce evil, and raising one's voice to pray.

A significant number of participants (70, 86.4 percent) indicated that when the socio-political situation is not good, the 'wisest', or the most rational, choice is to raise one's voice and pray, χ^2 (2) = 103.630, p<.0005.

Choices concerning ways of doing public theology and prayer are made by the Church. Public theology is prayer in action by fulfilling social engagement. Prayer and public engagement both are ways of living one's faith. Being strengthened by God in prayer, the Church can raise its voice and admonish evil according to the will of God while accepting responsibility in problems of social justice. This theology follows Boesak (2015:9) when he speaks about reading the signs of the time. The Church's role is to awaken people's consciousness. Le Bruyns (2014:1) mentions that the Greek word '*idios*' means 'not to be involved in public affairs'. In the Greek understanding those who were not interested in public affairs were idiots. Public engagement implies a worldly liberation in the context of aiming to build another possible world. In that way the Church is engaged in a contextual, prophetic and responsible theology. This way of doing theology will inevitably impact different spheres of public life including political, economic and social aspects. The Church has to alert the faithful to the arrival of the specific time to properly respond to the challenges of daily life. The role of the Church is to name the enemy and to give hope according to the gospel. In this context practical actions are initiated to remind people of God's will and of the project He has prepared for his people (Brown, 1990:9-12).

According to Gaudium et Spes, No 75:

> *« la politique est un « art Noble » qui permet aux fidèles laïcs de répondre à leur vocation spécifique de gérer le temporel selon Dieu et, à la manière du ferment dans la pâte, de transformer le monde dans lequel ils sont appelés à vivre »* (CENCO, 2006).

> In English: "Politics is a 'noble art' that allows the faithful lay to respond to their specific vocation to manage the temporal according to God and, like the ferment in the dough, to transform the world in which they are called to live" (CENCO, 2006).

To be disciple of Jesus is a risky task. Commenting on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's 'The Cost of Discipleship', Cosgrav (2005:67) remarks that the grace we receive from Jesus is not cheap, but a costly grace, as following Jesus may cost a person his or her life. Following Jesus implies sacrifices we must make for the sake of the kingdom.

The second question related to the third objective asks respondents if they feel the need for socio-political involvement of the church in the DR Congo.

The tables 28 provide some empirical evidence.

Table 28: Need for socio-political involvement

Need for social-political involvement of the church	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Yes	68	27.7	40.3
No	5	27.7	-22.7
Yes, but not in times of political turbulence	10	27.7	-17.7
Total	83		

Source: Author's computation

Table 29: Statistics of need of socio-political involvement

	Do you feel the need for socio-political involvement of the Church in the DR Congo?
Chi-Square	88.651[a]
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 27.7.

Source: Author's computation

The statistic test of chi-square indicates a significant number of positive responses (chi-square=88.651; p=.000 <.005). The feeling is thus that there is a need for church involvement. In fact, it seems as if the country is thirsty for such involvement.

The third question looks at "motivating factors helping or hampering the Church leaders' involvement in political issues". The six motivating factors identified refer to: need for power, earning money, disappointment with the community, patriotism, giving back to the nation, and political vision.

Table 30: One-sample statistics on motivational factors

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B11.1 Need of power	69	1.71	1.059	.127
B11.2 Greed – want to earn more money	71	1.85	1.261	.150
B11.3 Disappointment with the community	71	2.17	1.183	.140
B11.4 Patriotism	78	4.15	.955	.108
B11.5 To give back to the nation	75	3.96	1.019	.118
B11.6 Political vision	73	3.49	1.144	.134

Source: Author's computation

The one sample test is applied to the question. The result is that need of power has a mean of 1.71, greed or need to earn money has the mean of 1.85 and disappointment with the community has the mean of 2.17. The means being < 3 implies that those three factors indicate significant disagreement and that the need of, or the thirst for power, greed or the desire to earn money and disappointment with their congregations, are not factors that will make Church leaders in the DR Congo decide to get involved in political matters.

Figure 13: Motivation factors
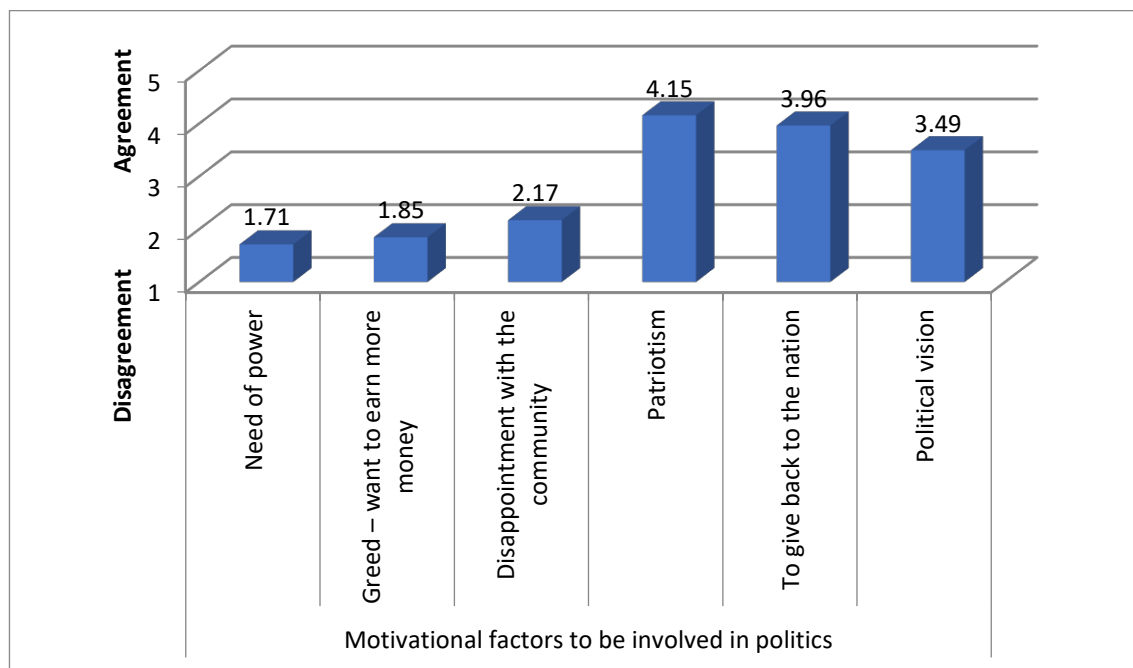
Source: Author's computation

According to the result of table 12, three other factors are mentioned. Patriotism with the mean of 4.15, the desire to give back to the nation with the mean of 3.96 and the political vision with the mean of 3.49, resulting in a means of > 3. In other words, these factors indicate significant agreement. The most important factor motivating the involvement of Church leaders in the politics of the country is patriotism, the love of country. The second motivation is that which they owe the nation. People want to give back for what God has granted them through their fatherland. The third factor involves political vision. People wish to see things happen as they ought to happen.

Factor analysis (FA) is used to determine a cluster of motives influencing the involvement of church leaders in political issues. The results of the FA are provided in Table 31-33

Table 31: Factor analysis of motives of influence

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.620
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	124.210
	Df	15
	Sig.	.000

Table 32: Variance on motivation of church leaders

Total Variance Explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.385	39.745	39.745	2.038	33.974	33.974	1.928	32.135	32.135
2	1.683	28.049	67.793	1.223	20.381	54.355	1.333	22.220	54.355
3	.789	13.147	80.941						
4	.572	9.539	90.479						
5	.351	5.857	96.336						
6	.220	3.664	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Source: Author's computation

Table 33: Groups of factor analysis of motivation

	Component	
	1	2
B11.2 Greed – want to earn more money	0.881	
B11.1 Need of power	0.879	
B11.3 Disappointment with the community	0.763	
B11.5 To give back to the nation		0.824
B11.4 Patriotism		0.798
B11.6 Political vision		0.681
variance explained (67.7)	38.7	28.04
crobah alpha	0.8	0.646
Laballe	Greed & dissatisfaction	Patriotism
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.		
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.		

Source: Author's computation

Two factors analyses can be distinguished in the involvement of people in socio-political affairs.

Factor 1 was labelled as greed and dissatisfaction'. This cluster was made up of 3 items: greed (with coefficient loading of 0.881), need of power (loading = 0.879), and disappointment with the community (loading = 0.763). This cluster was reliable with a Cronbach alpha of 0.8.

Factor 2 was labelled as 'patriotism'. This group was made up of 3 items: to give back to the nation (with coefficient loading = 0.824), patriotism (loading = 0.798) and political vision (loading = 0.681). This cluster had a Cronbach alpha of 0.64.

The highest loading is patriotism which is a strong motivation for Church leaders to get involved in political issues.

As regards objective three, asking for an assessment of the political responsibility of the Church in its prophetic way, the response of Church leaders is to raise one's voice and pray. There is a need for a public theology which is performing social engagements and thereby representing prayer in action. However, Church leaders agree that the highest form of motivation for occupying oneself with politics is patriotism or love of one's country and people of God.

5.3.2.4 Objective four: To propose a theological perspective through the *Kairos* tradition to the church in the DR Congo assessing the socio-political situation of the people

Two questions were used to elicit responses to this objective one of which has already served in relation to the third objective.

Respondents are asked to try and see a way in which the church can improve its prophetic voice in political affairs for the benefit of the country and its future. The question uses the qualitative method to engage participants in a consideration of how the church's activity in political affairs can improve the impact of its prophetic voice. Leaving a discussion of what improvement might consist in for later, we may on the basis of the present research accept that the Protestant Church in the DR Congo is involved in socio-political issues. The problem is however that the way things are done does not impact the nation. There is engagement but without noticeable effect. Some weaknesses of the Church may be listed that require attention in order to improve the prophetic voice of the Church:

    i.   One of the problems of the Church's socio-political engagement is a tendency to individual engagement and the scattering of forces. Many Church leaders belonging to the 95 ECC communities are directly engaged in specific components of the political system. Each of these leaders has his or her own vision of his calling. That justifies individual actions taken by Church leaders because these satisfy their own points of view. Many declarations, even those made by the President of the Church, are ignored by many Church leaders who accuse the President of airing his personal views. One respondent claims: "We reproach the ECC for siding with the government". Another leader states": "The ECC must do its best to be impartial by denouncing untruths without fear".

    ii.   A problem is also the lack of strong organisation of the Church in regard of its political involvement. There is no strong coordination of actions in the context of socio-politics. There is no department where political views can be discussed as required by contemporary demands and according to the bible, without siding with any political party. Without the Church building a strong structure to support its focus on socio-political issues, every individual

declaration will continue to be seen as a personal view and not be taken serious by the full body of the Church. The inevitable consequence of this is a lack of will to take part in actions that are doomed to remain 'without impact' on public life.

iii. An important aspect of the difficulties is the malfunctioning of communication about political issues between communities and the National Direction. Each community engages in politics in its own way, their actions even contradicting one another as seen in the table below.

Table 34: T test on provincial presidents.

Group Statistics

	A5.1 Provincial President	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?	Yes	11	3.82	1.601	.483
	No	67	2.34	1.409	.172
B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country	Yes	11	2.45	1.635	.493
	No	69	2.10	1.190	.143

Source: Author's computation

The t test is applied to the responses in respect of this comparison. Provincial presidents turn out to perceive the ECC's political/prophetic activity as more intensive than those Church leaders who are not provincial presidents, t (76) = 3.157, p=.002. With the mean of 3.82 for provincial presidents and 2.34 for non-provincial presidents, the finding is that the closer one's position is to the powers that be, the less one sees other realities. But as concerns perceptions of the impact of Church involvement, the test shows the mean of 2.45 for provincial presidents and the mean of 2.10 for community presidents. This tells us that both provincial presidents of the ECC and community presidents recognize the non-impact of Church action. The malfunction of actions and the difference in the perceived degree of the Church's socio-political involvement between the national board

and the communities reduces the impact of the action of the Church as a body. Individually, communities of the ECC are significantly involved in political affairs, but each one in its own way and sometimes in contradiction to each other, thereby diminishing impact.

One cause of this discordance is the organisation of the ECC. As an umbrella body, the ECC is a collection of autonomous communities. They all work on their own and if they work together it is in diverse ways. Each community has its own vision of church, politics and mission. The main lines of their vision may diverge from one community to the next. The ECC motto is '"united in the diversity'. Concerted actions and a shared vision are needed so that each community can testify its faith and affirm its views on the Church's socio-political involvement. Reflections on how the Church can attempt to strengthen its prophetic voice in order to spread a more powerful message that has an impact on the daily lives of people, are following.

i. The Church has to raise its voice and admonish evildoing. Being committed to the word of God, the Church has to avoid being politicized and speak out publicly, act righteously to advance social justice, be courageous and truthful. In times as crucial as the present in the DR Congo, the unique voice of the Church has to bring the message of Amos. By raising their voice in prayer, Church leaders make a public declaration. Amos presents himself as a human rights champion and insists on the words righteousness and social justice. His message focuses on the present and future of people (Amos 7.14-). Political leaders in their turn need to associate themselves with Church action. Being truthful requires from the Church the courage to speak out, denouncing evil and adhering to the word of God. The Church has to give up on thinking that politics is a bad thing and, instead, accept socio-political engagement and raise its voice like prophets in the bible. To denounce corruption in all its forms and advance the wellbeing of the people is a Church mission. The Church must be actively engaged through its members. It must be heard giving its views on public affairs. A determined, clear denunciation of evil does not compromise the Church's reconciling and peace-seeking mission.

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One aspect of the Church's engagement in socio-political issues is that it will have to withdraw from all the honours it receives and the privileges it enjoys to avoid any chance, and even any semblance, of being tainted by corruption. To succeed in its mission, the Church should reflect the kingdom of the Master. If the Church manages to integrate its political concerns by objectively denouncing every threat posed to society, and to pray and speak out, it will be doing its prophetic mission for the interest of the people without selfish motivations, so that it may truly become the voice of the voiceless. When worldly structures fail, the Church must aim at succeeding, at least in raising its voice to condemn social injustice, massacres, and unhuman living conditions. It also is the duty of the Church to pray for political leaders.

The Church playing its prophetic role in promoting justice and integrity. is what the world is waiting for.

For the mission of the Church to succeed, it has to teach people the fear of God and to fight every evil that removes the country from the will of God. One respondent in the present study declared: "This topic is interesting. I am touched because the ECC has failed its mission".

ii. The Church needs to adopt a critical position. As soon as the Church starts taking sides in politics and getting actually mixed up in a political system, it loses its objectivity. Most of the time, the silence of the Church is in practice perceived as an effective endorsement of evil. Keeping silent is inviting evil to spread its wings. Silence is not always a sign of wisdom. Sometimes it indicates fear and a sign of joining forces with evil. The Church's raised voice in times of serious crisis should not only admonish sin but also encourage those who try to advance their communities. To be critical means speaking truth and fearing God. When Church leaders beg political authorities for attention, they lose authority. The Church should be a light for politicians. While Church leaders must respect the political powers, they should at the same time maintain their authority and raise the prophetic voice impartially and in all honesty. Church leaders' roles aren't limited to having their members sing and dance on Sunday mornings. Taking

care of the entire human being is the holistic mission, the diaconal and evangelic task of the Church. One respondent in the present research remarked: "Unfortunately, the ECC sides with the government. The ECC is only protecting the interests of political leaders and not those of the people".

De Gruchy advises the Church that its "prophetic role requires that it maintains a critical distance from both political and civil society and refuses being co-opted. To maintain a critical detachment is wiser than to abstain from permeating government decisions" (Nyiawung, 2010: 4). When the church is co-opted by government, it loses its critical and prophetic lenses. Le Bruyns argues that the responsibility of the Church does not allow it to be simply the 'watchdogs' of society, but obliges it to act as critical and prophetic participants in public transformation (Le-Bruyns, 2014:476). Blowing the trumpet on the *Kairos* offers an opportunity the Church should not miss. The Church can play the role of the guard in Ezekiel 33.1-7, who blows the trumpet to warn people of danger. To maintain its prophetic mission the Church must avoid getting mixed up in a political party.

Being impartial means that the Church will admonish sin wherever it is found. The Church is required to rationally analyse a situation to be able to judge without subjectivity, to pray and speak out when necessary and to focus on maintaining a firm position. Impartiality will make the Church comfortable with the message of the gospel. The Church is composed of all the tendencies in society, from the sentiments of the presidential party to those of the opposition. Evil is not associated with a specific political party and has no colour, but it can be named from the pulpit. Even when wrong is committed unawares, the Church has to be firm and call wrongdoers to account. If Church members are politically divided the Church can initiate dialogue. Prayerfully, these Church members must correct negative attitudes and avoid violence. The gospel must be preached with purity, inspiring people but not begging them. Speaking truth in complex situations may not be easy on preachers. So did the disciples suffer for the sake of the gospel.

Choosing the option of critical engagement puts the Church in alignment with people who are weak, voiceless and forgotten. When the French speak of finding oneself '*au milieu du village*', it indicates neutrality rather than being without a position or a viewpoint. Neutrality doesn't imply doing nothing. The Church, as a referee, has to show the directive line and to advise, exhort, strengthen and teach the word of God to fulfil its huge responsibility. The Church has to manage its involvement with politics by admonishing political actors on threats uttered and on evil committed.

iii.   For example, religious leaders cannot be engaged directly, the Church can encourage the laity to become involved in socio-political issues and act as spokespersons. The Church's prophetic voice should begin to be heard in the Church itself. If leaders are not giving guidance in Church, then how can they make contributions in the political sphere? The Church has to be the model for society and an example of unselfishness. Once Church leaders are involved in political matters, there is still the challenge of the political ambitions of Church members to be considered. They are divided over many political parties. Church members must be encouraged to be active in politics, but the Church's task is to unify them in the wish to serve the wellbeing of humankind.

iv.   The prophetic voice of the church will make more of an impact by drawing on the word of God with wisdom: The Church has to obey the Lord and pray in accordance with the bible. God's word is the foundation of the socio-political engagement of the Church. The Church's role in this engagement is to practise the word of God and place the use of the bible above the man-made constitution. The word of God enlightens the Church with wisdom of the Holy Spirit in all circumstances, including its political engagement. This is why the Church should teach the word of God to its members and stand by it. The Church is supposed to understand and deepen its understanding of the word of God and apply it in the contemporary political context. Every action of the Church has to be based on the bible and the Christian faith. This is the way of those who are born again. The Church must obey the biblical recommendations. Through the power and authority of the word of God, the Church is able to strongly denounce

evil and stand firmly by God's word. The Church has the privilege of a power that the world cannot contain. The church has to awake and raise up its eyes to see how the church leaders guide us and to grasp how we can raise our voices according to the gospel.

v. Another step the church should take is the provision of civic education: The church must carefully determine its position and teach its members the Protestant ethic, the bible, the civic responsibility of Christians. It has to discuss elections and good governance and encourage Christians to enter the political system as if it were a ministry and a declaration of their faith. The management of cities demands honesty and patriotism. Mobilizing people in prayer, teaching them the way of God and love of their country, the church will end up having well-trained Christian leaders at their disposition, able to withstand the challenges of the world. The church should multiply teachings on the role of the church in politics and the management of the country's institutions.

vi. The Church has an urgent need for a strong and organised system to deal with socio-political concerns. One cause of the failure of the political involvement of the Church, underlined by respondents, is the lack of an organizational system of the Church, focused on socio-politics. If the Church agrees that the socio-political engagement is a Church mission, then why is there no strong structure to provide a foundation for activities in this context?

The organigram of the ECC tells us that six departments have been organized, namely DEVEM (*Département de la vie de l'Eglise et Mission,* or, department of church and mission life), Department of education, Department of Administration and Finances, Department of Health, Department of Diakonia, and Department of Family and Gender. Each department consists of a few branches. However, in none of these departments, attention is given to the other mission of the church. This means that, while Church leaders are aware of their responsibility as regards socio-political issues, there is no provision of support or guidance in this respect. The Church might argue that socio-politics are not its business. The same argument could be applied to the fields of education and health that, however, are accepted as fitting comfortably in the

Church organization. In fact, education and health are considered as part of a broad field that might be referred to as socio-political concerns. Even so, if the Church established an independent department for socio-political affairs, it could reflect on the socio-political situation in the DR Congo and present the outcomes of this reflection to Church leaders, after which the organization of concrete and effective actions can begin.

Comparing the Protestant involvement in socio-politics to that of the Catholic Church, the last make determined organisational efforts. For years now, the Catholics have prepared a document entitled: '*Le discours socio-politique des Evêques de la conférence épiscopale du Congo'* (Bashuth, 2008). Since years they gather their political declarations in one document whereas from Protestant side there isn't any systemic plan for dealing with political speeches.

Objective Four proposes a theological perspective through the *Kairos* tradition. Church leaders have already sorted out some aspects of the *Kairos* tradition in the DR Congo that will be presented in the next chapter. The creation of a tradition for the Church is suggested, requiring it to be really critical, encourage laity, engage in civic education and provide a strong organised system for socio-political involvement.

5.3.2.5 Objective Five consists of assessing the risks that the church runs by engaging in the political prophetic way

Three questions were used to address the fifth objective.

The first question inquires after "the best way for the clergy to be involved prophetically in socio-political affairs (Inside or outside)". The binomial test is used to respond to this objective as shown in table 35.

Table 35: Binomial test on the best way for the clergy to be involved

Binomial Test

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
B9 The best way for the clergy to be involved prophetically in socio-political affairs is ...	Group 1	Inside	34	.41	.50	.124[a]
	Group 2	Outside	49	.59		
		Total	83	1.00		

Source: Author's computation

Table 36: Binomial test 2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Inside	34	41.0	41.0	41.0
	Outside	49	59.0	59.0	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author's computation

The respondents' answers indicate that 59 percent prefer the church clergy not being directly involved in political affairs. They feel clergy needs to be involved but remain outside the political system. 49 Percent accept the clergy being involved inside the political system.

Even though the group supporting outside involvement is at 59 percent, this is not significant based on the Z approximation which indicates involvement can be either inside or outside the political system. The perception of the desirability of clergy playing a role within the political system or independent from it, varies from one community to another and each has its own arguments.

The second question referring to the fifth objective looks at "the risks or challenges a servant of God encounters when involved in political affairs". Descriptive statistics as in figure 9 is used to describe risks or challenges encountered by Church leaders. Seven

risks or challenges have been selected that servants of God engaged in politics may come up against. The first is that they could be seen as liars or false servants of God by Church members. They may be killed, or they may allocate too little time to the church and pastoral care. They could align themselves with corrupt politicians and be absorbed by the political system or get involved in occultism.

The one-sample test was applied to determine whether challenges exist or not, and to find out what the strongest challenge would be. The test results show significant agreement on all possible challenges, except to be killed on which there was no agreement nor disagreement.

Figure 14: Risks and challenges
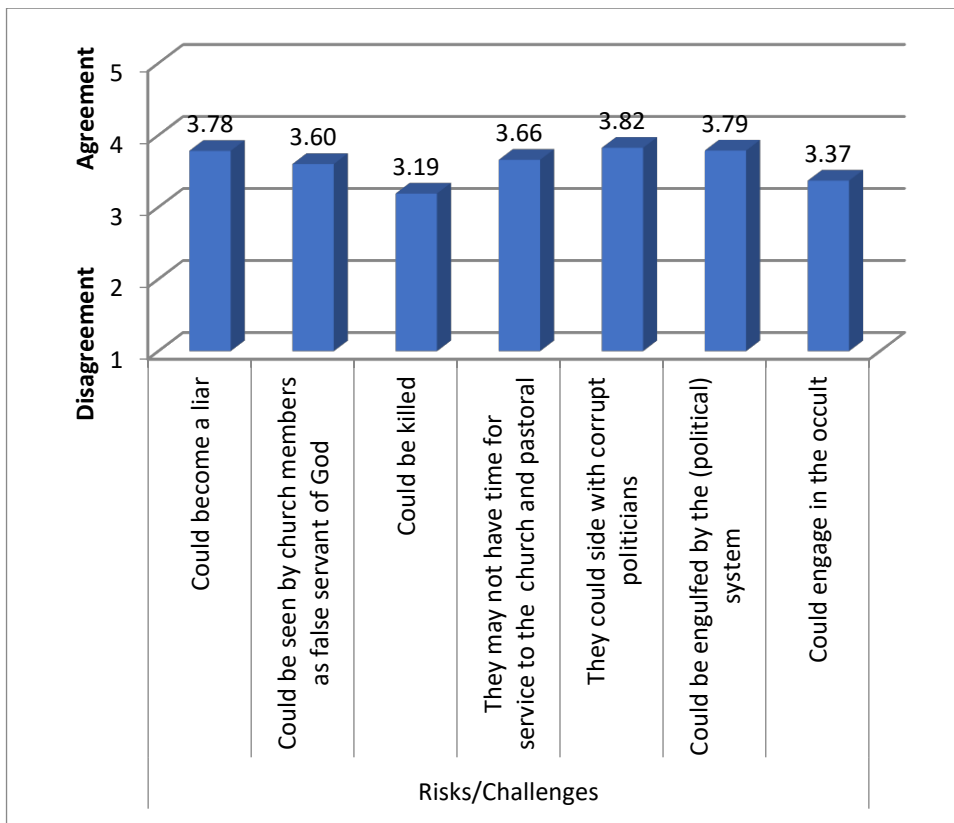
Source: Author's computation

The findings of figure 14 on the risks or challenges resulting from political involvement show that:

i.   Corruption is considered the biggest risk or challenge when Church leaders are engaged in political affairs. The test presents a mean value of 3.82, meaning that Church leaders might side with corrupt politicians. Obviously, corruption is a threat in most developing countries. The DR Congo is no exception and the country is in fact ranked among the most corrupted nations in the world (occupying 161st position out of 180 countries) according to the corruption perception index 2017 (IIAG, 2018).

ii. Church leaders could become absorbed by a political system. This risk presents a mean value of 3.79. One of the respondents stated that, "we have some parliament members; unfortunately, they deserted the church". The political milieu may influence people negatively or positively. It is easier to become absorbed by a system when working alone than when working as part of a team.

iii. Church leaders may turn into liars. One public conception of doing politics is 'telling lies'. People are often disappointed by politicians making false promises.

iv. They may lack the time for church ministry and pastoral care. It depends on whether politics is conceived as a job, a vocation or a ministry. Gamwell's experience (2005:ix.) teaches us that a clergy or laity may engage in politics as a Christian vocation to testify his or her faith. Politics can become a calling. Not only the priesthood or an occupation with politics can become a vocation, but also being a Christian.

v.   Church members could look upon clergy who engage in socio-politics as false servants of God. One of the challenges faced by politically active clergy is according to respondents, how they are perceived by others. Respondents in the present research opined that clergy who become involved in politics must not be motivated by political expediency but answer to an inner conviction of accomplishing God's responsibility, God's mission.

vi. Clergy engaging in socio-politics could get involved in occultism: The Christian faith can get badly shaken when people associate with people who do not care for the faith. Once a position of power has been attained, fear of losing power comes into play which may tempt one to get support from other spiritual forces.

vii. The risk of being killed is the last and least commonly accepted challenge met by the servant of God who is engaged in politics. It represents a mean value of 3.19, indicating neither agreement nor disagreement. This gives us a possible glimpse at how servants of God see themselves. It is love of their country that motivates them to get involved in politics and they don't consider their lives as more important that the good of the DR Congo. They are ready to suffer for the wellbeing of the people. They are willing to risk death for the sake of the nation as Jesus faced death to save lost humanity. Writing on the cost of discipleship, Bonhoeffer states that the more Christianity spreads, the less costly grace fades, referring to the grace which allows us to follow Jesus and pay the cost as it may cost a person's life (De-Gruchy, 1991: 159).

Table 37: One-sample test on the challenge

	Test Value = 3					
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
CHALLENGES	6.162	82	.000	.61274	.4149	.8105

Source: Author's computation

As concerns the above statements, the second table finds significance for the existence of challenges.

The T test application confirms there is significant agreement confirming that challenges exist, t (82) = 6.162, p<.0005. The socio-political mission is a risky mission. Those who engage in it have to be made aware of risks and challenges.

The third question aims to provide some insight into the feelings of respondents regarding involvement in socio-political and related issues. The qualitative method is used to discuss the ambiguity of Church leaders on socio-political matter. Most Church leaders express the opinion that it is a good and interesting topic, but not commonly discussed in their meetings. They hope that the outcome of the research will empower the Church to make a move in this area. Servants of God are not profoundly interested in discussions of this kind, arguing that these do not belong to the spiritual domain and that they are not politicians. Some Church leaders and pastors, however, aspire to politics. Others stated they had already tried to join the national parliament and failed but will try again. Not many Church leaders do write on these topics, but one respondent had reflected on "the prophetic mission of the Church according to the socio-political situation. The Church should exploit such reflection in the context of our country where things are becoming more and more tough. One of the responsibilities of the Church should also be such reflection, instead of promising the people of God false blessings, travel and so forth. It is really for this topic that the *Kairos* must be raised."

As regards the feelings of the Church leaders on the matter, most respondents were comfortable with reacting to the topic and contributed their thoughts on Church and politics. Views differed considerably. Most felt challenged by the question of Church engagement with socio-politics. Their conscience had been awakened and they admitted to feeling guilty for not taking the time in their ministries to think about the important problems of the DR Congo. One respondent wrote:

> "I feel challenged because the Church must play its prophetic role for the wellbeing of the people of God. As servant of God my duty is to contribute working on fulfilling the will of God. [The question of political involvement] is another challenge to my engagement with God".

Another respondent found:

> "This kind of reflection re-boosts our way of thinking [about searching] the welfare of our nation instead of observing things happening their own way. If we need a society in search of justice and equity the Church must play its prophetic mission. Reflection on Church and its political involvement must be multiplied among servants of God. Many of the servants of God don't know their role which is not only spiritual".

The topic was experienced as ambiguous in nature by participants who found the matter of being engaged or not being engaged in socio-politics somewhat confusing. One respondent remarked: "But sometimes we know that no one can serve two masters at once". It appears that many servants of God are confused when faced with the choice of politically engaging or not. The topic, and some questions, at times seemed to embarrass some respondents as hearing the truth does sometimes hurt. Another respondent said: "This topic does not make us feel comfortable because nowadays the Church seems to be politized". The topic being experienced as ambiguous depended to a degree on the circumstances or area where the discussion took place. An urban topic being discussed in an urban area can be more productive than discussing it in another type of area. Some respondents were embarrassed by the fact that they are aware of the importance of Church engagement in politics, but don't want such an engagement for themselves. Regarding the objective five, assessing the risks taken by the Church when engaging in the political prophetic way, either from inside or outside the political system, the strongest risk found is corruption. Corruption can occur in many ways. Many other risks deserve to be taken into account such as becoming absorbed by the political system, problems in time management of pastoral care, being seen as a false servant of God, or a liar, getting caught up in occultism and losing one's life.

CONCLUSION

Chapter Five applies quantitative and qualitative methods on a population of 83 Church leaders representing 95 communities. Five main findings are discussed on socio-political involvement of the Protestant Church in the DR Congo:

Firstly, the research shows that the Church should be involved in socio-political matters as a prophetic voice. The degree of agreement in this respect does however differ across categories. Those who have many years of ministry under their belts, agree more significantly than those who have less experience of pastoral care. The research demonstrates that the National Direction of the Protestant Church is not seen as being involved in a prophetic way. In cases when the Church is involved in actions of a socio-

political nature, the impact is far from impressive. Moreover, some communities have organised ways of being involved in socio-political issues in their own way.

Secondly, the research exposes two theological foundations for political Church involvement. Such involvement is the mission of the Church. The bible is seen as an effective tool for justifying a role for the Church in socio-politics.

In the third place, when the socio-political situation in a country is not good, the wisest reaction is to raise one's voice and pray. There is a need for a public theology which is seen as prayer in action by fulfilling social engagements. Church leaders are of the opinion that many in their circles who wish to participate in political activity, are motivated by the highest feelings of patriotism.

Fourthly, there is a need for a *Kairos* tradition in the DR Congo. This tradition involves the Church to be really critical, and to encourage laity to engage in civic education and in providing a strong organised system for handling socio-political engagement.

In the fifth place, being involved in the prophetic way, either inside or independent from the political system, the strongest risk run by Church leaders involved in socio-politics is claimed to consist in corruption. Corruption can take many forms and has affected many functionaries. Among other risks that have to be taken into account, is to be engulfed by the political system, to fail in time management for pastoral care, to be considered a false servant of God, or a liar, to get involved in occultism and to lose one's life. The life of a disciple has always been fraught with difficulties and it continues to be so.

The ECC can make efforts to improve the impact made by its prophetic voice by determining, and dealing with, its weak points which are: individuality of engagement, scattered forces, and lack of strong organisation of the Church for the purpose of political involvement, the malfunctioning of communications between communities and of the National Direction on political affairs. The Church can improve its impact by raising its prophetic voice on socio-political concerns and by admonishing evil, by being critical, encouraging laity, drawing on the word of God with wisdom, engaging in civic education and providing a strong, well organised system for socio-political engagement.

Chapter Six considers the prophetic theology on social justice that the Church should adopt and practise, acting in the *Kairos* tradition.

CHAPTER SIX

PROPHETIC THEOLOGY ON SOCIAL JUSTICE: RE-READING WALTER BRUEGGEMANN

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Six considers the understanding of social justice in Brueggemann's theology. It is mostly concerned with Brueggemann's stress on the common good of which all human beings are deserving. It is an approach that necessitates the Church to be open to imagining a better world. Brueggemann declares:

> The great crisis among us is the crisis of 'common good', the sense of community solidarity that binds all in a common destiny - haves and have-nots, the rich and the poor. We face a crisis about the common good because there are powerful forces at work among us to resist the common good, to violate community solidarity, and to deny a common destiny. Mature people, at their best are people who are committed to the common good that reaches beyond private interest, transcends sectarian commitments and offers human solidarity (Brueggemann, 2010:1).

This section focuses on biographical details of Brueggemann, defining the context of, and the threats to, social justice as perceived by Brueggemann. Furthermore, key themes of social justice are presented as well as biblical models of social justice and the position of the Church in this respect.

6.2 BIOGRAPHY OF WALTER BRUEGGEMANN

Walter Brueggemann is considered as one of the most powerful bible interpreters of our time. He is the author of more than a hundred books and many academic articles. Brueggemann was born in Tilden, Nebraska, in 1933. His father was a German Evangelical pastor. He graduated in 1955 with an A.B at Elmhurst College after which he attended Eden Theological Seminary, earning a B.D. (equivalent to today's M.Div.) in 1958. In 1961, he completed his formal theological education at Union Theological Seminary and got his Th.D. While teaching at Eden, he earned a Ph.D. in education at St.

Louis University.   Brueggemann has served as faculty at two institutions, Eden Theological Seminary (1961-1986) and Columbia Theological Seminary (1986-2003). One of his prominent studies discusses '*the prophetic imagination*', published in 1978. His primary way of presenting his thoughts is based on rhetorical criticism. *His magnum opus*, Theology of the Old Testament (1997), is a rhetorical-critical look at the Old Testament through the lenses of 'testimony, dispute, and advocacy.' He continues his writings to this day and published a commentary in 2014. Brueggemann works as an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. He resides with his wife Tia in Cincinnati, Ohio and is a professor emeritus of Old Testament studies at Columbia University.

6.3 DEFINITION AND CONTEXT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

A way of describing social justice is that it concerns the distribution of social goods and social power. The Mosaic tradition is focused more on distributive than on retributive justice (Brueggemann, 1997:736-738). Social justice in the context of the DR Congo is probably not unlike social justice in historical times in Israel, with social goods and social power unequally and in destructive ways distributed.

Social justice entails equity in the redistribution of resources and equal access to services, resources, power, knowledge and information. In the process of securing social justice, people should be empowered to participate in decision-making and activities and to address resulting power imbalances that affect their lives (Mostert, 2014:129). Galambos (2008:3) lists six principles of distributive justice, namely:
An equal share for each person;
To each person a share according to his or her need;
To each person a share according to effort;
Or according to contribution;
Or according to merit;
And, finally, to each person a share according to free market exchange.
The establishment of social justice makes sense as it is the wellbeing of the community that requires the fair distribution of social goods and power. As Colson and Morse (2005:80) affirm, the justice we need is concerned with human well-being, particularly in

respect of minorities and of those who are suffering. The Congolese people suffer from increasing inequalities in income distribution. This is understandable based on, for example, the fact that the average income of 20% of the richest Congolese was 15.1 times higher than that of 20% of the poorest. In 2012 this ratio fell to 9.3%. The management of natural resources is one of the tasks of the government that is not satisfactory fulfilled. It implies that poverty has developed into a system created by lack of good leadership which leads to social disequilibria (Sachs, 2005:56).

Social injustice is denounced in many parts of the bible, for example in the book of Micah 2.1-5 where greed drives people to try and seize the property of others. A greater threat to the world than poverty is greed driving people to attain satisfaction without considering the neighbour. As we are children of God and seeking the will of our Father, I agree with Conde-Frazier that social justice is an integral dimension of spiritual life. The Holy Spirit empowers humanity to participate in the fullness of relational life. Social justice entails actions of Christians in the community. Social justice might not be the result of certain social policies, but rather the expression of our obedience to the gospel. In the context of justice, Conde-Frazier (2006:326) declares:

> Religious education for justice requires living in the borderland between God and the people. It creates a prophetic space where we do not announce and denounce but where we help to bring about alternative practices for more humane living.

A Christian's life is concerned with the whole body of Christ. Whether Christian or not, every human being is *imago Dei,* and deserves our care as being part of our body. In the words of Mostert (2014:129):

> social justice is both a goal of action and the process of action itself, which involves an emphasis on equity or equality for individuals in society in terms of access to a number of different resources and opportunities, the right to self-determination or autonomy and participation in decision-making, freedom from oppression, and a balancing of power across society.

Journeying with the thought of Brueggemann and in the company of other scholars, has made me aware of the many ways in which social justice among humanity is threatened.

6.4 THREATS TO SOCIAL JUSTICE IN BRUEGGEMANN'S PERCEPTION

Reflecting on the repression of the people of God in Egypt, Brueggemann mentions that although, according to Genesis 12, Egypt could have fed the entire world, it chose to martyrize the Hebrew people. A prophet was needed who could speak out about their plight. Brueggemann defines a prophet as someone who can keep standing outside the mainstream of everyday life and expose its reality. He is sensitive to the pain suffered by others. Brueggemann emphasizes that, when the prophet talks of God, he always hints at aspects of a social or political nature. These dimensions cannot be separated from the prophetic voice (Brueggemann, 2006:199). There is an interesting example of Jeremiah who is working and helping in Jerusalem when the city is destroyed and the temple burning, while the king is in exile. The true prophet is concerned for the common good being threatened. In this context Brueggemann underlines three threats to the common good. These are the imperial system, the complexities of state monopolies as embodied in systems of government, **and oppressive social policies.**

6.4.1 The imperial system

The imperial system is a social arrangement controlled by an agent with immense power. Rulers in whom too much authority is invested become embodiments of power. The narrative of God's people in Egypt is informed by the power of the Pharaoh. Writing about serving the common good, Brueggemann (2010:3) refers to the Pharaoh as a paradigm of the enemy of the common good, or as an incarnation of the imperial system.

An imperial system can be looked at from the inside as well as the outside. Seen from the outside the system is comparable to the contemporary international system of exploiting vulnerable countries, profiting of their resources, giving rise to warfare, and seeming to provide support when disasters strike that are caused by the system's own policies. Seen from the inside, the imperial system operates much as the governance of most African countries, where the powerful are free to ill-treat their fellow human beings.
Among characteristics of the imperial system are the following four.

A first characteristic is a refusal to take note of the failure of the nation's social, economic and political fabric (Brueggemann, 2010:103-104). Living in the empire, one is forced to pretend it is a utopia and to congratulate the powers that be on having affected social degradation.

Related to this feature is the fact that the powerful in the empire ignore the reality surrounding them. Insensitivity is the hallmark of the empire. It is a closed self-centred world, taking no account of other realities.

Hence, grief in the empire is not allowed to be expressed in anything but muted tones. This comes down to a lack of freedom of expression. Of those in the DR Congo who in the past few years have dared to raise their voices in protest, many have landed in jail or lost their lives. Another characteristic of the imperial system is that the empire is in the habit of making false promises that increased wellbeing is about to materialize. Brueggemann (1972:96) states that Israel in the tenth century BCE was, culturally and politically, defined by the use of power. Economic and political resources were controlled by the mightiest in the land. Their power could bring disaster or welfare, produce curses or blessings and cause life or death. Similar processes are functioning today in many African countries, one of them the DR Congo, with powerful persons shaping society into what suits their interests. The same power was exercised by Pilate who said to Jesus: "Don't you realise I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" (John 19.10). Abuse of power continues today.

6.4.2 The complex system of state monopoly

In the imperial system, the emperor embodies the law. No institution is above the emperor. Everything is done according to his wishes. The empire is run to serve the wellbeing of the emperor and there is no priority such as the common good. The life of the emperor is worth more than the lives of his people. The dislocation of people and the production of refugees is what imperial policy often leads to (Brueggemann, 2008:288). In the narrative of God's people in Egypt, the Pharaoh can be seen as the embodiment of the state monopoly because of his capacity to produce wealth for others. In those times food was a weapon and a tool of control. Pharaoh attempted to control the world using

Egypt's food monopoly, making the country simultaneously into a source of life and an agent enslaving those who seek life (Brueggemann, 2000:75). The first chapter of Exodus refers to the Nile that was first the source of life to become a source of death when born males had to be killed and done away with. God's gift of the life-giving river thus functioned in the ill-treatment of the people of God. The situation is reminiscent of those African countries, where today leaders monopolize control of natural resources. In the DR Congo, for example, natural resources are the preserve of powerful people. People of God are victimized for the interests of a minority that has appropriated what is God's creation and should represent a blessing. With self-enrichment a central concern of rulers, there is little thought of the common good. Contemporary 'Pharaohs' create what some scholars call the 'myth of scarcity' that may be one of the causes of violence in the world. The principle of the 'myth of scarcity' is that bread will never be generated for the world but only for 'us' and 'ours' although God has created abundance (Brueggemann, 1999:113). If the world nowadays seems to be over inhabited resulting in food shortages, the truth is that too much goes to some people, and too little to the majority. As Brueggemann (1999:113) argues:

> The claim of creation faith is that there is more than enough to share, and where there is sharing there is generativity of more because as the fruitful instrument of the creation the shalom of God enacted as sharing, they do in fact produce more.

In many African countries a sustained policy of self-enrichment and abuse of civic freedoms has contributed to extreme poverty. Responding to Karl Marx's thought, Brueggemann states: "The way in which an economy is dominated by the propertied is separated from the realities of the social fabric in ways that are inevitably destructive" (Brueggemann, 2000:23). Those who live under such a system are in constant fear of what, forever worsening, conditions the future may hold for them.

In his vision of the prophetic mission of the Church, Brueggemann (2001b:9) emphasizes that "there is no freedom of God without the politics of justice and compassion, and there is no politics of justice and compassion without a religion of the freedom of God".

6.4.3 Oppressive social policy

Most policies are produced to serve for the exploitation of the weaker members of society. People's energy being exploited to satisfy the extravagant needs of some, applied policy takes on an increasingly oppressive character. This picture of social policy comes close to matching DR Congo's social system developed to benefit those in power.

An oppressive system is characterized by, *inter alia*, the presence of hard labour without wages being paid (as in 1 Kings 5.13-18 where subjects are chosen to do forced labour for the person in power). An oppressive system may also impose hard labour without decent wages whereby law enforcement is on the side of the powers that be. As oppressive social policies don't focus on the common good or on social justice, wages, if paid, are usually insufficient to an indecent degree. The imperial system implies exploitation and the use of cheap labour for increased production. It is a strategy of capitalism in developing countries. The DR Congo is a point in case where Chinese employers pay workers around 50 US $ per month while they have to be on duty from 8 am to 18 pm. It is all about production. Note that 50 US $ might just suffice to pay for accommodation of a single person.

Another feature of an imperial system is that there is usually an oppressive levy system. Generally, the levy collected under an imperial system is geared towards profiting the oppressing class. There also may be a multi levy system that narrowly enables people to live decently but that doesn't allow them to make progress, even if they are businesspeople.

The narrative of Moses leading Israel away from imperial Egypt indicates two possibilities for people who live in an imperial system to recover their freedom:
First, there is the chance of breaking free from what might be called a religion of state triumphalism. In the case of the Hebrews in Egypt, the breakaway was realised by Moses exposing and dismantling the gods worshiped in static triumphalism. Moses showed that these gods were devoid of any divine power and represented nothing but the mythical legitimacy of Pharaoh. The empire had been supported by claims of its mythical significance, but these were brought to an end by the disclosure of the alternative religion

centred on the freedom of God. The narrative indicates that there is a connection between the religion of static triumphalism and politics of oppression and exploitation (Brueggemann, 2001b:6-7).

The Moses narrative offers a second possibility to break away from the politics of oppression and exploitation. It exposes the notion of state theology as being no more than simply the theological justification of the status quo including its racism, capitalism, totalitarianism and imperialism. It blesses injustice, canonizes the will of the powerful and reduces the poor to passivity, obedience and apathy (Leonard, 2011:6).

In this context Brueggemann (2001b:7) writes that:

> It is the marvel of prophetic faith that both imperial religion and imperial politics could be broken. Religiously, the gods were declared no-gods. Politically, the oppressiveness of the brickyard was shown to be ineffective and not necessary to human community. Moses introduced not just the new free God and not just a message of social liberation. Rather, his work came precisely at the [point of] engagement of the religion of God's freedom with the politics of human justice.

6.5 KEY THEMES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN BRUEGGEMANN'S UNDERSTANDING

On the basis of my reading of Brueggemann's studies, I have selected two themes that he associates with social justice. These are the search for the common good and the hope for a better world as imagined by people looking for an alternative.

6.5.1 The common good

Brueggemann's interpretation of the Pentateuch has a great impact on his social reading of the bible. It may be advisable for the Church today to read the bible with a view to sharpen its social perceptions. In respect of the Church today, Brueggemann writes: "The tragedy of the Church is that it has so many people who read their bible as history stoppers" (Brueggemann, 2006:198).

Brueggemann thinks that, in order to serve the common good, the Church has to re-imagine the world differently, reading the bible as a history maker. "When the Church only echoes the world's kingdom of scarcity, then it has failed in its vocation. But the faithful

Church keeps at the tasks of living out a journey that points to the common good" (Brueggemann, 2010:32).

Brueggemann uses Genesis 47.13 and following texts which mention steps to bring people to slavery. Three steps were followed by the hungry peasants. Second, the peasants' cattle were taken on behalf of the Pharaoh. Cattle were their means of survival but when they ran out of money, they gave up what was their livelihood in exchange for food.

Finally, their freedom itself was exchanged for food. Brueggemann reasons that slavery was produced by manipulating the economy with the aim of an increasing concentration of wealth and power for the few at the expense of the community. The result was a slave state which is what is becoming of the DR Congo where wealth is concentrated in a few communities while food is growing into a real weapon of dominion.

After the Exodus (Exodus 20), God gave the people the ten commandments as a statement on the basis of which to organise social power and social goods for the common benefit of the community (Brueggemann, 2010-26). The commandments received at the mountain had to abolish the Pharaoh's rule and replace it with God's rule of freedom and worship. Some key points of the new rule established by the Lord to be observed by the people follow below.

First rule is that God must be loved, served and trusted (Exodus 20.1-3). Neighbours of all kinds have to be respected, protected and not exploited as happened under the Pharaoh when neighbours were used to increase production (Exodus 20.5-9). In the third place, predatory practices and aggressive policies that made less important citizens vulnerable to the ambitions of prominent persons had to be abolished. In a rapacious economic system such as that of the Pharaoh there is no security. Pharaoh's greedy system was continuously in need of more and the perception of a common good lost all meaning (Exodus 20.17). Finally, the people would need a day to rest as the ten commandments prescribed. The first motive for the free day offered by Exodus 20.8-11 is not to use the day to worship, but to rest. Rest had been an impossibility under the Pharaonic system where all of life was regulated for productive purposes. Under this

system, even Pharaoh himself risked missing out on rest by his continuous occupation with commanding tasks and handing out quotas for people to fulfil. Society was in danger of becoming a place of production and accumulation without any enjoyment. People functioned like machines for creating benefit and were used by others as if they were objects.

In Sinai, God changed the Pharaonic rule of production and accumulation to the rule of an economy of social common good. Differing from Pharaoh's view, God promoted the cancelation of the debt of the poor after seven years (Deuteronomy 15.1-18), and a ban on the charging of interest on loan given to His people (Deuteronomy 23.19-20). Furthermore there were rules that slaves must be given hospitality (Deuteronomy 23.15-16), that it was not permitted to require collateral from the poor (Deuteronomy 24.10-13), that the poor deserved their wages and must not be deprive of them (Deuteronomy 24.14-15) while justice has to be done to resident aliens and orphans (Deuteronomy 24.17-18).

The rules tended to promote the socio-equilibria and provision for the needy and marginalized in an approach that Brueggemann (2010:39-43) calls the 'economy-with-neighbourhood'. Mostly, societal evil results from the understanding of these two rules (socio-equilibria and provision for needy and marginalized). Interpreting Walter Brueggemann, Nessan (2017:443) proposes society to shift its focus from building dependence on oppressive global structures and direct more energy to associative life styles on the local level, for example in neighbourhoods. Current society stimulates the growth of individualism that does not always allow people to focus on shared goals. Individualism does not always allow people to focus on shared goals. People could revise their relationships and resist the temptation of greed, individualism, and like-mindedness that characterize our society. Even the marginalized in society are often unable to understand that neighbourhood is a force that can be used to oppose the oppression emanating from contemporary Pharaohs. Similarly, Bergant (2012: 383) reasons: "According to Brueggemann the autonomy, secularity, and individualism that characterize modernity have 'exiled' the contemporary believer". Furthermore, Wynne (1977:1769) reminds us that Brueggemann, in his writing entitled "The Bible makes sense", emphasizes that, in spite of the different characters of the Old and New Testaments, the

common good is a very important aspect of both. However, for the common good to become a central concern in society, people have to start living with and for each other as brothers and sisters. Leaders in society abide by rules of production and accumulation and neglect the need for rest and freedom. The result is that society is becoming transformed to fit the societal model favoured by those in power. In his picture of society, Brueggemann (2010:49) describes the social order as shaped like the temple of Solomon in 2 Kings 6.3-22, which is not an accidental piece of architecture but an 'imagined social order'. The three-chambers or three parts of the temple can be seen as summarizing the qualified, the partially qualified and the disqualified.

In Jeremiah 9.24, and the Exodus, three important Hebrew verbs which represent the 'pillows' of the common good are used to explain the Lord's purpose. The verbs are *Hesed, Mispat* and *Sedaqah.* In a study of Brueggemann's book, 'The practice of home fulness', Yuan (2016:8) insists on the need for reparation amongst neighbours and on sacramental submission which includes, what he calls, 'the triad of steadfast love, justice and righteousness to replace wisdom, might and wealth. The following sections contain discussions of this triad of common good as perceived by Brueggemann.

6.5.1.1 *Hesed* or 'steadfast love'

The word *Hesed* occurs 245 times in the Old Testament of which 63 times in the secular sphere. The word is derived from the Arabic root *hasada* meaning 'band together for mutual aid' (G. Johannes Botterweck, 1986:45). The person who receives from others an act of *Hesed,* expects to do acts of *Hesed* in return. There are plenty examples in the bible of acts of *Hesed*. David, for example, offers *Hesed* to Jonathan's son in return for what Jonathan has been for him. *Hesed* in this sense can be understood as 'good deeds'. In the religious context the word is associated with God's kindness.

It involves standing in solidarity, honouring commitment and being reliable in relation to others. It reflects one aspect of social welfare that consists in welcoming marginalized people, respecting them in their own identity, as full members of the community (Burnside, 2011:241). A society bound together by *Hesed* will prosper as people are looking for each other's welfare instead of serving their own interests.

6.5.1.2 *Mispat* or justice

English makes no difference between the Hebrew words *Mispat* (justice) and *din* (judgement). *Mispat* has many meanings. On the basis of its root '*spt*' it means, depending on the context, to rule, to govern, to command, to judge, to arbitrate, to warn, to punish, or to vindicate. The substantive can thus mean justice, judgement, rights, vindication, deliverance, custom or norm (Freedman, 2009a:1127-1128).

The Old Testament uses the word in its meaning of distribution – distribution to ensure that all community members have access to resources and goods and can live a life of dignity. Scholars are not in agreement that social justice can be defined in the same way as welfare (Burnside, 2011:240). Biblical consideration connects justice and welfare. The bible proposes some ways to pursue justice. For justice to prevail, some important principles have to be adhered to, in the opinion of Burnside (2011:103-104).

One of these principles is that God is the source of justice. Deuteronomy 32.4 calls God the source of true justice. Seeking justice in separation from God is like looking for water in the wilderness. True justice is in the *shalom* of God. In biblical perspective, the *shalom* is not only the absence of war, but also the authentic harmony of a society in which people care for each other. '*Shalom*' is the way things ought to be. The main cause of injustice, crime, and poverty is human sin. Sin pollutes the *shalom* that has to be restored (Colson and Morse, 2005:80). Justice abides by the nature and the deeds of God. It is meaningless to speak about justice without mentioning God. God is a just God (Psalm 98.9).

Another point is that the knowledge of God determines the practice of justice. The world makes the mistake of talking about justice without knowing the God of justice. The age of the Enlightenment has tried to move God aside, presuming science can solve the world's problems. Instead the justice produced by human beings turns into a threat to them.
God has established judges for God's people to mediate his decisions, for instance in the cases of Jethro, Moses, and Jehoshaphat (Exodus 18.19; Deuteronomy 1.16-17; 2 Chronicles 19.6).

Being image of God, the human being might be an agent of justice. According to Genesis 1.26-27, God created the human being in his own image and likeness. The fall of man by disobedience corrupted the nature of the human being (Genesis 3) after which rivalry, violence and greed began to dominate society (Micah 6.3-8). The human perception of justice, corrupted in the fall, needs to be restored by the coming of Jesus.

Another important principle in pursuing justice, consists in our duty to fight oppressors so that the oppressed may be liberated (Deuteronomy 16.20). In the Old Testament, those who were appointed to judge the people of God (*dayyan* or *sopet*), or magistrates, were expected to reflect God's nature of holiness. When executing justice, magistrates or judges have to act as agents or deputies of God in His holiness. In times of war, judges were appointed by God Himself with the aim of liberating people from aggressive enemy power. In peace time, the judges administered justice when disputes between people arose (Freedman, 2009a:1128). Justice thus refers in the Old Testament to basic human rights. God's justice was based on concern for the poor and marginalized. The pursuit of justice is of central importance. In the words of Marshall (2005:29) :

> Justice is always an effort. It does not just happen. It does not spontaneously spring into existence. Nor is it the automatic or accidental by product of something else such as the operation of market forces or the spread of Western democracy. Justice requires commitment and struggle.

In the same context, justice has to pursue the social order (Leviticus 25.23). True justice has to apply to relationship. As it applies to God's relationship with humanity, justice must also be the keeper of relationships between human beings. Justice must be measured by the extent to which people are aware of the obligation to live in ways that uphold the dignity and rights of others (Marshall, 2005:36). The notion of justice should be taught to everyone, according to Exodus 21.1; 24.12 and Deuteronomy 17.10-11. Justice has to sort out disputes (Exodus 23.4-5). Justice has to be co-opted with the practice of wisdom (Proverbs 2.6-8).

Another principle that needs to be in place for justice to be done is that there must be no separation of powers in the search for justice. Levites, priests, kings, prophets and non-

priests were involved in getting justice (Deuteronomy 17.8-20; 1 Kings 21.1-16). Today's leadership fails because it is ignorant of this principle and leaves the search for justice to a limited social class. Many Church leaders have withdrawn from the search for justice, arguing that it is not the Church's responsibility.

In addition, when dealing with injustice God sides with the poor and defenceless. Unfortunately, in matters of social justice the scale is always tipped in favour of the wealthy and powerful whereas God's preferential option would be the side of the weak and oppressed. God has in the past intervened to serve His people. He implements laws to protect those who are poor and vulnerable (Deuteronomy 24.19-22; 15.1-11; Leviticus 19.9-10; 25.8-17; Exodus 23.10-11). God also makes use of prophets to confront rich and powerful wrongdoers (Isaiah 3.14-15; Amos 2.6-7; 4.1-3; 5.10-13; Jeremiah 5.26-29; Malachi 3.5; Zachariah 7.9-14).

Justice remains a pillow supporting socio-economic stability in opposition to corruption. In Burnside's view *(2011:115)* it is also of the essence to underline the difference between human justice and divine justice. on Burnside's view*:*

Divine justice	Human justice
1. God is the ultimate source of justice	1. Justice is tied to law legitimated by human resources and possibly corrupted institutions
2. Judges act according to the nature of God	2. Justice (adjudication) is separated from religion
3. Justice is rooted in the social order	3. Justice is achieved by application of the law
4. The quest for justice is a communal responsibility	4. Justice is supported by human rights
5. Judges are mostly non-professional and the quest for justice is communal	5. Judges are professional and only few are involved

6. The character of the law is to practise wisdom, rather than follow rules.	6. Law is considered as a system of general rules
7. There is no separation of powers	7. There is separation of powers

One objective of the Church's preaching must be to awaken people to the reality of the times. Justice must not be merely a dream, but a living pursuit. Evangelical preachers have the potential to fulfil a prophetic mission by bringing a critical and hopeful message. It is the kind of message that can be found in Jesus' ministry when he speaks about social criticism and hope. Keeping the significance of prophets in mind, we must try and imagine the world as a fulfilment of the purpose of God. People of God should always ask themselves: What would the world be like if God was there and leading it? To undo the collapse of social relationships has to be one of the tasks of the prophet. The prophet should aim for a society where human beings don't destroy each other, a society where the lions and lambs eat together and share their food. This metaphor represents an imagined society that seeks justice and where every single member is considered worthy and deserving of honour and security.

In the New Testament (Mark 4.19; 10.17-31, Matthew 13.22; 19.16-30; 6.21, Luke 8.14; 18.18-3; 12.16-21; 14.1-14; 16.13) Jesus admonishes the concentration of wealth which is evidence of structural injustice in society. The prosperity of the rich comes at the expense of the poor. This constitutes a threat to the common good in society. In that context Jesus declares in his discourse (Mark 14.1-14, Matthew 26.11 and John 12.8), that people always have the poor with them. This doesn't imply that Jesus endorses the presence of poverty in the society. It is a way to stress that the failing practice of the covenant in society produces poor people (Deuteronomy 15.11). Even when talking on beatitude in Matthew 5.3-12, Jesus does not want to ascribe spiritual value to poverty and hunger. People are not blessed because of their material condition. Jesus either needs to tell his respondents that when God will come in His kingdom, poverty will not exist anymore (Marshall, 2005:54-55).

Referring to the greedy rich, Jesus speaks of the 'mammon' of injustice which is dishonest wealth. This was also the theme of Jesus' criticism of the wealthy elite in Luke 12.15: They accumulate unneeded surplus, ignore the needs of the poor (Luke 10.25-37) and corrupt and exploit the weak (Mark 11.15-19). If such behaviour were ignored by the bible, it would lose its vitality and life-bearing quality in society.

In relation to the life-bearing quality of the scripture Brueggemann (2000:22) worries that, if the bible would no longer be used in human society but only in scholarship, the text will lose its vitality. The vitality of the scripture is for public use and has to play a role in society. He disagrees with Luther's view of the theology of the cross, and he encourages theologians to be theologians of the cross, able to act prophetically for the common good, avoiding the theology of glory which, according to Brueggemann (2000:22), calls evil good and good evil, as acknowledged in Isaiah 5.20: "Ah, you who call evil good and good evil, Who put darkness for light and light for darkness. Who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" Rather people should seek the theology of the cross which calls things by their proper name.

6.5.1.3 *Sedaqah* ק ד צ **or righteousness**

In Brueggemann's thought (2010:62-63), righteousness is the intervention in social affairs to rehabilitate society, social wellbeing and to respond to social grievances.

The Hebrew root of righteousness is ק ד צ(*sdk*), a word that occurs 523 times in the Old Testament, mostly in the prophets, the Psalms and wisdom literature. Many Old Testament scholars define the root *sdk* in two ways, first as whoever watches over righteousness and justice distributes reward and punishment according to whether the righteousness in question corresponds to. Second, *sdk* can also be understood as deliverance and salvation. It is a gift rather than a punishment (G. Johannes Botterweck, 2003:239-249).

God's justice is revealed in Jesus Christ. It includes the human being and it is not just a judgement but rather a creative justice. The divine justice that Jesus Christ revealed before the world, does not exclude the sinner but includes him or her. Justice has always been central to the reformation and is even the foundation of Christian faith. Justice is

identified as a struggle necessary to deal with the marginalized oppressed people in, for example, the DR Congo (Buttelli, 2015:145).

God delights in *Hesed, Mispat* and *Sedaqah*. They are the best offerings the world can make to the Lord.

In the context of the common good, in the following section a reflection in the Exodus narrative is addressed.

6.5.1.4 **Exodus as paradigm for common good**

This section considers the Exodus as a paradigm for the common good in the DR Congo. The bible explains the term Exodus as meaning departure. Brueggemann's understanding of the Exodus (1999:114) is not necessarily or merely as a geographical displacement, but also as an economic occurrence, an imaginative act of human beings to affect an existence without having the Pharaoh dictate their living circumstances. The story of Exodus presents the fact of people having to leave their homes to settle elsewhere where life may be better for them.

The important question is how the people oppressed by the Pharaohs of our time can find release from their oppressors? How can the notion of the Exodus be made relevant in a non-geographical way of understanding? How can the people of the DR Congo leave their Pharaohs behind and live their lives without being dominated and threatened by those in power? As the people of God yearning for an alternative when the Israel was wounded, many African people are yearning for, and in need of, an advocate and a deliverer. God came to respond to Israel's yearning and was immediately ready to take on the role of the liberator. When Israel cried out in Exodus 2.23-25, God decided to champion Israel's cause using enough power and authority to legitimate Israel as a nation and to overturn oppressive structures, procedures, and assumptions (Brueggemann, 1999:48).

Israel was freed from oppressive powers by the power of God Himself which was above the Pharaoh's. God used a man to accomplish His plan to deliver His people. The overturning of oppressive structures becomes non-rebellious and a legal action when it is God who legitimates. It should not be considered as a lack of the respect that is due to

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political leaders according to Romans 13. Two concepts are crucial in this context, namely God's power and human intervention. Once God approves the need for the liberation of a people, he uses humans to take part in the process. It does however remain God's power that is applied to accomplish His will. This takes us to the African context. Moses would today have been called a rebel. But Moses functioned in the plan of God to release His people. Are all the contemporary fighters for liberation from present-day Pharaohs to be considered as rebels?

The Congolese people, like Israel, need to escape their oppressors, exercise their freedom and become 'the subject of their own history' (Brueggemann, 1999:49). As in the Exodus narrative, God's people are always following the way of their Father who engages in the battle against God's enemy. The logical way to oppose the modern Pharaohs is to be on God's side which is always the side of the oppressed people.

The challenge posed by the deliverance is to transform the vision of the Exodus into a sustainable social practice that has institutional staying power, credibility and authority, and that can create an egalitarian community. Economic resources and political procedures have to become available for the entire community, excluding the possibility of yesterday's oppressed people becoming tomorrow's oppressors. There is the tendency of those who are yearning for liberation to turn, once they are released from their yoke, into lions and lording it over the weak. This transformation has affected many African leaders who, once they have taken overpower from the colonialists, become threats to their own and other nations, at times worse than the colonialists.

The Exodus process also includes grief. In the words of Brueggemann (1986:41), "only grief permits the newness". The people of God cried out to be released. When God heard their grief He came and intervened. The same logic is applied in the book of Jeremiah. If he had not cried out as described in his chapters 4 and 8, God would not have come to intervene and heal the people. Grief is also one aspect of the way in which Congolese people need to experience their Exodus.

Is there a correlation of the Exodus narrative and the search for social justice? Is there a correlation between faith and social justice? Odahl and others (2013:428-429) present a study that examines the relation between faith, or belief, and their participants' engagement with civic questions. Their findings show that people with a strong and more mature faith base are likely to have a stronger belief in the need to actively promote social justice. They have more confidence in their ability to positively impact others as well as a greater trust in the supportive efforts of their surroundings activating for social justice, while they have a greater tendency to engage in social justice promotion and community activism. As justice is both a personal and a social virtue in the Christian understanding, it is crucially important for justice to be relevant to the practice of social work at all levels. The virtue of justice is defined as the excellent acknowledgement of the good (Mayer, 2014:208-209). One of the CENCO statements reports.

> *« La Justice sociale « grandit une nation » (cf. Proverbes 14, 34), elle crée un climat de paix et d'harmonie dans la société du fait que la loi protège tout citoyen des exactions et de tout abus de pouvoir. Une telle justice implique l'existence d'un Etat de droit, dans lequel personne ne concentre tous les pouvoirs entre ses mains. La justice sociale et distributive doit être promue car elle offre à tous une égalité de chance fondée sur les mérites objectifs et non sur le clientélisme »* (CENCO, 2009).

> In English: Social Justice "grows a nation" (Proverbs 14, 34), it creates a climate of peace and harmony in society because the law protects every citizen from abuse of power. Such justice implies the existence of the state of law, in which no one holds all power in his own hands. Social and distributive justice must be promoted because it offers all people an equal chance based on objective merits and not on clientelism. (CENCO, 2009).

6.5.2 Hope for an alternative future

The prophet Jeremiah is one of the interesting prophetic voices who did ministry by anticipating a crisis, and when it came about, he helped people to walk alongside the establishment. He worked from criticism to hopefulness.

The Pharaonic exploitation in the Exodus narrative needed a dreamer like Moses, able to act outside the imperial reality. Dreamers are of importance as they may challenge the powerful. They are able to imagine, in the words of Brueggemann, a new future, an

alternative world (Rahner, 1975:650-651). The Old Testament's understanding of hope is determined by the following concepts.

Beseth: ב ס ת: To be confident, to feel secure

Knh:ה ו ק: To wait for, to be tense

'thl: י ת ל: To expect, to hope

Hsh: ח ס ה: To fly to, to take refuse in,

Hkth: ח כ ה: To wait for longingly

Shbr: ש ב ר: To trust

'mn: א מ ן: To be firm and consoled, to believe, trust, hope.

Israel's hope is on Yahweh. In the New Testament, the concept of hope is embodied in three concepts:

Hupomenein: To be patient, to endure

Gregorein: To be watchful

Elpisein: To hope.

In the gospel of John and in some synoptics' conceptions, hope is seen in the same way as faith, and in Revelations it is matched with patience (Rahner, 1975:651). As shown below, two reflections can inspire us to hope for an alternative future:

6.5.2.1 A possibility to believe in hope against hope

Brueggemann (2006:204) argues that, when the people and the king were in exile, the message of the prophet was no longer focused on criticism but on giving hope.

With Jerusalem having been destroyed, people changed their view of life. They felt despair and a deep sense of the loss they had experienced. Politically, they felt humiliated among those to whom they had boasted of being great and important. Theologically they felt they were losing the promise of being people of God. That is what usually happens when the symbol of one's pride is gone and the situation, instead of improving as expected is worsening, while socio-political structures collapse and fail, then hope fades away and despair takes its place. When people's faith undergoes change of an emotional,

political and theological nature, it leads to a sense of loss, vulnerability and abandonment (Brueggemann, 2014:89-90). Do African countries have any reason to be hopeful when all they see and experience in their surroundings is destruction, political and socio-economic collapse and societal pressure of many sorts? The future doesn't look like anything to put one's hope in. The book of Lamentations 5.1-22 becomes the everyday reality of most of Africa with the prophet saying:

1 *Remember, O Lord, what has happened to us. Look at us and see our disgrace.*

2 *Our property is in the hands of strangers; foreigners are living in our homes.*

3 *Our fathers have been killed by the enemy, and now our mothers are widows.*

4 *We must pay for the water we drink; we must buy the wood we need for fuel.*

5 *Driven hard like donkeys or camels, we are tired, but are allowed no rest.*

6 *To get food enough to stay alive, we went begging to Egypt and Assyria.*

7 *Our ancestors sinned, but now they are gone, and we are suffering for their sins.*

8 *Our rulers are no better than slaves, and no one can save us from their power.*

9 *Murderers roam through the countryside; we risk our lives when we look for food.*

10 *Hunger has made us burn with fever until our skin is as hot as an oven.*

11 *Our wives have been raped on Mount Zion itself; in every Judean village our daughters have been forced to submit.*

12 *Our leaders have been taken and hanged; our elders are shown no respect.*

13 *Our young men are forced to grind grain like slaves; boys go staggering under heavy loads of wood.*

14 *The old people no longer sit at the city gate, and the young people no longer make music.*

15 *Happiness has gone out of our lives; grief has taken the place of our dances.*

16 *Nothing is left of all we were proud of. We sinned, and now we are doomed.*

17 *We are sick at our very hearts and can hardly see through our tears,*

18 *because Mount Zion lies lonely and deserted, and wild jackals prowl through its ruins.*

19 *But you, O Lord, are king forever and will rule to the end of time.*

20 *Why have you abandoned us so long? Will you ever remember us again?*

21 *Bring us back to you, Lord! Bring us back! Restore our ancient glory.*

22 *Or have you rejected us forever? Is there no limit to your anger?*

Being fully aware of current reality, the prophetic task in the midst of exilic despair over destruction and displacement is to declare and enact hope for a buoyant future that is securely in the purview of God (Brueggemann, 2014:101).

The reading of Isiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel shows that they have some common mode of poesy. They do not only speak of the abandonment of Yahweh. They present him as the source of hope and life. Faithful people expect to receive a new future from God.

It is the responsibility of the prophets to help the community that has lost the temple, symbol of the dignity of the nation, to receive the new world defined by Yahweh (Brueggemann, 1986:12). The reference is to Jeremiah to whom the Lord has given the mission to pluck up and tear down, to destroy and overthrow. But most important for the prophet Jeremiah is to consider other insights into his calling: To plant and to build. Those two verbs constitute the basis of an argument for hope among the people. As Brueggemann puts it, Jeremiah has the capacity to speak about newness coming from nullity. The ideology of the present age does not believe in real newness. But with the power of God newness becomes possible (Brueggemann, 1986:29). Hope is thus understood as God's power to bring about the new and to influence our understanding, our reason, our control and our despair. Hope trusts in the capacity of God to intervene *ex nihilo*. The prophet then moves to fulfil the plan of God for His people:

> "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile." (Jeremiah 29.11-14).

The verbs cited above, to plant and to build, are found concentrated in chapters 29-33 of the book of Jeremiah. These chapters are concerned with the return from exile,

restoration for Israel's destiny and, especially, the new covenant (Brueggemann, 1986:30).

Could this be applied in the context of the DR Congo and turn the country into a liveable place? Even where families are broken by war, a destroyed economy, and an overall bad socio-political situation, where those in power continue to ill-treat and kill people who depend on their governance, even there a future newness is possible. As Brueggemann notices, the pain of the prophet Jeremiah, which surely may be a pain that is shared by many engaged prophets in the DR Congo, is to understand how his contemporaries could not have noticed, understood and acknowledged the reality of their lives. The prophet assumed that his contemporaries were either too stupid to see the reality, or they were dishonest and tried to cover it up. This resembles what is happening in the DR Congo where blinded supportive groups cover up evil and argue in favour of what they consider to be their own interest. That is what Brueggemann (1986: 31-33) calls stupidity. Using the paradigm of Jeremiah 30.12-17, the following poem could apply to the DR Congo.

> When there is none to uphold the DR Congo's cause,
> When there is no medicine for the DR Congo's wound,
> When there is no healing for DR Congo,
> When all the DR Congo's lovers have forgotten him, the good news is God comes with full circle and embraces with compassion for powerful healing. As God's people abandoned in exile is targeted by luxuriant homecoming with new basis.
> Prophetic imagination today must focus on hope in the God who acts for God in the world God created (Cushman, 2013:764).

In his prophetic imagination, Brueggemann (2001b:14) embraces the same thought of hope and uses the concept of energizing. The energy is not the energy already possessed by human beings, but it consists in the promise they have been given. People of faith believe that something is about to be given and are energized by the expectation. I agree with Brueggemann on factors that energize people or give hope. Among these facts are the following six.

The first is about experience and tells us to sometimes accept the darkness of life. We live in a society that does not need any vulnerability. Unfortunately, the Church's liturgy instructs to attest to the saving vulnerability of Friday. The Christian's Friday of crucifixion

should change the way Christians perceive vulnerability by reminding them of the decisive thing happening there whereby God's vulnerability was exhibited as ultimate truth (Brueggemann 2008: 286-287). Brueggemann therefore considers the crucifixion as the exposure of the vulnerability of God in the face of violence committed by the empire. Jesus' trial before Pilate in the new covenant turned out to be a trial of the empire before Jesus. Likewise, Israel's trial before Pharaoh in the old covenant turned out to be a trial of Pharaoh before the people of God. The switch from vulnerability to surprise was possible by the connection between Friday and Sunday, between the post-Joseph era in Egypt and the day of the doxology of the people after crossing the sea. The second factor is the insurance that human beings are God's people, chosen by Himself: The narrative of the Exodus 11.7 informs us how Moses encouraged people that there must be a difference between them and the Egyptians: The awareness of their position as chosen people in an uncertain world gave the people confidence. A third factor is that one can appropriate the freedom of God as one's own. In this way, doxology becomes, as Abraham Heschel defines it, "the last full act of human freedom and justice" (Brueggemann, 2001b:17). This approach asks for 'imagination'. Imagination is not visible, and it has to precede its implementation. A new vision will need competent people who have imagination and are able to put it to effective use.

Another point is that the resurrection of Christ must be understood as our victory. The resurrection of Christ allows us to perceive a divine process of transformation from death to life, mortality to immortality, and from shame to glory. This reality empowers us to imagine the coming about of a new world as a divine process of transformation. Brueggemann (2010:87) affirms that loss must be grieved for newness to be possible. When loss is denied, it leads to social disfunction and may even produce violence. It is in terms of the resurrection that Moltmann (2003:157) imagines the thought of Brueggemann who reasons we have to see the world through the eyes of the dying Christ, conscious of everything that is false in it as well as of that which terrorizes and destroys. Hope in the resurrection of life leads us to the realism of the cross.

A fifth factor that may energize or give hope to people is holding on to the scripture as material for the imagination of the new world. Knoke (2013:178) follows the lines of

Brueggemann's thought in reckoning that the use of scripture may not serve the purpose of a scientific exploration for verifiable knowledge about the text, but rather inspire a new recapitulation that will generate a new world bringing a new reading. The more the biblical text is understood, the more a new future should be imagined and created. Not in the sense of reaching a utopia, but in the sense of acting it out in our daily lives. The scripture becomes material through which a Christian can imagine the best world. According to the statistics concerning Christians, around 88.6 % of Congolese are Christians. The DR Congo is one of countries worldwide where Christianity is increasing. The important question is whether these Christians live their lives imagining a new DR Congo. Are the Congolese bible or scripture functioning as tools to facilitate imagining a best country or are they 'opium of the people' as Karl Marx defined religion? The prophetic imagination is not a matter only of interest for clergy, for a limited circle. Every Christian has a vocation to live his or her Christian life and to adopt as part of that life the imagining of a better future and of an alternative for social injustice in all its forms. In such a country, the way in which Christians act determines the future. This is the sense in which religious education in the DR Congo should improve the capacity of Christians to understand what defines Christian life. Christian life is not limited to Sunday mornings when people come to church as if they were living in heaven and seem to have forgotten their social reality. The sixth factor is to accept the challenge of the prophetic ministry: In the words of Brueggemann (2008:295):

> Prophetic ministry is challenging because it is characteristically done among those who refuse covenantal obedience and find easy accommodation to the status quo a readier path of life. The wonder of faith is that the 'talk' sometimes authorizes, empowers, and emboldens the 'walk'. Prophetic ministry is to talk the talk so that the community may walk the walk of faith into the abyss and walk the walk of faith out of the abyss into restoration. (…) It is (…) neither prediction as some conservatives would have it nor social action as some liberals would have it. Prophetic ministry is to talk in ways that move past denial and that move past despair into the walk of vulnerability and surprise, there to find the gift of God and the possibility of genuine humanness.

The prophetic 'imagination' can be summarized as the actions of God in creation, exodus, and covenant. It is focused on hope in the God who acts for God in the world that God

created (Cushman, 2013:764). Commenting on the prophetic imagination as perceived by Brueggemann, Grey (2014:8) underlines one of the challenges of the prophets of ancient Israel when it seemed, as it does today, that people were so immersed in the dominant culture, that the capacity to imagine an alternative world was lost. The role of prophets is to see the alternative future that other people are unable to imagine. The prophetic imagination of Brueggemann does not give people an opportunity to ignore the reality, but rather insists that, as a prerequisite for being able to imagine an alternative, people must fully recognize what is going on. The alternative cannot be imagined as long as the reality is ignored. In the explanation of his view of the imagination, Brueggemann expresses his understanding of the narrative of Exodus 16 concerning Israel being led and fed in the wilderness, as an important aspect of Israel's historical imagination. The people had to deal with a long and demanding stay in the wilderness, from the departure out of slavery until the entry into the good land. A characteristic of wilderness is precariousness as it is a place without food, defence and resources. Out of that event, Israel constructed a central focus of historical imagination: The bread of wilderness is the bread of heaven! (Brueggemann, 2001a:15-16).

6.5.2.2 Hoping without exploiting the holy God

The book of Ezekiel presents holiness as a source of hope and its first chapters announce the destruction of the city and the deportation. Ezekiel was a somewhat younger contemporary of Jeremiah. Having similar issues to deal with, they had different approaches.

A challenge in the context of present-day enlightenment is the practice of a utilitarian God. In the view of Brueggemann (1986:53), God is considered as essentially a God to be used to provide social change or to be like a human provider, but not in the first place an object of worship. The tradition of Ezekiel turns against such exploitation of God. God must first be obeyed, glorified, honoured, adored and feared. God should not be recognised and known for his usefulness, but because of his nature.
Ezekiel 8.6 notes:

God said to me, "Mortal man, do you see what is happening? Look at the disgusting things the people of Israel are doing here, driving me farther and farther away from my holy place. You will see even more disgraceful things than this."

Ezekiel demonstrates that God refuses to stay where he is not honoured. "This articulation of God's glory and God's departure is a way to help people think through the absence of God and the conditions under which God will stay or leave" (Brueggemann, 1986:54). Ezekiel presents God's holiness that must be linked with righteousness, although righteousness becomes just a religious obligation. Besides, righteousness without holiness leads to legalism and moralism. God's holiness requires righteousness which entails three things of which the first one is to avoid idolatry. According to Ezekiel 18, idolatry is to assign our faith with an unworthy and unworkable object. A second advice is to be aware of sexual and marital responsibility. Finally, economic responsibility has to be taken into account. After the disaster of the sin of people rebuked (Ezekiel 8 and 7), in the following section of chapter 34 the given new future begins to unfold.

The newness anticipated by Ezekiel will include a restoration of the political and the socio-economic order. The new order will establish political institutions that practise social justice. Before the 587 BCE exile, justice was not possible. After God has been restored to His holiness and opportunistic notions of His usefulness have somewhat fade the way to holiness, God can bring the people to a holistic restoration.

The prophet in Ezekiel 36 ends by presenting God as the ground of holiness. God promises a new life in which obedience is possible. This restorative account is also found in the second book of Isaiah 40-55 of about 540 BCE when the Babylonian empire was about to collapse. Like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the second Isiah is great literature about the hope of a people that had lost confidence. It mentions all the promises made to people who have seen their city falling and experienced the collapse of the political and socio-economic systems of the nation. New structures come into being after the bad times of exile when people felt lost and could see no way forward. The discontent of the exile in a sense functions similarly to grief as perceived by Brueggemann. In the second Isaiah the end of the Babylonian empire is highlighted when Persia came into prominence under

Cyrus who permitted the deported nation of Israel to return to its homeland. Brueggemann points out that, as Jeremiah considered Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar as an agent of Yahweh's judgement, so the second Isiah considers Persia under Cyrus as an agent of Yahweh's restorative action (Brueggemann, 1986:91). The crucial point here is the rescue of the people of God by gentiles, by a nation that does not know God. God's sovereignty thus allows that His people are rescued in a way they have not planned for. The occurrence could be applicable in the context of the DR Congo where people at times feel that only external help might be able to turn their situation around.

The metaphor of the exile also raises questions in regard of the Church in the DR Congo where Christians are under political, social and economic siege. The fact is that many Jews in the time of exile were settle in Babylon. They had become assimilated, felt at home and were often not aware of their exilic status. Exile is not only a geographic fact, but also has theological consequences. Many Congolese may not recognise the fact of their exile as they have grown accustomed to their present living circumstances. The second book of Isaiah could be used as a liberative imaginative model of a nation in despair.

Brueggemann's metaphor of exile and homecoming based on the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel and on the second Isaiah book, opens up a possibility of reading the desperate socio-political situation of the DR Congo as comparable to the exile of the Jews and, consequently, of imagining a similar homecoming to a hopeful future. The DR Congo is in need of true prophets who speak on hope for the country's future, along the lines of Brueggemann's thought (1997:625).

> While the prophets are characteristically immersed in public crises, they are not primarily political agents in any direct sense of the word, and they rarely suggest a specific policy. Nor are they, against popular liberal opinion, social activists. They are most characteristically 'utterers', and, until later developments alter their way of functioning, they speak most often with an appearance of elusiveness and with the imaginative power of poetry.

God gave newness which resulted from the grief of the prophet Jeremiah. God's holiness did lead to the true hopefulness of people, according to Ezekiel, and Isiah introduces the practice of memory permitting the articulation of a new possibility. Congolese could

experience present life as grief that can allow for newness to come about, while holiness can fill them with hope and memory can suggest the possibility of change (Brueggemann, 1986:132).

By Luther's phrase, "the crucified God", we are called back to the raw claim that it is because of the self-giving of God in weakness that we can truly exhibit holiness (Brueggemann, 2008:286.).

6.6 BIBLICAL MODELS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

Some biblical prophets can be consulted on their address of prophetic message. All the Old Testament prophets were aware of the pain and of the ways in which society functions. They would act in accordance with the situation of their time and place, in order to practise responsibility. The following section considers their ministry from the perspective of its implications for social justice.

Prophet	Problem of the time	Destination of the message	Strategy or method used	Result	Reference
Moses	Slavery of people of God in Egypt	Pharaoh and Israelites	To face the oppressor	Exodus of the people	Exodus
Samuel	Plays the roles of priest, prophet, judge and seer	People of Israel	Lead the people on theocracy		1,2 Samuel
Elijah	Syncretistic worship of Baal	The royal house of Israel	To confront the king for infidelity and social injustice. 1Kings 17.1, 18.8, 21.20-22. To challenge the king by miracles: stopping it from raining to punish those who disdain Yahweh	God's fear in Israel. Persecuted and run away	1Kings 17.19-21; 2Kings 1-2
Nehemiah	Deportation of people, destruction of the temple and the wall, brief, their identity not dignified	To the people	Fasting and praying To plead to the king, advocacy. Awakening consciousness of the people (Nehemiah 2.8)	He brought a new life to the dying Jewish community in Jerusalem (North, 1992:1069) Wall rebuilding.	Nehemiah 1

Micaiah	Political conflict between Israel and Syria	King Ahab	Not compromising God's word	imprisonment	1 Kings 22.1-
Nathan	The dynasty of David	To David	Announces clearly the will of God. the use of fictional legal case in 2 Samuel 12.	Repentance of David	2 Samuel 7; 12
Esther	Threat of Israelites in foreign country	To the king	Prayer, Fasting, strategical on advocacy	Freedom of people	Esther 1
Jeremiah	Idolatry, Bad socioeconomic political policies, injustice in the government. He portrayed Jerusalem as a vulnerable woman being violently assaulted (Brueggemann, 1997:426)	To the king and the people	He preached at temple door	He was arrested, punished, the cistern	Jeremiah 7

Micah	Considered as spokespersons of peasants in Jerusalem where those who are strong as land owners, displacing people and creating a poor class (Brueggemann, 2006:201), landholder oppression	Corrupt political leaders as cannibals devouring people (3.1-4), blind prophets (3.5-12)	Direct speech denounced the instrumentalization of religion to hide the social injustice. To teach justice, mercy and humility		Micah 1
Isaiah			He was in the councils of those in power		
Amos (Willough by, 1992:203-206)	The presumption of innocence by religious ritual to be exempted from social justice and righteousness, social injustice, oppression of the poor, lack of moral values, exploiting nation,	People, judges	-Proclamation of rejection of Israel's cult (5.21-24) To cry on justice (5.24)	He has a difficult task to convince people	Amos 1

	corrupt courts				
John the Baptist	Against Herod	Herod	Rebukes Herod's sin	death	Mark 6.14-29
Jesus	Socio political unjust society	The oppressive system	Direct speech Proclaims a holistic freedom	Death and resurrection	Luke 4.18-21

Brueggemann, considering the prophetic ministry in the bible and the notion of covenant, describes them as two traditions that come from Moses and David. In the Davidic tradition, the prophets are supportive of the monarchy and the higher classes and abide by the discourse of unity. The Mosaic tradition, however, is associated with liberation. It focuses on God's righteousness and justice. It is interested in the peasants, the poor and marginalized seeking socio-justice. This is also the tradition of Brueggemann (De-Gruchy, 1987:63).

6.7 CAN THERE BE CHURCH NEUTRALITY IN THE FACE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE?

This section addresses the question of the true position of the Church in respect of social justice. Can the Church be neutral when challenged by issues of social justice? Is an apolitical Church possible when social justice is in peril?

Quoting Hoffmeyer (2013:169) :

> According to the principle of inertia, trying to be politically neutral equates to support for the existing order. If one is not doing something to change the way things are, one lets them continue the same way.

The 'a' in apolitical which indicates neutrality somehow ends up representing complicity. But truth must be told and sinfulness and evil rebuked. As the Church is the light and salt of the earth it has to take a position on what is right and just. The notion of 'apolitical' has no place in the role that the Church is expected to play.

> You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven" (Matthew 5.14-16).

In his writing on 'Interrupting silence: God's command to speak out', Brueggemann (2018:1) states:

> Silence is a complex matter. It can refer to awe before unutterable holiness, but it can also refer to the coercion where some voices are silenced in the interest of control by the dominant voices.

CONCLUSION

Chapter Six reviews the prophetic theology of social justice that the Church should engage in and for which Brueggemann's theology provides the framework as it stresses the common good and the possibilities created by imagining a better world. Social justice entails equity in redistribution of resources, equal access to services, resources, power, and knowledge or information. People should be empowered so that they can participate in the social justice processes affecting their lives. In many parts of the bible a lack of social justice is denounced.

Twelve findings can be summarized from this section in relation to Brueggemann's thoughts on social justice.

First, social justice might not necessarily be considered as the result of social policies. God is the source of justice. Second, three threats to the common good can be distinguished: The imperial system, justice being an **embodiment of the complexities of state monopoly, and oppressive social policy.**

Third, the imperial system can on the basis of its outside appearance be compared to the contemporary international system of exploiting weak countries.

Fourth, the imperial system can from the inside be perceived as a system in which people in power have the right to ill-treat their fellow human beings.

Fifth, in the imperial system, the emperor embodies the law.

Sixth, in the imperial system most policies are established as a system for exploiting weak members of society, *inter alia* through an increasingly oppressive levy system.

Seventh, people have to discover freedom by breaking away from a static religion of triumphalism and politics of oppression and exploitation.

Eighth, the common good of the people can only be understood by an awareness of the triad steadfast love, justice, and righteousness.

Ninth, the significance of Exodus does not necessary lie only in geographical displacement but also in its economic consequences and in the fact that it gave rise to an imaginative act of human beings to choose for a life of which the circumstances can't be dictated by a Pharaoh.

Tenth, people may hope for an alternative future and harbor a hope against hope, a hope that doesn't exploit the holy God.

Eleventh, Brueggemann's prophetic theology abides by the Mosaic tradition, which is liberative, focused on God's righteousness and justice and interested in the peasants,

the poor, and the marginalized who are in need of justice. And, finally, even in today's world in the contemporary DR Congo with all its human despair, a new era of social justice may come about by accepting the present darkness and remembering the connection between Good Friday and Easter, or the vulnerability of the crucifixion that preceded the resurrection.

Being aware of our position the world gives us confidence. We may appropriate the freedom of God as being ours. To conceive of Christ's resurrection as our victory, we can hold on the scripture as material for imagining a new world and accept the challenge of the prophetic ministry.

Chapter Seven is concerned with the *Kairos* in DR Congo and the space it will create for promoting social justice.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PROMOTING A *KAIROS* DR CONGO AS PARADIGM OF A PROPHETIC VOICE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Seven presents an overview of the *Kairos* tradition. The way in which people respond to the *Kairos* can bring hope and joy into their lives and cause restoration or trouble in the society. The Kairos tradition functions in this chapter as a paradigm of a prophetic voice, drafting a model for a *Kairos* DR Congo. The (South African) *Kairos* document (Gary S, 2011) is a Christian, biblical and theological reflection on the crises that may affect a country at a certain moment in history. That moment then should cause people to reflect on their current political and socio-economic situation.

7.2 THE *KAIROS* TRADITION AS PARADIGM OF PROPHETIC VOICE

The *Kairos* tradition is intensely involved with a prophetic theology. Prophetic theology requires from us an input that goes deeper than the intellect, forcing us to exemplify its thinking in our own lives. Prophetic theology emphasizes three points as being of profound importance. These are integrity, and having the quality of character that accepts risks and sacrifice (Logan, 1988:114) . Prophetic theology is concerned with the expression of fearless criticism in respect of policies, law and the judiciary, and dehumanizing practices, while it should encourage a system of resistance against forms of oppression (Ulshofer, 2008:78). One potential force for social transformation in the DR Congo consists in the country's number of Christians (around 85 % of Congolese). Discussing religion in Africa, Ulshofer (2008:73) mentions two interesting aspects of a different nature, namely the growth of religiosity and the possible link between religion and international conflict on the continent. Many terrorists are happy to claim fighting for their faith. As has been the case in history, Church involvement may bring about profound change in the DR Congo. The following statement encourages the practice of open-minded and thoughtful good theology.

> For religion to play a constructive, redeeming, humanizing and dignifying
> role in the world, it is important that the moral convictions and practices

of religions be open to critical internal and external scrutiny (…). We owe the world good theology. Theology as critical reflection upon the content of faith is crucial to guide religion so that it be a force that heals, humanizes and dignifies, and that it not be a force that destroys humans and our natural environment. Against this background the importance of public theology, i.e. theology that reflects upon these central questions of the life of faith cannot be overemphasized (Ulshofer, 2008:74).

The *Kairos* document was the first time written down by the ICT (Institute for Contextual Theology) in South Africa in 1985. The tradition did stem from small Christian communities active in bible study and mutual support groups. They were dedicated Christians working independently from parish structures. The movement was ecumenical and aroused the interest of many organisations. In fact, the Church was at that time not hand-in-glove with the government or with some societal institution, but it had been called to play an active part in preparing for the building of a new South Africa. At this point in time the Church could be considered as part of civil society because it had got involved in promoting civil society resources and individual and social capabilities, including the provision of medical and economic basic education and improving people's ability to express their opinion (Cochrane, 2013a:43). As a civil society movement, the Church had to adhere to certain principles like every organisation in civil society in this century. Thus meant that the Church should work on human rights issues, on democracy and problematic control of power, on the rejection of secret services and monopolies, on freedom of public opinion-making and it had to express itself on parliamentary control of police and the military and on freedom of economic activity (Cochrane, 2013b:7). On the role of the Church, Tutu writes:

> And the church of God must produce a relevant theology which speaks to this hopeless and despondency. The Church of God must declare the Lordship of God and his Christ - that God is the Lord of History and that this is his world despite all appearances to the contrary, that he is a God of justice and care about oppression and exploitation, about death and detention, about front-enders, squatters shacks, about unemployment and about power (Tutu, 1984).

7.2.1 Defining the *Kairos*

The English word 'time' in Greek has three different connotations expressed as *chronos*, *eschaton* and *Kairos*.

Chronos refers to time as measured in hours or dates. It is about time as functioning in daily life, the succession of moments. *Eschaton* indicates a near future. When Jesus, or the prophets, mention the eschaton, it is described as a near future or a future that is coming soon (Maduro, 1989:437). *Kairos* finally is contrasted with the Greek transliteration of *Chronos*. *Kairos* is literally translated as 'time', but in theology it refers to 'a specific moment of life, a very special kind of time'. In the biblical understanding *Kairos* is the right and special time for momentous things that are about to happen, or that are happening. It is about opportunities that require our response (Brown, 1990:3.).

The South African *Kairos* document wants to alert people to the momentous nature of the time they are living in and how to properly respond to its challenges – challenges resulting from the South African socio-political situation in the 1980s. It was foreseen that *Kairos* might be expressed and function differently in the context of other societies, depending on their specific situations.

In the context of South Africa which is our focus in dealing with the understanding and practice of this theology, the *Kairos* was indeed perceived as a special moment in time when God visits His people and offers them a unique opportunity for change and decisive action, for repentance and conversion (Brown, 1990:5).
In such circumstances it is obviously of the first importance to recognize God's visitation. God's visitation implies God's action involving people who want to obey Him. It is God's work, a divine work. People are just required to understand the way in which God works in His creation.

The second crucial point is the need to understand the uniqueness of the opportunity. It is a moment that must not be missed. To miss such a moment can have immeasurable consequences in many areas of public life, the Church and the country as a whole. There is no excuse to ignore, to avoid. or refuse to acknowledge the time of visitation. Jesus wept over Jerusalem because it did not understand it was the time of God's visitation, the time for change, the time of grace, the gift of God:

> Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and

> your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation" (Luke 19.41-44).

Jesus is surely weeping over African countries where societies are increasingly damaged by injustice, crime, and general dehumanization.

God's visitation has to be accompanied by repentance and conversion. It is essential that people recognize their sins and repent of them. The Greek word '*metanoeo*' expresses the spiritual change undergone by a sinner who returns to God. When the repentant man or woman gets a different view of sinning and sees the purpose of his or her sins in another light, it may lead to a profound change of mind.

Repentance has to be shown by the production of fruits of spiritual life.

Conversions may take on different characters of which three are highlighted. The first is conversion as spiritual awareness, mentioned above. Conversion can also be a socio-ecclesial reality which constitutes a break with society and at the same time a new commitment to it, placing believers in a dialectical relationship with their environment. In such a case, the believer gets a sense of responsibility for the society where he lives and in which he has undergone conversion as a life's journey leading to spirituality as a praxis of faith (Costas, 1989: 112-120). This understanding of conversion is linked with another aspect of the *Kairos* moment. It concerns the change of behaviour and priorities that results from conversion and that must lead to concrete actions seeking the welfare of suffering people and the avoidance of selfishness. the A fifth crucial point of conversion consists in decisive action: the *Kairos* tradition should not fade away in well-meant by empty theories but be borne out by concrete action.

7.2.2 Brief background and origin of *Kairos*

The *Kairos* tradition originates in South Africa and was conceived as a challenge to the Church. The *Kairos* document came out during the South African anti-apartheid struggle, more precisely when the regime had declared the first state of emergency in 1985 (Boesak, 2015:9). The document was not immediately welcomed by the whole community. The early reception was hesitant. Almost ten years later, in 1994, South Africa became a democracy. The awakening of the people began with the verbs, to see, to judge and to act. The *Kairos* tradition could not be established by individual efforts but required a collective consciousness. As Boesak (2015:10) declares:

It suggests an abiding awareness, what one could call a prophetic alertness, a readiness for when such a moment might arrive. The phrasing of the vision statement also suggests more than an individualized consciousness, indeed, a consciousness that stirs, embraces, and inspires humanity.

Brown (1990:2) mentions that in the same period two other and similar documents appeared, challenging the Church to play its role in the social arena. One of these was the '*Kairos* Central America' in 1988 and the other was entitled 'The road to Damascus, *Kairos* and conversion', created by South Africa, Central America and Asia, in 1989 (Gary S, 2011).

The first three *Kairos* documents tried to direct a prophetic word to the Church, each in its specific and local context. While the documents were adopted in different localities, these had in common a strong presence of oppression and violence. Brown (1990:9-12) distinguishes ten characteristics of *Kairos* documents.

i.   A *Kairos* document has to be written with a sense of urgency as if it is a matter of life or death. To some degree the document reflects liberation theology. When society has become corrupted, it is difficult to limit or undo the pollution. The worse a situation is, the greater the urgency to deal with it. In many African countries, and in particular in the DR Congo, living circumstances have reached the worst possible level.

ii. A *Kairos* document is the result of a group effort. It is a theology from the masses to the masses. This collective theology is not dampened by a Church body or compelling organization. The collective theology often functions as a social theology that is aware of the realities on the ground. The South African *Kairos* document was signed by around 150 theologians.

iii. The document begins by analysing the present situation to which it provides a possible response. It describes 'what is going on'. A critical analysis of the situation throws light on possibilities to affect improvement. Importantly, geographical and political contexts have to be taken into account.

Theology is used as a 'second act', as Gustavo Gutierrez views it. In the case of Kairos documents, the 'first act' consists in an active engagement with and commitment to the poor and oppressed so that when the situation is analysed, the analysts themselves have become familiar with the suffering caused by it.

It is looked at through the lens of God's word. Theologising thus gets a deep, solid and realistic character.

iv. The theology must be informed by social analysis. The issues of justice in general, social justice, exploitation and oppression are under consideration. The role of the social analysis is to enrich the theology.

v. The role of the Church is taken with utmost seriousness. It requires the Church to be self-critical. Participants in the creation of a *Kairos* document write as committed church members to the church members of the world. In this context, however, they act outside, and unrestricted by, existing church structures.

vi. The creators of a *Kairos* document don't set out to blame 'others' but acknowledge their own part in wrongdoing. They must identify evil in their own hearts, confess it and ask God to empower them to do good. Generally, as human beings we tend to think of ourselves as better than others. It is important to recognize that changing the world must begin by changing our own inner self.

vii. But also the enemy must be named. The major source of sin and destruction in our surroundings has to be named so that it may be brought under control.

viii. Hope is affirmed as a major contribution of the gospel because even when evil is omnipresent, bringing extreme poverty, warfare and death, God is in control of it all.

ix. A Kairos document calls up to practical activity. Immediate steps must be taken to set practical, concrete engagement into motion.

As the *Kairos* tradition had an impact in South Africa, so many other countries may be positively influenced by Church initiatives. For instance, history shows that, after the 1990s, African politics was much concerned with realising democracy and especially with handling the question of the 'sustainability of democracy'. In an analysis of the side by side functioning of democracy and Christianity in Africa, Ranger (2008:9) declares that churches have played an important role in the various stages of the democratisation of the African continent, from the anti-colonial revolution of the 1960s through the introduction of multi-party systems, to today. Scholars agree that at the time the Church's commitment to democracy in Africa made a U-turn. It has been noticed, however, that the Church is in danger of losing direction as regards democratic practices, like it has lost its way in respect of its prophetic role. Ranger

states that 'the historic churches, so central to the second African democratic revolution, had become less relevant to the third'. This implies that, whereas churches were strong in denouncing and attacking dictatorial regimes, they are failing in stimulating the development of democratic practices of governance. Many churches, for example in South Africa, who were active in the anti-apartheid liberation movement, are today marginalized. The discourse on such issues as poverty, violence, and race is no longer effective. Bishop Tutu confesses:

> We had a common position, our stand against apartheid. I now realise what I did previously: that it is great deal easier to be against... We no longer meet regularly as Church leaders because the tyranny is over... (Ranger, 2008:16).

Moreover, Le Bruyns (2012:69-70) points out:

> Having moved from an apartheid, illegitimate state to a post-apartheid, democratic state, it is indeed tempting for those on the side of the struggle for liberation to adopt an uncritical supportive stance in political life. The political leadership of the ruling party in 1994 and thereafter was one that inherited the ongoing legacy of apartheid. They needed support rather than reactionary criticism.

This attitude, even if understandable, leads to problems if those who yesterday opposed apartheid, today become part of another oppressive system.

Since 1985, several *Kairos* documents have appeared across the world. Each of these has its own specific challenges to address and each may invite theological, socio-economic and political readings. Unfortunately, we are experiencing a global crisis that must be globally addressed. This crisis asks for a global *Kairos.* In the context of such a possible global action, Boesak (2015:10) underlines four points that would have to be borne out by a global *Kairos.*

Boesak's first point is that the *Kairos* is a moment of truth. The truth is not only crucially important so that we may declare others guilty, but it is relevant also to ourselves whose innocence may not be absolute and to whom also some blame may adhere. The moment of truth allows us to repent, to convert and to commit ourselves again. It reminds us of the forgiving love of God that leads to our wellbeing. The flesh-born truth is Jesus the saviour. Discovering truth can be a shocking as well as a liberating moment. Being aware of our own weakness we escape self-satisfaction and a sense of superiority. A greater humility is a gift of the Holy Spirit and makes us more powerful in the struggle for a change in society. In Boesak's words (2015:11):

> We are not the truth: the truth has found, recovered, and reclaimed us. We are not the light: the light illumines and leads us. We are not the voice: we speak and act because we heard the Voice that calls us to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. The voice we hear and respond to is the voice of the voiceless, the poor and oppressed, those who are the faces at the bottom of the well.

Secondly, the *Kairos* is a moment of discernment. Discernment is the work of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 12.10, Paul identifies discernment as a gift of the Spirit. The discernment of spirits became an important element of the belief and practice of the early Christians (Yong, 2008:232-235). Discernment in the context of *Kairos* means that we see clearly what is wrong in the society and try our best not to leave things as they are.

In the third place, the *Kairos* is a moment of decisiveness. To be engaged in the sense of *Kairos* is a one-way process performed with determination and without fear because, even if it is not without risks, it also brings gains.

Fourthly, the *Kairos* is a unique moment. *Kairos* implies 'now or never'. The moment of urgent action is there.

7.2.3 *Kairos* around the world

Kairos has gone around the world. Since 1985 the following *Kairos* initiatives have been documented.

Kairos South Africa (1985). The South African *Kairos* document went public in 1985. It emphasized four aspects of South African society, which were racist domination; political oppression; socio-economic exploitation and the silence of the Church. The development of the South African Kairos went through various stages. In 1986 the document was revised under the title 'The *Kairos* document, challenge to the Church. A theological comment on the political crisis in South Africa' (Gary S, 2011:27). A year after the launch of the first *Kairos*, the situation in the country had worsened. The then President, P.W. Botha, was determined to maintain the apartheid state. There were many arrests and deportations. The question was if the *Kairos* moment really had arrived. *Kairos* theologians decided to revise the first edition and use a simpler style that could be understood by everyone. Only the chapter on the prophetic theology was rewritten. The document was considered as an instrument of faith in the search for justice and peace. Thousands of people were involved in the process.

The same year (1986) another document appeared as a critique of evangelical theology and practice compiled by South African Evangelicals themselves. The critique was influenced by American and European missionaries with socio-political agendas aimed at relieving the social need of people (Gary S, 2011:68).

In 1988, the Pentecostal church drew up a document entitled 'A relevant Pentecostal witness'. This document represented a way of breaking silence and get the inhuman situation acknowledged across the country.

In 1989 'The road to Damascus, *Kairos* and conversion'. The document was written by seven nations, the Philippines, South Korea, Namibia, South Africa, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. The point that these nations had in common was the presence of Christians on both sides of the political conflict between oppressed and oppressors (Gary S, 2011:139). This last document aimed to lead the way from persecution to conversion.

In 1990 'Violence: The new *Kairos*' appeared. It was five years since the launch of the first *Kairos* and oppression was still rife.

Kairos Central America (1988). The *Kairos* initiative in Central America was the result of 464 years of colonial domination. It was a regional *Kairos*. The freedom struggle in the region followed on the Spanish conquest and the establishment of colonial political structures. Natural resources had been pillaged since the 16th century. The indigenous people were forced to work as slaves in agriculture and mining. There was much suffering as a result of, among others, violence caused by people who were recruited to fight against their brothers and sisters, extreme poverty, injustice, and the efforts made to replace the right of power by the power of right (Gary S, 2011:117).

Kairos for Kenya (1991). This document was published by the department of justice, peace and reconciliation of the national council of the Church of Kenya at the time when the country was struggling to practise true democracy. Democracy was under threat from high levels of corruption, tribalism, unemployment and the resulting poverty, abuse of the electoral process and the many detentions without trial.

Kairos Europe (1998). *Kairos* Europe was a regional initiative. The signatories of this document were people from different social classes. Among them were representatives of self-help organisations working for social justice, excluded and

homeless people, people with insecure employment, youths battling different problems, violated and harassed women, discriminated people (Gary S, 2011:200-202). The signatories of this *Kairos* document were concerned about a report that 20 % of the world population used 80% of the world's resources and about the opposition between Western Europe and the countries of East and Central Europe where there was serious unemployment. Hoping to solve such issues, the European Union was formed with later a monetary union, but the purpose of creating jobs was not entirely realised (Gary S, 2011:204-207). The document analysed the concentration of economic power, economic crime, and socio-economic and military causes of migration (Gary S, 2011:209-213).

Kairos Zimbabwe (1998). Worries leading to the compiling of *Kairos* Zimbabwe coincide with the main problems of Zimbabwe and its governance such as the fall of equitable wealth distribution favouriting the rich, compromised human dignity and wellbeing, 18 years of impassivity in respect of increasingly dictatorial regulations, armed violence against unarmed people, the unjust imposing of tax, growing hunger and despair (Gary 2011: 234).

Kairos India (2000). The *Kairos* India process started in 1999 in the context of the country's socio-political crisis. The *Kairos* document was addressed to the Indian churches to recapture the meaning of *Kairos* as experienced to the tribal grouping. The document seems to focus on developing a biblical and theological alternative that may assist Christians and their churches in India to respond to the political crisis. to work on restructuring the socio-cultural fabric of life in India, to address its social justice and political issues and to look into consequences of globalisation on the sub-continent (Gary S, 2011:276).

Kairos America (2007). This *Kairos* began as a workplace for development and drafting ideas for the *Kairos.* Its website provided *Kairos* documents, related articles, essays and readings to assist in the development of a national approach to social criticism in the North American context. Two meetings a month were organised in the Cleveland and Ohio regions while the *Kairos* information concerned remained available on the web until 2011 (Gary S, 2011:280).

Kairos Palestine (2009). The *Kairos* Palestine document is produced by a group of Palestinian Christians suffering under Israeli occupation and living without hope of a

solution. Worldwide many documents have been written in response to the *Kairos* Palestine. The *Kairos* Palestine was concerned with some of the challenges facing the nation, among these the struggle to talk on peace in the Middle East; the wall separating Palestinian territory from Israel, the everyday humiliating treatment at military checkpoints, the separation of family members, restricted religious liberty, refugee issues, the prisoners in Israel, Jerusalem as a symbol of peace and a sign of conflict, international injustice in respect of Palestine. To these serious challenges, Palestinians responded, some by insisting on negotiations and others by suggesting armed resistance (Gary S, 2011:382-385).

Kairos Nigeria. The Nigerians have since 2011 made use of the *Kairos* Palestine to introduce Christians in Nigeria to the problem of land occupation in Palestine. Since 2016 *Kairos* Nigeria has focused on holistic peace, justice and human rights.

Kairos Malawi. Not much is known about *Kairos* Malawi. It focuses on the *Kairos* God can give to each individual.

Kairos Swaziland. Representatives of different religious denominations gathered at the Swazi George Hotel in 2011 for a symposium (SCCL, 2011:3). The Church of Swaziland had become concerned by disgruntled criticism of oppressed people, the challenge of marginalized people, denial of fundamental rights and freedoms, and socio-economic challenges.

Kairos Brazil: *Kairos* Palestine Brasil was initially formulated as a response document to the *Kairos* Palestine document and written collectively by many theologians. The document gathered 238 signatures from Brazilian Christians of different denominations. It is available in Portuguese, English and Spanish on the website of *Kairos* Palestine Brasil. The group continues to be involved in advocacy, praying, and education about the Palestinian situation for Brazilian readers while mobilizing communities in Brazil during the WWPPI

Kairos Germany. Solidaritaetsnetz Deutschland was established in 2012 as a response to the *Kairos* Palestine document 'A Moment of Truth', under the umbrella organization of *Kairos* Europa.

Kairos Netherlands. It was established in 2011 as an international community of young entrepreneurs to solve world's challenges.

Kairos Sri Lanka. *Kairos* Sri Lanka consists of a group currently working to establish a Kairos movement by drafting a document with the involvement of an ecumenical team of theologians.

Kairos Sweden. *Kairos* Palestine - Sweden is a network in solidarity with the call from *Kairos* Palestine.

Kairos Switzerland.: In 2014, a group of Christians in Switzerland issued a document expressing solidarity with *Kairos* Palestine.

Kairos Britain. In the United Kingdom *Kairos* Britain is a network formed by individuals, organizations and faith communities to respond to the *Kairos* Palestine document, 'A Moment of Truth'. The initiative originates from a meeting of Christians in Iona in May 2012.

United Methodist *Kairos* Response in USA. Dating from 2010, the United Methodist *Kairos* Response (UMKR) is an international peace movement that responds to the urgent call of Christians in Palestine for effective action, supporting a just peace in Israel/Palestine. (See the Kairospalestine.ps. website).

Kairos DR Congo: The *Kairos* is in the process of being established.

7.3 DRAFTING A SAMPLE OF A CONGOLESE *KAIROS*

This section discusses key aspects of the DR Congo's *Kairos*. Among the problems of the country that have led to the initiative for the *Kairos* are a lack of social justice and an educational system, an uninterrupted cycle of wars, corruption, incredible poverty among the population, international looting and the silence of the Protestant Church.

The present research involves a proposed mode of prophetic voice functioning as a 'Congolese *Kairos'*. In order to get a deeper understanding of a *Kairos* and of its significance, a workshop was organised that reflected on the possibility of having a Congolese *Kairos* and what it should look like. Before the workshop took place, some preparatory meetings were held.

The research into the feasibility of a *Kairos* DR Congo was conducted by a group of 24 Congolese living in Durban and Pietermaritzburg in South Africa in a residential 3-day workshop. It was facilitated by the KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council and held at

Caribe Lodge in Pietermaritzburg. Dr Clint Le Bruyns, Director of the Department of Theology and Development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal was appointed to facilitate the workshop. He cooperated with Dr Lucas (one of the authors of the South African *Kairos),* Mr Bisimwa Timothee Makanishe (lecturer at UKZN), Mr Chengetanai Rabengai (Programme Director of the KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council), and Rev. Joel Kuvuna Mbongi.

A drafting committee was appointed to continue the work after the termination of the workshop. A questionnaire test was provided before and after the workshop to assess the understanding of the participants on the concept of *Kairos* at the beginning and the end of discussions. Four commissions were formed for the draft of the *Kairos*, which were, in addition to the actual drafting commission, commissions on social analysis, on theological analysis, and for practical analysis.

7.3.1 Objective of the *Kairos* process

The main objective of the present chapter is to promote a DR Congo *Kairos* as prophetic theology on social justice. The drafting sample of *Kairos* is a model or paradigm of a permanent strategic group reflecting on socio-political issues in the DR Congo. The group composing the drafting *Kairos* does not necessarily consist of theologians. Anyone who has been engaged in matters of socio-political interest is welcome. The three earlier meetings were held in Durban and led by Dr Clint Le Bruyns, Director of the Department of Theology and Development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

7.3.2 Pre-test and post-test

Tests were given to participants at the beginning and end of the workshop to evaluate their sense of emergency that a *Kairos* be initiated in the DR Congo and to find out how participants understand the concept of a *Kairos.*

PRE-TEST

1. What is the 'sense of urgency' about compiling a document in the social context of the DR Congo? Who or what is the 'enemy' responsible for the current crisis in the DR Congo? This 'enemy' is the root of the problems in the country's social context.

2. What image comes to mind when you think about the role of the Church in the DR Congo? Why choose this particular image for representing your thoughts on the role of the Church?

3. Are the churches of one mind amidst the crisis? How do you make sense of this consensus or contestation among the churches?

4. How hopeful do you feel about the future of Church and society in the DR Congo? (Scale of 0-10: 0 = no hope, 5 = somewhat hopeful, 10 = extremely hopeful).

5. What needs to happen practically to transform the situation in the DR Congo?

6. What expectations do you have for a *Kairos* DR Congo drafting workshop? What impact do you envisage the *Kairos* document having in and beyond the Congolese context?

POST-TEST

1. What is the 'sense of urgency' about a *Kairos* document in the social context in the DR Congo?

2. Who or what is the 'enemy' responsible for the current crisis in the DR Congo? This 'enemy' is the root of the problems in the country's social context.

3. What image comes to mind when you think about the role of the Church in the DR Congo context? Why choose this particular image to represent your thoughts on the role of the church?

4. Are the churches of one mind amidst the crisis? How do you make sense of this consensus or contestation among the churches?

5. How hopeful do you feel about the future of church and society in DR Congo? (Scale of 0-10: 0 = no hope, 5 = somewhat hopeful, 10 = extremely hopeful).

6. What needs to happen practically to transform the situation in the DR Congo?

7. What expectations do you have for this *Kairos* DR Congo drafting workshop? What impact do you envisage this *Kairos* document having in and beyond the Congolese context?

Of 24 participants, 19 filled in the questionnaire, 17 of them were considered in the present analysis. 2 respondents completed only the pre-test.

COMPARING PRE- AND POST-TEXT

Number	CODE	QUES-TION	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
1	1978	1.	Extremely urgent in the DR Congo as the crisis has been there for many years. People are dying. No social justice.	Social-economic injustice
		2.	Internal enemies: Lack of identity. External: multinationals	Lack of leadership and nationhood, multinationals and imperialism.
		3.	The role of the church is contributing to problem	The church is divided
		4.	The church is divided. The Catholic Church against the regime and others supportive.	Most of the churches are siding with oppressor
		5.	10	10
		6.	Need of a programme to enable people to be a nation. Programme on social justice, political education, leadership.	A prophetic theology where the church does self-critique and criticizes the oppressor.
		7.	The *Kairos* document brings change in DRC and beyond.	*Kairos* must be critical of the church and oppressor for liberation
2	1234	1.	…	Socio-economic situation and lack of respect for law
		2.	Lack of love towards the nation by Congolese. International conspiracy against the DRC	Western countries Congolese imperial leadership

		3.	The church almost absent on the political scene. The church fails because, corrupted.	The church is pro-perpetrator and anti-perpetrator.
		4.	People also have position on this or that in political issues.	Individually, yes
		5.	10, very hopefully	5
		6.	Help Congolese to change and stop imposing leaders	Revive patriotism, to have frank partnership with Western countries
		7.	I don't know what the impact will be and the motive of the process	I am not expecting too much from the *Kairos* to change view in Congo. At least readers will get a sense of what the church ought to do
3	1126	1.	People must take responsibility	The renewal of the current leadership
		2.	People, government and international community are responsible	The Congolese himself and the international community
		3.	The church sided with oppressor, except Catholic	Church is part of the crisis because of its division
		4.	The church is not able to speak out	Churches must come together
		5.	5.Somewhat helpful	5
		6.	People must take responsibility for change	Unity and integrity are needed
		7.	To be able to be the catalyst of the DRC	To ignite change in the DRC
4	1976	1.	To stop murder in the country	People always die in DRC

		2.	The government and the wealth	The enemy is Congolese, AU, EU…
		3.	The church must tell the truth	The church is hypocrite
		4.	No idea	I do not know
		5.	Extremely hopeful	Extremely hopeful
		6.	The government must give up	To tell people the reality
		7.	I don't know about *Kairos*	*Kairos* must tell the truth
5	1703	1.	General crisis experienced by the country	The political situation changes
		2.	Political leaders.	Congolese leadership and external organisation
		3.	The Protestant Church seems to be corrupted. Only the Catholic Church is playing its role	To side with oppressed and play the prophetic role
		4.	No, they are not	Yes, the Church presented its position for encouraging its faithful
		5.	Some hopeful. 5	5
		6.	The change political leaders	To have new leaders
		7.	To get a *Kairos* document and changes	These ideas must be spread to Congolese and human rights institutions
6	2004	1.	Good leadership	Political stability, peace and democracy, political change
		2.	Western and other Afro countries	Imperialism and African countries
		3.	The church does not play any role	The church failed but it has a major role

		4.	No impact in the country from churches	Contestation in the church
		5.	No hope 0	5
		6.	To stop international interference and have citizen leaders	Negotiate with international multi power and remove the Monusco
		7.	I expect to go out with some solution	Play the role of advocacy
7	1462	1.	Corrupt leadership, ill-working, health system, poverty, abduction, war…	Making a call for action by the church
		2.	The UN, multinational agencies, Tutsi empire, '*collabos*'	Congolese resources, silence of the church, and then UN, SADC…
		3.	Church has opportunity to address the souls to influence change.	To give direction, to apply a contextual theology
		4.	No churches are divided	Churches are divided
		5.	7	10
		6.	Need of a *coup d'état*	Agree with modes suggested
		7.	No	The document must touch the uninformed world. It must be an ongoing work for more data.
8	2512	1.	Poverty, bad government	The church Is divided by the state
		2.	Lack of sharing our history	Lack of sharing our history
		3.	Failing of the church, except the Catholic	The church must train youth for the future

		4.	Revival church withdraw from the scene thinking that it is not their business	Failing of revival churches
		5.	Somewhat hopeful. 5	No position
		6.	To change and come together as leaders	The national leaders must gather
		7.	To teach the love, to make people aware of the *Kairos* for the intellectual change	To teach love and awareness of *Kairos*
9	2404	1.	To stop killing	Imperative need to change the government
		2.	The international community	The international community
		3.	Church is corrupted	Corrupted churches
		4.	Church supporting the government	Church is not talking the same language
		5.	5	8
		6.	The international community and Monusco must not interfere in Congolese problem	We need good governance
		7.	Don t know now	This document can help the chaos
10	1979	1.	The organised insecurity	Lack of good government
		2.	The government	Lack of leadership (in politics and church)
		3.	The church is neutral	The church failed in its role
		4.	…….	The silence of the church and some siding with oppressor are causes of crisis

		5.	10	10
		6.	People must know politics of their country, interacting with political leaders	The church must engage in politics
		7.	This project must move to DRC to assist people	This document must help people to know the needs of the country.
11	1986	1.	Corruption, social cohesion	Education, good leadership, development, unity
		2.	International community,	Politicians, international institutions
		3.	Peace building, reconciliation and justice.	Church who are supposed to bring unity, but divide
		4.	Churches have leadership problem.	Churches are divided by selfishness
		5.	5	5
		6.	Good leadership, respect of constitution	Change of leadership, improve justice
		7.	By this document, people will understand and act in their community	*Kairos* must analyse the country in 6 modes. Speak on respect for constitution and law
12	1103	1.	Dehumanized situation of people	Social justice
		2.	International community and Congolese	International institutions
		3.	Salvation, God in the society	Bring hope. Shop love
		4.	……	Silence of the church contributes to the oppression
		5.	……	0
		6.	……	By church's prophetic voice

		7.	Consciousness for Congolese people	Empower Congolese
13	1970	1.	Political tension and ethnic division	Political stability and good governance
		2.	The president and his followers	The silence of the church and Africa
		3.	The church might be the salt and light of the earth	The church must speak out
		4.	I am not sure	The church is divided
		5.	10	Extremely hopeful
		6.	Need of engagement and dialogue between parties	Need of participation of all
		7.	The document must make impact. But it might not be considered by the power	This document will have impact not only in Congo but in Africa
14	1202	1.	People must wake up for their wellness	Need of awareness
		2.	Congolese, political leaders	The division of the people
		3.	The church is blind except the Catholic Church	Church must work on peace, truth and reconciliation
		4.	Church supports bad political leaders by hiding on the prayer role of the church	Church is divided. Don't have the same vision.
		5.	Extremely hopeful 10	Somewhat hopeful 5
		6.	A true dialogue on peace building	Need of unity

		7.	May the *Kairos* help us to have involvement of the church	The *Kairos* can be agent of people knowledge.
15	1992	1.	Political war	Political stability, good leadership
		2.	I am not sure	Congolese and external people
		3.	Church divided	Church divided because of money
		4.	Some churches have different view	Selfishness of the church
		5.	Somewhat hopeful 5	Extremely hopeful 10
		6.	….	We need peace, love and hope
		7.	Unity, respect of one's view	*Kairos* to open eyes of Congolese
16	1977	1.	Dialogue	Peace and economic stability
		2.	International communities, political leaders and ignorant people	Government, people, church leaders, ignorance
		3.	Churches are used by the government	Church must avoid corrupt position
		4.		Difference religion must work
		5.	Somehow hopeful 5	5
		6.	Justice must be used	To look at the same direction
		7.		To teach the way to change the mind of our leaders
17	2015	1.	Come with innovative system	Social condition, democracy, poverty, armed groups
		2.	The West	Congolese, leadership, multinational system

		3.	Politicized church	Catholic Church is critical, and Protestant and others are siding with the government
		4.	Church divided	Need of a structure putting all the churches together
		5.	Without hope 0	5
		6.	Each one has a role to play	The church must use its power
		7.	Need to understand what *Kairos* is and how it can help	The *Kairos* must be adopted by the church in order to have the impact

Responses to the pre- and post-tests indicate that the workshop led quite a few participants to change the opinions with which they had arrived. Below analyses of some participants' views are presented.

1. The sense of urgency for a *Kairos* DR Congo. There was little doubt about the urgency, but participants needed to reflect to determine what it actually was that necessitated urgency.

2. The 'enemy' of the DRC. In the pre-test people pointed at lack of identity, lack of love for the country, and the failing government. Also a bad management of natural resources, political leaders in general, the Tutsi, the unknown history of the country, and the current president were named as causes of the DR Congo crisis. The post-test shows a shift in thinking. Some 'enemies' were added such as multinationals, imperialism, the international community and organisations, the silence of the Church, lack of leadership, lack of unity of the people, and lack of knowledge of the people.

3. The image of the Church in the crisis. In the pre-test participants presented many different images of the Church. It was seen, for example, as having a problematic role, it was 'absent', it had failed by siding with oppressors and hiding truth and it should address problems and exercise influence so that there may be change. The Church seems to be corrupted except the Catholic Church. Hiding in apolitical neutrality does not strengthen the church's image as the salt and light of the world. The Church thus

becomes blind and politicized and it is used as an instrument by the government. In the post-test, respondents expressed the opinion that churches in the DR Congo are divided. There are among them pro-perpetrators, hypocrites who don't embrace contextual theology and who are divisive without offering any hope and without speaking truthfully.

4. Are the churches of one mind? The pre-test shows that according to participants the Church is divided and makes no impact. They are silenced and have their own leadership problems. They hide from performing their prayer role. The post-test opines that the churches are siding with oppressors and becoming selfish. In respect of that development, there is a need for a restructured Church.

5. How hopeful are participants for the future? Comparing the pre and post-tests, with 17 participants, 1/17 without hope, 3/17 losing hope, 8/17 stable on hope and 5/17 raising their hope. The average of raising hope and stable hope is very high. It means that people in the workshop trust in a better future of the country.

This figure shows that level of hope.

Figure 15: Level of hope
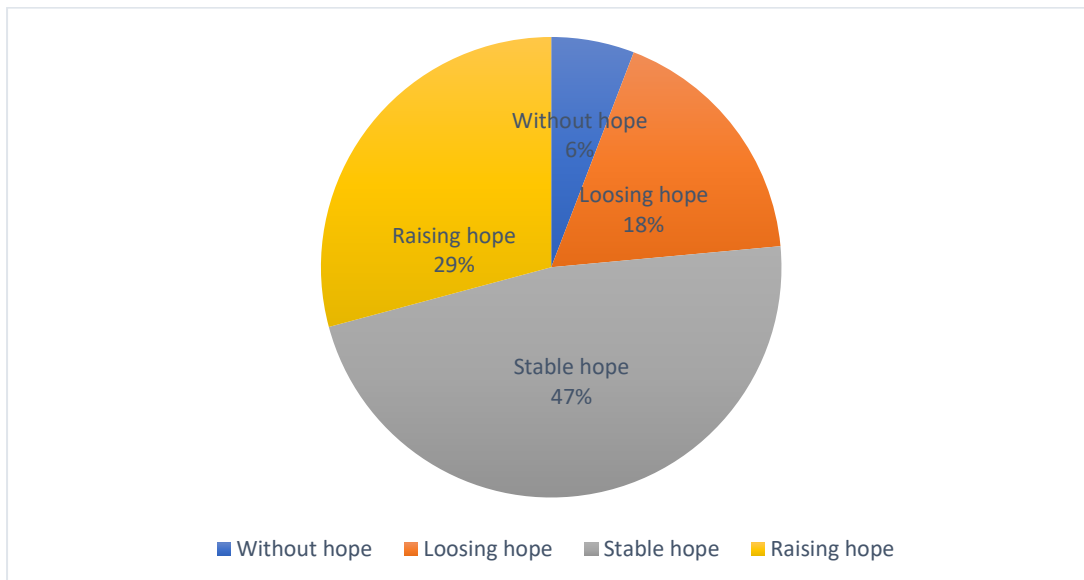
6. Practical propositions to transform the situation in the DR Congo. The pre-test shows the perceived need for a programme on social justice. To develop the electorate choosing of leaders, a sense of responsibility, a change of political leadership, to put a halt to international interference. Some participants propose a *coup d'état*, more respect for legal documents, a dialogue between parties. In addition, the post-test

emphasizes the need for a prophetic theology, patriotism, sincere partnership with Western countries, integrity, freedom to discuss reality, cancel the Monusco contract, the need for the Church to engage in politics and for justice to be improved.

7. What is expected from the *Kairos* document? The pre-test stipulates that change must be ignited in the DR Congo and that awareness of that need has to be spread among Congolese and human rights institutions. People have to be empowered and their Congolese consciousness stimulated so that they become active. In the post-test participants emphasize the importance of being critical and to give readers of the *Kairos* document a sense of what the Church ought to do such as advocacy to help people realise their needs. The document must be an ongoing work and adopted by the Church as well as other interested groups.

7.4 SOCIAL ANALYSIS

7.4.1 Background of the crisis

In spite of the DR Congo being one of the richest countries in the world due to its natural resources, it has one of the lowest GDPs per capita, in 2015 estimated at US$ 441. According to UNDP, around 80 percent of Congolese live under the poverty line with an income of US$ 2 per day while the income of 63% is less than US$1.25 a day. Only nine percent of Congolese have access to electricity. The socio-political environment is highly problematic and characterized by inefficient government, restriction of basic human rights and freedoms, political repression and injustice. Congolese generally have come to perceive their government as illegitimate, corrupt, useless and predatory. It has failed to stop ongoing massacres (80 mass graves have been discovered between August 2016 and July 2017). Violence, killing, and the child-soldiering phenomenon continue unabated. More than 2 million people have been displaced since 2016. Seven African countries have been involved in a war fought mostly on Congolese territory and that has killed more people than any other conflict in the world since the end of the second World War. It is estimated that nearly 40% of women in the Eastern DR Congo have been raped or mass raped since 1996.

The conflict is generally regarded as a battle for control over minerals and involves the exchange of gold, coltan, and diamonds. Other aspects of the violence in the DR Congo are the ethnic and racial background as well as nationalist agendas. The presence of nationals of Rwandese origin is contentious but no longer publicly

discussed. The largest UN peace mission in the world, employing more than 20 000 peacekeepers, is found in the DR Congo. Yet, where these peacekeepers are present, in the North Kivu region, people are still being massacred with machetes and axes. The Congolese people are impacted by:

i. Western imperialism or colonialism. Since 1885, the DR Congo has been continuously controlled by outsiders. The controlling powers have changed but the control remains. It seems that the Congolese were not prepared for independence. Since the so-called independence in 1960, the implementation of Western systems has continued, for example in the looting of national resources whereby multinational companies export raw natural resources in processes that are accompanied by aggression and manipulation. Whereas the country acceded independence, in practice it is still controlled by external forces. Even Congolese Presidents appear to not take their own decisions but are made to implement the wishes of Western entities. The invasion of Congolese territory is supported by international systems and international institutions such as the EU and UN don't speak out. The Congolese dictatorship was established soon after independence by Mobutu's *coup d'état,* followed by the killing of Lumumba; the mismanagement of national resources; poor governance that cannot by any stretch of the imagination be defined as a fair and effective exercise of power on behalf of the people. Good governance inspires people and leaders to have confidence and to respect one another. In cases of bad governance leaders assume they are superior to the people they oppress (Gary S, 2011:233). In consequence, people try to regain their freedom and some wellbeing by opposing their leaders who are blamed for injustice, greed, unemployment and poverty, insecurity, and human rights violation. People demand an end to the collapse of the education system, the health care system, the collapse of infrastructure (the whole country of 2.345.409.000 km2 has only 3200 km of asphalt roads), economic degradation, unequal distribution of wealth, identity questions, collapse of the judiciary system and to protect the legislature, army and police from infiltration by foreigners (22 armies consisting of foreigners were involved in warfare on Congolese soil).

ii. The 'enemies' of the DR Congo. Two kinds of enemies have been named by participants in this research. The first one is the external enemy consisting of

international organisations, multinational business agencies and the regional blocks. The second kind of enemy is internal: a corrupt political system, a failing judiciary, and politicized public services including the military and national police leadership.

7.4.2 Failure of church responsibility

The Congolese Church is a praying Church, built on the hope that God will sooner or later heal the nation and provide godly leaders; The Church is involved in charity on local levels. It preaches peaceful co-existence, reconciliation, forgiveness and justice. Denominational churches have many outreach programmes. However, the Church in the DR Congo is divided and generally passive in its acceptance of the divisions. There are today four Church divisions.

First, the Protestant Church of which the voice is not regularly heard. Most past Protestant leaders have viewed politics as non-church business. Those under the ECC umbrella are clear in their support for the government. On the whole 57.8% of Protestant Church leaders are not politically involved while 42.2 % encourage their able congregants to get involved.

Second, the revival churches are strongly divided and their position in respect of the crisis in the country is not clear. Leaders of each group have their own interests and viewpoints. Whereas some support the powers that be, others were forced into exile for having rebuked political wrongdoing.

Third, the traditional or independent churches: Some are siding with the government, but others are either utterly against or have no stable position.

Fourth, the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church usually lets its prophetic voice being heard, expressing the Church's engagement in mediation for the sake of peace building and reconciliation.

7.5 THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Four aspects of Christianity require serious consideration in the context of compiling a Congolese *Kairos*. They are discussed in the following sections.

7.5.1 Congolese as Imago Dei

The human being is created as Imago Dei. According to Groody *(WY:644) imago Dei* is the personal and relational nature of human existence and the difficulty of

understanding human life apart from the mystery of God. As such, the human being has an inherent dignity bestowed by God who created him or her. Dignity is in the South African context expressed as *ubuntu* which in a fundamental sense represents personhood, humanity, humaneness and morality (Mokgoro, 1998:2). God, the creator of man and woman *ex nihilo,* gave them human dignity.

This means that no one has the right to dehumanize and take possession of the divine creature. Everyone deserves equality of respect, chance, dignity, from the top to the bottom of society.

> So, God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply"; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. And God said, "See I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of the earth, and every tree, whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food (Genesis 1.27-29).

Nobody has chosen his or her nationality, language, culture, parents. Everyone has the right to enjoy the society in which he or she was born. Even when sin occurred in the garden, the human being remained image of God (Genesis 5: 1-3; 9: 6). The main problem of humanity and society is sin. Sin has changed the relationship between people.

7.5.2 The model of preferential option for the poor

The preferential option for the poor is the mission of Jesus when he takes the place of people who are oppressed or who are suffering for a multitude of reasons (Luke. 4: 18 - 22; 6: 20 – 26; 7: 20 – 22; 14: 7 – 14; Matthew 6: 9 - 13). This mission remains a challenge for the Church today. Instead of taking sides with the poor, the Protestant Church in the DR Congo is accused of siding with the government, the powers that be, and the rich. In the words of Vicencio (1995:67):

> "Both these societies were driven by an understanding of God who takes sides with the poor and destitute (Leviticus 25), with those whose basic needs are not satisfied (Mt.25: 32f), with the empowerment of the weak and judgement of the strong (Luke 1: 46f)".

As regards the concept of the Church being neutral into which many take refuge, Vicencio (1995:61-68) argues:

> 'Differently stated, the Biblical God is never revealed in a neutral place (whether in the mind of intellectuals or among the counsellors of the Pharaohs or high priests), but among the slaves (Exodus), the peasant farmers (Amos), the widows and orphans (New Testament)'.

The Congolese Church needs to find out whether the interests of the poor are considered in all the socio-political and economic contexts of the country. It is the Church's role to keep informed about the needs, aspirations and frustrations of the poor so that the Church may speak out and act compassionately in respect of their plight. The Church has to offer space to those who are muzzled. In that way the Church may become once again the voice of the voiceless.

7.5.3 Prophetic theology for the Church

A prophetic theology understands the *Kairos* and engages with the socioeconomics and politics of its time. A prophetic theology accepts the need to confront the status quo, to confront present-day Pharaohs and empires.

The prophetic role of the Church in the DR Congo must seek to expose the causes of the social, political, economic, and spiritual ills in the country and insist that these are dealt with. The prophetic theology helps to understand life in its holistic dimensions. Each aspect of life affects life in its entirety. Social situations may impact spiritual states of being. In a prophetic ministry, any earthly human social arrangement is welcome, but it also seek to achieve what is perceived as the reign of God on earth: "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6.10). The pastoral ministry and the conscientization of the Church as regard the failing of government and state will lead to the Church participating in governance and playing a role for the wellbeing of the people and in their struggle for justice. Concerning the struggle for justice, I am of the same view as De Gruchy (1988:167) in his statement:

> The struggle for justice (with the poor) is not for the sake of confrontation, even though that may often be the immediate, penultimate, and necessary effect. Injustice (and corruption against the poor) and those who perpetrate it must be confronted with the claims of justice and truth, the demands of the gospel. This is all for the sake of reconciliation (justice, democracy, good governance, service delivery,) and eradication of poverty".

7.5.4 Theology on social justice

In Brueggemann's understanding of social justice, it is of crucial importance to consider the common good and the hope for a better future.

Taking account of these concerns tends to promote *socio-equilibria* and provision for the needy and marginalized in a process that by Brueggemann (2010:39-43) is called the 'economy-with-neighbourhood'. The concept of justice is then understood to include a system of distribution that ensures all members of society of dignified living as they have sufficient access to resources and goods. Righteousness may involve intervention in social affairs to rehabilitate society, promote social wellbeing and respond to social grievances.

The Pharaonic exploitation as described in the Exodus narrative needed a dreamer such as Moses who was able to imagine a world outside the imperial reality, to act and to make that world a reality. Dreamers can challenge power as, in the words of Brueggemann, they are able to imagine a new future and a different world. The Church must bring a message of hope as is written in 2 Chronicles 7.14:

> If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

7.6 PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Being a Christian means to live a sacrificial life. The life of a Christian should not only be a religious life, but like the life of Christ. In the practical sense one may move in that direction by speaking to communities, social movements, government, international communities, working with churches, NGOs, and so forth. This is what is understood as part of public theology which is Koopman (2016:1142) defined as a crucial facet of theology focusing on the public significance, impact and implications of the Christian faith. It brings the Christian faith into dialogue with the questions and plights of human beings in all walks of life. It centres on how the liberating and dignifying impact of the Christian faith diminishes human vulnerability and impacts poverty and marginalization. It is clear that there are many theological approaches some of which deserve a better reception than they usually get in the academic environment where the public performance of religious entities tends to be challenged and condemned, especially where the political activities of evangelicals are concerned (Buttelli, 2018:396). That is why, for example in North America and Africa, evangelical churches are not involved in the public sphere as Le Bruyns relates:

> In North America as much as in Africa, evangelicals are typically portrayed as socially irrelevant and superficial, politically narrow and embarrassing, and theologically intolerant and other-worldly. They are usually a serious concern in the public eye but are not usually taken very seriously for their public contribution. The fact that very little theological attention has been paid to evangelicals in South Africa is an apt case in point — if South African academic literature provides any indication (Le Bruyns, 2006:344).

Moreover, in his reflection on theology in the public space, Buttelli (2018:402) advocates that the powers that be may be guided by the demands of the social movements using the language of liberation theologies. This then would result in a theology made in the public space.

From looking at the *Kairos* movement as a public engagement, this section develops seven practical actions in the framework of the *Kairos* process. These are strategies that the church could apply as a way of concretely engaging with the socio-economic and political aspects of the struggle for social justice. Bonhoeffer, writing about spiritual strength, links the prayer with action in the countering of the dictatorship of the Nazis (De-Gruchy, 1999:246).

7.6.1 Encouraging self-positive change

When people think of change, they expect it to refer to others rather than to themselves. However, we must be the change that we await from others. If the Church wants the government to change, it first has to experience change itself. If we can't change others, at least we can attempt to change ourselves. That possibility is implied in Jesus' thought when he says that we are the light and the salt of the earth. This thought inspires people when in the *Kairos* process they first think on their own repentance: 'We have sinned,' meaning that we need to change our ways.

7.6.2 Developing sermons material

God's word that is the centre of Christian life can be confusing. Each Christian interprets the bible from the background of his or her own environment, culture, up bring/ing and experience. Those who choose for the socio-political involvement of the Church are in agreement with a biblical view of the Christian life. Those who refute the Church's engagement with socio-political matters also base their opinion on their particular interpretation of the bible and Christian life.

Satan used the word of God to confuse the ministry of Jesus. It was the battle of 'It is written' (Matthew 4.6-7). There are still churches where the word of God is used to keep people in a state of cultural, political and social oppression. That strategy was also used during apartheid in South Africa where the bible was used to justify oppression.

One of the tasks the Church should take on is the development of a series of sermons, sessions of teaching and bible studies, devoted to confusing bible verses on social, economic and political matters. Generally, what we have been taught is what has created our beliefs and motivated our social commitment.

Many controversial biblical verses can be used for such sermons and studies, such as:

❖ **Romans 13.1-4**

> Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. 2 Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. 3 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. 4 For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

❖ **Romans 13.5-7**

> 5 Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. 6 This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. 7 Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

❖ **1 Peter 2.13-14**

> 13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

- ❖ **Mark 12.17**

  > 17 Then Jesus said to them, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." And they were amazed at him.

- ❖ **Matthew 22.20-21**

  > 20 and he asked them, "Whose image is this? And whose inscription?" 21 "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said to them, "So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

- ❖ **John 18.36**

  > Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."

The word used in the first verse of Romans 13 means, 'let every soul', implying everyone. Not only every Christian, but all human beings. However, the question is what to do if the governing authority does not recognize his dependence on God and does not govern according to what God recommends? Is he allowed to do what is unjust and rude? Surely the word of Paul to the Sanhedrin could in his context be useful: 'we must obey God rather than men' (Acts 5.29).

Many scriptural passages must be read in the context of an African understanding. When the bible was introduced in Africa, it was accompanied by the arrival of colonialism and imperialism. Many bible verses were used as tools to subdue the indigenous people. That which in the context of the *Kairos* tradition is called the 'state theology', is used by states to justify the status quo including its oppressive and racist elements, is in fact not far removed from the 'Church theology' reflected in statements of Church leaders when they are, superficially and counter-productively, criticizing 'the roots of evil' (De-Gruchy, 1987:61). Similarly, De Gruchy (2008:35) mentions the negative effects on religion made by the crusades, the inquisitions, the killing done in the name of holy wars, and apartheid in South Africa. Apparently, religion has been used as a tool in various political contexts throughout history. West discusses three waves of evangelism from 1415 onwards with the third one taking place between 1920 and 959 under missionary-colonial influence and considered as the transition from colonialism to independence of African states (West, 2016:76-86).

7.6.3 To develop an organised system

For the prophetic voice of the Church to function as voice of the voiceless an organised system is needed. Corruption and injustice are part of organised systems. To fight a system such an organised entity is needed. In respect of a normative system to empower a community, Linthicum (1991:38) suggests that people can be empowered by just acting collectively, basing themselves on reflection, projects and actions. When people feel that wellbeing escapes them because they are excluded from social, economic and political spheres, they must take time and reflect on the level of their own responsibility for the dilemma. Linthicum (1991:38), writing on the power of organisation, states that, "if people can be empowered to work cooperatively, to work as a single unit, then they will be able to take responsibility for the life of that community and, consequently, to participate fully for the life of that city".

People thus need space for reflection. There is power in people sitting down to reflect on what is going on and why it is happening. Nehemiah did so when the time came to rebuild Jerusalem. As a result of his reflection people came into action.

> And I told them how God has been with me and helped me, and what the emperor had said to me. They responded: "Let's start building!" And they got ready to start the work (Nehemiah 2.18 GNT).

Reflection leads people to initiate projects and to realise which activities could be organised to solve problems. Some collective enterprises, rather than individual actions, make people strong. Evil grows into a system. It is not easy to bring a system to an end by separate individual actions.

7.6.4 People's education

A programme is needed, organised by the Church providing training for its socio-political engagement. If people are well educated and informed, they are able to constructively challenge unjust systems and structures at all levels of society as is the case in the discourse engagement of Gustafson (Le Bruyns, 2017). The prophetic model discourse energizes people to be critical, to identify evil and attack its root causes. This discourse had a positive effect in the South African apartheid struggle. It can also function as a narrative model because it involves telling a story. It can be used in conferences and the stories may be about people, role models, martyrs, heroes, friends, with the aim of bringing virtue and values to life. The technical model

of the discourse can consist in the critically analysing of situations. The discourse can be focused by asking basic questions concerning the ethics of a society, such as: What is a morally good society, who is a morally good person? what is morally good behaviour? The policy model of discourse refers to discourse aimed at influencing process or legislation. It is the discourse of people in positions of responsibility, people who yield power and take decisions that are of influence on others. In this context it is relevant to note that the Church is in need of people of influence who are heard in society and have influence in the community. Their influence will ultimately also impact policy.

In respect of education the curricula of the theological institutions should be assessed. It is important to start reflecting on, and with, future Church leaders and consider their study programmes in the light of their theological basis.

7.6.5 Prayer meeting

The world is under spiritual influence. The bible book of Esther informs us of the importance of Esther's prayer before her advocacy to the king. She did not trust in her own arguments and relationship with the king. She rather put her confidence in the supernatural power of prayer which can change the intentions of evil to harm God's people.

> Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day, I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king. Even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish (Esther 4.16).

> Then the king asked, "what is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be given you" (Esther 5.3).

This narrative is full of questionable information. We can understand spiritual preparation before physical action. Esther acts against the law of the kingdom of Xerxes by introducing the law of the Almighty God for which people had been sold to be destroyed and annihilated. Esther's visit would have posed a risk for all those who wanted to raise their voices on behalf of the voiceless. What happened in Chapter 5.3 to the king to make him ignore the law? Was it the physical aspect of the queen? Maybe. But there is an understandable change from concern for the law to excessive love for the queen to whom is she will be given as much as half of Xerxes' kingdom. Note that the king had never made such a promise since the moment that Esther

entered his palace. The narrative indicates that the power of prayer can defeat the law.

7.6.6 Advocacy process

The Church may take the initiative to act for the voiceless. Esther took the risk of approaching the king on behalf of the people. Like Esther, the Church should organise a system of advocacy on behalf of the oppressed. Many oppressive laws limiting the rights and freedoms of the people could be changed by the Church standing up and advocating for the people. In such a process those who are involved should approach the government. The risk implied in such an effort consists in getting so close to the rulers that one might be engulfed by the system and become corrupted oneself. Such advocacy would take time. In the time of Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron went many times to speak out on behalf of the people of God without giving up. Reflecting on the responsibility of the Church, De Gruchy (1995: 267-268) states:

> The Church has a particular responsibility to help those with power to act responsibly, but in solidarity with those who are powerless. If the first responsibility of the Church is to keep those who are in power accountable, its second responsibility is to enable those who are powerless to become empowered so that they can participate as equals in the exercise of power.

7.6.7 Resistance

'Resistance' is often understood in the sense of violence, in other words, negatively. Resistance is a manner of expressing one's view.

There are many examples of resistance in the bible. Jesus is the main representative of resistance. He opposed the political powers of his time who ignored the poor and the cries of the ill-treated and the dehumanized people to celebrate the glory of Rome. He resisted the emperor by instructing the Pharisees and Herodians after they asked him whether they should pay taxes (Mark 12.17). He also resisted a deadly threat from Herod Antipas, the political rulers of Galilee and Perea (Luke 13.31). Resisting Herod, he directly referred to him as 'the fox' (Luke 13.32). He finally challenged political arrogance by riding a donkey before his death, showing that he was the king ruling overall. Jesus' way thus is the way of resistance to oppressive forces, including certain religious authorities (Long, 2008:xxvii). According to Long (2008:xxviii), resistance is an everyday concern, for all Christians, for ordinary people.

But Christianity, after all, is not only resistance. It's also the creation of 'the beloved community', the flourishing of peace and justice on earth, and the very presence of the ever-reconciling Spirit of Jesus (Long, 2008:xxxi).

Three methods of offering resistance emanate from Jesus' ministry.

The first one is based on the development of a relationship with the marginalized groups in society: Women, tax collectors, Samaritans, militant activists, the poor (2008:6). The second method involves to direct resistance against the cultural systems that people are part of and under which they become victims of injustice (2008:9). The third method consists in public protest as a mode of resistance. The bible offers, among others, the following examples of public protest. The first is when Jesus cleared the temple (Matthew 21.12-17; Mark 11.15-19; Luke19.45-48; John 2.13-17). A second example is presented by Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic who suggest that the procession of Christians on Palm Sunday was likely to be a protest march (Long, 2008:12).

Bonhoeffer was by his knowledge of the power of God steadied in resisting Nazism and told the Church that its services could be considered as a 'sort of idolatrous religion'. Issues of human rights, for example, should feature as one of the worship services. Also, Bonhoeffer wishes for a 'non-religious Christianity' and not a 'sacralised institution preserving its clerical privileges'. The 'non-religious Christianity' is the Church becoming able to serve the oppressed, the marginalised and to deal with the real issues of society (De-Gruchy, 1999: 246-249). Furthermore in the context of resistance, from the Old to the New Testament prophets are often looked upon as social radicals willing to overthrow their social order in the interest of justice (De-Gruchy, 1987: 62). Such a show of courage has to be recognized as resistance to the established order.

Is violent resistance an option for Christians?

There has been a more or less ongoing debate in the last twenty years on the question of Jesus allowing violent resistance. Jesus wants to make a difference with the Roman authorities who were to crucify him and uses the teaching of the Zealot to render to Caesar what is his and to God what is His (Mark 12.17). In relation to this aspect of Jesus' teaching, Wittenberg (2007:ix) articulates that resistance has traditionally, by

and large, been identified with violence and was therefore not considered to be a Christian option.

The fact is that Jesus never used violence. Even when in danger of being killed violently, he did not respond in kind. When, in the garden, Peter tried to resist violently, Jesus rebuked him.

> But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword (Matthew 26.52).
> When oppressed, he said nothing… (Isiah. 53….)

Referring to non-violent resistance, Martin Luther King Jr used Matthew 5.39 as a bedrock for the claim that Jesus' resistance was non-violent. But there comes a time for making exceptions as in the following statement.

> If a Christian ever chooses violent resistance, it must be done in the manner that Bonhoeffer made his choice - as an exception to the rule in case of extreme human rights abuses, after all other methods have been exhausted and much prayer has been offered, and with a full willingness to accept the guilt and consequences (Long, 2008:15).

Then resistance can be seen as an active prayer to God for justice, peace, and reconciliation by embracing spiritual disciplines such as fasting, meditation and prayer. Many civil rights organisations have experienced the power of non-violent actions. Reflecting on non-violence, I am of the view that it must not only be a strategy for the people, but also a policy to be taught by the government (Stassen, 1992:21). Black people in the USA were for centuries humiliated their protest was part of a non-violent movement. Reporting on the speech of the USA President at Cairo University in 2009, Nimtz (2016:2) notes that violence is considered as a dead end.

The tradition of non-violence was born from ancient cultures challenging the realistic view of war and based on moral or religious principles. War was thus a challenge already for the early Christians who even refused military service and who did not tend to offering resistance even in periods of the cruellest persecution. When the alliance between the empire and the Church was consolidated, soldiers were converted to Christianity and started fighting in what were called just and holy wars (de Oliveira, 2017:26-27).

Many leaders halfway the twentieth century used the non-violent method of resistance. One of these was Martin Luther King Jr. who was inspired by Mahatma Gandhi and by Bayard Rustin, a civil rights movement leader in the USA. As a Quaker and as a

witness of God's presence, Rustin was called to speak truth to power and, when necessary, to loyally oppose the government. In regard of resistance he suggested that its objective must be to transform the state: "What is likely to be the effect of the resistance? Will the new state be worse than the first"? (Rustin:17). In the thought of Rustin, violence never sows the seed of peace. King's method was a synthesis between Christian pacifism and Gandhi's *satyagraha*. He advocated non-violent resistance and civil disobedience and his idea was to create a beloved community. The following statement expresses how he understood non-violent resistance.

> (…) King considers that non-violent resistance and civil disobedience must not be used as a way to humiliate or defeat the opponent, but as a way to gain its friendship and understanding. The goal, according to King, is to create what he calls 'creative tension'. It relates to bringing tensions and contradictions to the surface in order to publicly expose the deepest resentments, show the situation's injustices, touch the consciousness of opponents and the public in general and – from the discomfort caused by this crisis – create a situation in which people start wanting to resolve conflict and value negotiation (de Oliveira, 2017:29).

Mahatma Gandhi was involved in non-violent action in South Africa and in various social movements as well as the struggle for India's independence. Both Gandhi and King's attitudes and writings are strongly influenced by their respective spiritual traditions. Gandhi used a strategy called *satyagraha* from '*satya*' (truth) and '*agrah*' (strength, insistence) which includes protests, boycotts, strikes, non-cooperation, usurpation of government functions and building parallel institutions. This strategy is based on 'respectful disobedience' to the oppressors and means to be transparent and true (de Oliveira, 2017:32-34). Gandhi usually criticized passive resistance.

In 1951 a new policy was introduced in South Africa that excluded blacks from any political representation in government. In 1952 Nelson Mandela organised a non-violent civil boycott against unjust laws such as the country had never seen (Boepple, 2014:325). In his testimony, Mandela said, talking about himself:

> "I was the symbol of justice in the court of the oppressor, the representative of the great ideals of freedom, fairness, and democracy in a society that dishonoured those virtues. I realized then and there that I could carry on the fight even within the fortress of the enemy" (Boepple, 2014:326).

Mandela played an important role in the ending of apartheid and promulgated a new constitution. A commission of truth and reconciliation was installed to investigate past human rights abuses. Mandela's government introduced other crucial reforms and played internationally the role of mediator to help bringing peaceful solutions to conflicts.

The theology of Romero gives another view of violence used in certain cases. In his reflection on the violence of love, Romero points out a way of expressing love that seems to contain an element of violence. He argues:

> We have never preached violence, except the violence of love, which left Christ nailed to a cross, the violence that we must each do to ourselves to overcome our selfishness and such cruel inequalities among us. The violence we preach is not the violence of the sword, the violence of hatred. It is the violence of love, of brotherhood, the violence that wills to beat weapons into sickles for work (Romero, 2007:25).

As archbishop of San Salvador and a fearless defender of the poor and suffering, Romero cannot see destructive violence in his method because it contributes to the love of brotherhood and saves people from the use of weapons.

The practice of the Congolese *Kairos* has some special characteristics. It aims to deal with both the roots and the leaves of the plant of evil, in other words, with the causes and the consequences. This implies that socio-political troubles are not approached as if they existed in a vacuum. There are people who cause and others who undergo. The problem does not consist only in the wrongdoers, but also in the passivity and ignorance of those who think their compliance marks them as good people. All the seven practical actions of the *Kairos* deal with society in all its dimensions, from top to bottom.

CONCLUSION

Chapter Seven addresses the *Kairos* as a paradigm of the prophetic voice in the context of the DR Congo. Being aware of what is going on in the DR Congo is only a beginning. This section deals with ways to react practically and positively to the crisis in the country.

The chapter is presented as part of a biblical and theological reflection on how to realize the social justice the urgent need of which has been described in the previous chapter. Congolese experience their situation as close to desperate. Hence, the time to act is now. Not only does the *Kairos* DR Congo offer an opportunity for repentance and conversion, but it alerts the population to respond and to challenge that which has been imposed on them by committing to decisive actions for change.

Originating in 1985 in South Africa, eighteen other countries worldwide have formulated a *Kairos* document, each in its own context. The Congolese *Kairos* will be the twentieth.

Ideas are presented for a draft *Kairos* DR Congo document confronting crucial aspects such as social justice, violent conflicts, poverty, education, corruption and the silence of the Church. Key points are the need for a social analysis that describes the background of the crisis and defines its causes and that takes a critical view of the Church's failure in this context.

In addition, a theological analysis is required whereby every Congolese is respected as *imago Dei*. Hence, the model of preferential option for the poor must be adopted and social justice addressed.

The chapter suggests seven practical actions as part of the *Kairos* DR Congo, among which are self-positive change, the development of specific sermon material, encouraging the Church to organize a system for educating people, engaging in prayer meetings, advocacy processes and pacific resistance.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 GENERAL CONCLUSION

This research focuses on the prophetic responsibility of the Protestant Church in respect of socio-political instability in the DR Congo and aims to determine how the Church can exercise its political responsibility in a prophetic way. The main hypothesis is that many churches are not able to raise a prophetic voice in the midst of the present political turbulence.

The main research question is: Considering the serious crisis that the DR Congo finds itself in, in what way can the Congolese Church (the ECC) fulfil its political responsibility in a prophetic way within the framework of a *Kairos* document?
The material necessary for an understanding of, on the one hand, the present situation in the DR Congo and, on the other hand, the possibilities offered by a *Kairos*, is presented in eight chapters.

The first chapter contains an overview of the research. The research is motivated by the growing misery of the Congolese people and the decay of the country's socio-political situation, the confused position of the Church, and common misconceptions of politics and prophets. On the basis of a literature review, the research is framed by the prophetic theology which includes the *Kairos* tradition, the liberation theology and the liberation mode of Jesus. Three methods of data collection are defined in the research: The analysis of documents, the use of the quantitative and qualitative methods, and Brueggemann's theology on social justice.

Chapter Two indicates the point of conversation between the Church and political functionaries in the African context. The African political situation is ambiguous with people who have recently been freed from the Western domination of which their states are a product, now appearing to have been taken in local bondage. Many of the so-called heroes of independence in Africa have turned into dictators. Most of those who ran the revolutionary movements were not politicians and the continent has experienced the rise of political opportunists without a relevant ideology or principles. The lack of quality of leadership contributes to the weakness of African democracy.

The continent witnessed the advent of political independence between the 1960s and 1990s, accompanied by the failing introduction of democratization. Since then the continent has known a 'virtual democratization' with colonial powers continuing to wield economic power. The chapter is further concerned with the relationship of politics and Church which can be distinguished by the fields of action of six forms of relevant organisations. As the practice of politics also is a vocation, the Church may be involved in it and individual Christians may look upon political engagement as a way to live their Christian life and participate in the management of the society. The chapter retraces the relationship Church-state as perceived by, among others, the Reformers Luther, Zwingli and Calvin, each of which interpreted Jesus' position on political involvement. The section presents plenty arguments that encourage the Church's participation in politics. In the early years of independence, the Church has actually tried to impact social life, only to be eventually silenced. Even so, the Church has played a role of considerable importance in African democratization. The section hence calls on the Church to once again adopt a prophetic responsibility amid the serious socio-political crisis that the DR Congo finds itself in today.

The third chapter considers the socio-political situation in the DR Congo, a country so large that it takes on the dimensions of a continent. It has more than 82 000 000 inhabitants living in 26 provinces, four official languages, and around 450 ethnic groups. Around 85% of the population are Christians.

In the 1960s the DR Congo was viewed as one of the most promising countries in Africa. Unfortunately, as many scholars show, from King Leopold II, through the Belgian governments, to leaders such as Mobutu, Laurent Desire Kabila and Joseph Kabila, the country has been managed as a private possession and, often for personal gain, exploited, while also, at times, being badly neglected. Its abundance of natural resources makes the DR Congo into, potentially, one of the richest countries in the world. It offers over 1100 types of minerals valued as equivalent to the GDP of the US and the EU combined. Democratization took off in 1990 with the introduction of a transitional period during which a multi-party system would be launched. The transition period lasted no less than 16 years, from 1990 to 2006. The decay of the economic system had already set in. For example, the allocation in the state budget for education went from 30% in 1960 to 0.6% in 2014. Recent statistics define 82.2% of workers in the DR Congo as 'disguised unemployed', meaning that they are unable

to live of their wages. An important cause of the poverty of Congolese is the mismanagement of natural resources in addition to growing external exploitation and worsened by corruption. In the meantime the justice system had been turned into a political instrument facilitating the committing of human rights abuses. Chapter Three presents in addition analyses and statistics indicating that, compared to the last days of the Mobutu regime, the situation in the DR Congo as it is today has undergone no improvement.

Chapter Four is devoted to the socio-political role of the Protestant Church in the RD Congo. The Protestant Church consists of 95 communities and is part of an umbrella body (ECC), that was by Western missionaries created before independence to secure Protestant unity and to be as one in confronting the government when it acts against the interests of the indigenous people. In the 1970s, after a conflict between the ruling power and the Catholic Church, the Protestant structure was captured and became an instrument used by the government to solidify its power. Three major missions are known of the Protestant Church, namely an evangelical, an educational and a diaconal mission. The Church has made many efforts in the field of diaconal responsibility. But the Church still has a long way to go in respect of its political responsibility. In the early 1990s, the Protestant Church began to raise its voice seemingly distancing itself from the government, but the forces holding Church and government together were so strong that soon there were signs of reconciliation. The Protestant Church has by the public commonly been accused of siding with the political powers that be, as compared to the more independent stance of the Catholic Church. The Protestant Church has made a few declarations containing a critique of the government, but these haven't been heard or become known publicly. The chapter stresses the need to distinguish between personal statements made by some leaders and declarations based on the Church's formal viewpoints and it insists that the Church needs to engage with socio-politics in a structured way to impact people's lives.

The fifth chapter discusses the methodology applied in the research, the data collection, analysis and interpretation. The field work is concerned with determining to what degree the Protestant Church is involved in socio-political issues and to assess the willingness of Church leaders to increase the Church's participation in politics. It deals with the research hypothesis examining what prevents the Church from being heard in the DR Congo political crises. The research uses both quantitative and

qualitative methods. The research population consists of 95 Church leaders of whom 83 from 10 out of 11 provinces were asked, to complete the questionnaire of 23 questions.

The fieldwork resulted in a majority view that the Church should get off the fence and act as a prophetic voice in the context of socio-political matters. From the answers to the questionnaire it became clear that those Church leaders who have a good deal of experience in the ministry agreed more significantly with Church engagement in politics, than those with less pastoral experience. The research demonstrates that the National Direction of the Protestant Church is not seen as being involved in the country's crisis in a prophetic way. Even when the Church is perceived as trying to make contributions towards improving the situation, these don't make much of an impact. Moreover, some congregations have, independently from the ECC, found ways of their own to engage with socio-political problems in their surroundings.

Two basic theological viewpoints dominate in relation to political involvement of the Church. The one insists on the separation of the spiritual realm from the public sphere, or of the Church from politics. The other sees political involvement as the mission of the Church, whereby the bible proves an effective tool for justifying the Church making socio-political choices. Participants in the research think that, when the socio-political situation is problematic, the Church must raise its voice and pray. There is a need for a public theology that presents taking part in social engagement as a form of prayer in action. In the opinion of Church leaders, many Christians who want to be involved in political issues are moved by a motivation of the highest order, namely patriotism. As regards the Church's role in the public realm, the *Kairos* tradition fulfils a need in the DR Congo. The *Kairos* implies a tradition of a Church that is truly critical, that encourages laity involvement and civic education, and that provides a strong organised system for dealing with socio-political issues. Being involved in a prophetic way, either inside or from the outside of the political system, the risk one runs is that of being caught up in corruption. Other risks that have to be taken into account are being engulfed by the political system to such a degree that pastoral care suffers while Church leaders who occupy themselves with politics also may be considered as false servants of God or liars. Besides they run the dangers of becoming involved in occultism and to be killed. Disciples' lives have always posed risks.

The sixth chapter is a re-reading of Walter Brueggemann's thought on social justice as a prophetic theology. The Congolese people are in need of social justice. In Brueggemann's view the worst possible crisis is that of the common good. Social justice entails the distribution of social goods and social power, including the equitable redistribution of resources, equal access to services, resources, power, and knowledge or information. Lack of social justice has been denounced by many biblical prophets. Social justice is both a goal of action and the process of action itself. One might look upon social justice, not necessarily as the result of certain social policies, but as attained through God who is the source of justice. Three threats to the common good are imperialism, political powers as the embodiment of the **complex state monopoly system, and oppressive social policies.** Imperialism can operate from outside the country, for example in the shape of the international system of exploitation of weak countries, or from inside the country when people in positions of power hold all the rights, including the one to ill-treat their fellow-citizens. In an imperial system, the emperor embodies the law and most policies, including an increasingly oppressive levy system, are part of a governing structure aimed at exploiting the weak. People may recover their freedom by breaking away from the 'religion' of static triumphalism and politics of oppression and exploitation. Brueggemann presents the common good of the people as defined by the triad of steadfast love, justice and righteousness. Exodus is not necessarily a geographical displacement but can also be an economic act, the imaginative deed of a human being breaking free from contemporary pharaohs dictating life's circumstances. People may foster a hope-against-hope, a hope for a better future that doesn't exploit the holy God. In this context, Brueggemann applies the Mosaic tradition, which is liberative, focused on God's righteousness and justice and concerned with the peasants, the poor, and the marginalized people seeking justice.

In Brueggemann's view, a new epoch of social justice is possible by sometimes accepting the darkness of life, such as the God's vulnerability on Good Friday is connected to the resurrection on the following Sunday.

Chapter Seven promotes the crucial importance of social justice. It presents the *Kairos* tradition as a paradigm of a prophetic voice. The *Kairos* is a Christian, biblical and theological reflection on socio-political crises. The tradition should bring people to reflect on their current situation in the context of social, economic and political

wellbeing and make them decide to look for social justice. The *Kairos* entails the arrival, or near arrival, of a special moment in time, a right moment that must be used. It is about opportunities that demand a response for the sake of social justice. Twenty countries have thus far built on the *Kairos* tradition as offering a chance to express themselves on socio-political and economic matters. Chapter Seven proposes practical action for social justice. The basis of the *Kairos* is to support human beings as created in the *imago Dei*, to act in a prophetic way and address social justice. The tradition suggests seven practical actions that may lead to the successful dealing with social justice and improve ways of distributing social goods and social power: These acts include: To affect self-positive change, to develop sermon material, encourage an organized system of the Church, educate people, hold prayer meetings, engage in advocacy processes and in peaceful resistance.

8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

In raising a prophetic voice, three tasks are of the utmost importance.
These are: advocacy of the Church to the government, the UN and political parties, providing political education, training and speaking out on evil.
On the basis of the present research a few recommendations can be made.

8.2.1 Starting a *Kairos* DR Congo

In civil society, when one entity keeps silent and offers no opinion on governance, it is presumed to be in support the ruling party. On the other hand, if an entity raises its voice, it is expected to be part of the opposition and fight the government. In the context of the *Kairos* it is most important that the Church doesn't take sides with either the majority party or the opposition, but that it sides with the oppressed, the voiceless, in short with the people. The *Kairos* tradition offers a space for reflection on socio-political and economic responsibility, of which there is an overwhelming need in the RD Congo.

8.2.2 A change for common effort and responsibility

Every single part of the Church carries responsibility for people's wellbeing. The success of applying the *Kairos* tradition depends on every church member's efforts to change him- or herself, and the environment. In Church everyone, from the national

level to individual members has some responsibility towards affecting change and offering hope.

8.2.2.1 National presidency of the ECC

In the framework of a *Kairos* DR Congo and the Church's fulfilment of responsibilities the following recommendations are made to the presidency of the Church.

i. The Church should improve the impact of its socio-political voice by raising it to admonish evil, express criticism, and encourage laity to play an active role, draw on the word of God with wisdom.

ii. The creation of a national *bureau d'études,* or study centre, as part of the commission of *Justice, Paix et Sauvegarde de la Création,* or the commission of justice, peace and protection of the creation, where theologians, historians, scholars of sociology, lawyers and others who are in possession of relevant expertise, come together to discuss socio-political issues. Such a structure will prevent the confusion presently caused by the differing, and sometimes opposing, declarations on socio-political matters made by the Church leader in his personal capacity and by the Church expressing its official position. This study centre should not function merely as a specialized section of an executive committee or as a synodal commission, but as a permanent structure that considers problems affecting the nation and looks for ways to solve them. The composition of this study centre will further an impartial and thoughtful approach of problems, taking account of, theological, social and scientific factors, and stimulate acting in a critical and prophetic way. In that way the Church may become the voice of the voiceless. The study centre will be a socio-political and technical structure. Its activity will solve the weakness of the Church consisting in the individual character of the involvement of leaders, communities and single members in socio-political concerns, resulting in forces being scattered and the misfunctioning or failure of actions due to a lack of communication and consultation on political affairs between the Church's National Direction and its lower levels.

iii. To use the *Kairos* document as a model. As discussed above, the *Kairos* document is compiled after the performance of social and theological analyses expected to be followed by practical action.

iv.   The Protestant Church should issue an annual message to the nation based on the work done by the afore-mentioned study centre, including its analyses. The message has to be endorsed by the national Church leaders before being released to the people.

v.   To introduce in the training of future Church leaders a course on socio-political questions. The commission for justice, peace, and protection of the creation should organise colloquia, Church leaders training, theological reflection and bible study sessions focused on socio-political matters.

vi.   There is a need to clarify the job descriptions of the commission of justice, peace, and protection of the creation, and the commission of *Diaconia,* especially concerning their role in regard of socio-political matters.

vii.   The Church should do its utmost to ensure that its position and declarations on socio-political issues are made known to the people and are in the reports of the National Synods and Executive Committees not obscured by a mass of other information. It is strongly recommended that the Church, using its department of media and through the spokesperson of the Presidency, makes the position of the Church on socio-political matters crystal clear.

8.2.2.2   On the community level

The research shows that 57.8 percent of Church leaders from 95 faith communities in the DR Congo is not involved in political matters. The recommendation made to the national presidency of the ECC apply to any of the Protestant communities. It is commendable that every community has its *bureau d'etudes,* or study centre, as part of a commission for justice, peace and the protection of the creation, to study, analyse and reflect on problems of a socio-political nature.

8.2.2.3 Local churches

It would be a positive development if local churches had their own commissions of justice, peace and protection of creation, with a *bureau d' études* to initiate studies and produce pamphlets on the Church's commitment to the socio-political situation nationally and locally. This would encourage discussions on socio-political issues as mission of the Church which would have the character of a spiritual activity. The seven practical actions of the *Kairos* can be meaningfully applied at the local Church level.

Local churches should encourage actions leading to self-positive change inspiring people to change themselves before trying to change others. Relevant sermon material could be developed by designing a contextual bible study on particular scriptures that cause the misinterpretation of political involvement of the Church. A well-organized system to deal with the Church's concerns is advisable. This may be aimed, among others, at educating people, and holding prayer meetings reflecting on the spiritual dimension of the political crisis in the world. In addition, local churches should be occupied with advocacy processes and peaceful resistance.

8.2.2.4 '*Conseil des pasteurs*' (COPA)

The Council of Pastors constitutes a platform of Protestant pastors, living in a certain milieu. They usually hold monthly meetings where they intensify thoughts and ideas and confer on matters affecting the Church and on socio-politics, according to the job description from the ECC.

8.2.2.5 Theological training

Theological training institutions are the laboratories of the Church. Their graduates have to be able to reflect and determine theological positions on social matters. Hence, it is necessary to add a socio-political dimension to their curricula.

8.3 FURTHER RESEARCH

The present research is neither final nor complete. Many other dimensions are awaiting the scrutiny of future researchers. For one thing, this research was limited in scope by focusing mostly on socio-political issues that the Church should address. Many other points need attention and many questions ask for answers as seen below. What would the current situation of the DR Congo be if the present government weren't there? Furthermore, if the present government is at the heart of the problems in the DR Congo, what guarantees a better life under a different government? What is the background of the profound involvement of the Catholic Church in problems of a socio-political nature and what is its impact in the RD Congo?

It is suggested that a post-doctoral study focuses on the role of churches in the public sphere and on the urgency of the need for a prophetic theology in the contemporary world. Also, an assessment of all the *Kairos* documents and their impact in the social

life of their countries of origin could be a useful contribution to a more precise conception of the Church's role in society.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Data analysis

Demographics

A1 Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	82	98.8	98.8	98.8
	Female	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

A2 Studies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bible school	5	6.0	6.0	6.0
	Graduate	15	18.1	18.1	24.1
	Licence	47	56.6	56.6	80.7
	Masters/PhD	12	14.5	14.5	95.2
	No theological studies	4	4.8	4.8	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

A3. Approximately how many pastors do you have in your community

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Up to 50	25	30.1	30.9	30.9
	51-100	8	9.6	9.9	40.7
	101-150	13	15.7	16.0	56.8
	151-200	2	2.4	2.5	59.3
	200+	33	39.8	40.7	100.0
	Total	81	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.4		
Total		83	100.0		

A4 How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-5	2	2.4	2.4	2.4
	6-10	6	7.2	7.3	9.8
	11-15	6	7.2	7.3	17.1
	16-20	10	12.0	12.2	29.3
	>20	58	69.9	70.7	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

A5.1 Provincial President

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	11	13.3	13.4	13.4
	No	71	85.5	86.6	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

A5.2 Vice Provincial President

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	5	6.0	6.1	6.1
	No	77	92.8	93.9	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

A5.3 Member of Executive committee

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	70	84.3	85.4	85.4
	No	12	14.5	14.6	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

A6 What is your current position in your community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Presidency	60	72.3	72.3	72.3
	Executive/Board committee	15	18.1	18.1	90.4
	Pastor	8	9.6	9.6	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

A7 For how long have you occupied the position specified in question 6?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-5	28	33.7	34.1	34.1
	6-10	28	33.7	34.1	68.3
	11-15	9	10.8	11.0	79.3
	16-20	6	7.2	7.3	86.6
	>20	11	13.3	13.4	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

A8 How many provinces out of 11 are reached by your community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-3	19	22.9	22.9	22.9
	4-6	46	55.4	55.4	78.3
	7-9	10	12.0	12.0	90.4
	10-11	8	9.6	9.6	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

A9 Which province is home to your community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	BC	13	15.7	15.7	15.7
	BDD	10	12.0	12.0	27.7
	KIN	17	20.5	20.5	48.2
	KOCC	7	8.4	8.4	56.6
	KOR	10	12.0	12.0	68.7
	EQ	2	2.4	2.4	71.1
	OR	8	9.6	9.6	80.7
	NK	4	4.8	4.8	85.5
	SK	5	6.0	6.0	91.6
	KAT	7	8.4	8.4	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

Section II

B1 Indicate your agreement that the Protestant church in Congo must be involved in political issues

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	4	4.8	4.9	4.9
	Disagree	4	4.8	4.9	9.8
	Neutral	15	18.1	18.3	28.0
	Agree	37	44.6	45.1	73.2
	Strongly agree	22	26.5	26.8	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

Test – one-sample t-test

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B1 Indicate your agreement that the Protestant church in Congo must be involved in political issues	82	3.84	1.036	.114

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
B1 Indicate your agreement that the Protestant church in Congo must be involved in political issues	7.355	81	.000	.841	.61	1.07

B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	29	34.9	36.7	36.7
	2	14	16.9	17.7	54.4
	3	14	16.9	17.7	72.2
	4	8	9.6	10.1	82.3
	5	14	16.9	17.7	100.0
	Total	79	95.2	100.0	
Missing	System	4	4.8		
Total		83	100.0		

Test – one-sample t-test to test for a significant extent...

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?	79	2.54	1.509	.170

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?	-2.684	78	.009	-.456	-.79	-.12

B3 Is the ECC engaged in political affairs in your province?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	34	41.0	41.5	41.5
	No	48	57.8	58.5	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

Test – Binomial test

Binomial Test

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
B3 Is the ECC engaged in political affairs in your province?	Group 1	Yes	34	.41	.50	.151[a]
	Group 2	No	48	.59		
	Total		82	1.00		

a. Based on Z Approximation.

B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	34	41.0	42.0	42.0
	2	19	22.9	23.5	65.4
	3	15	18.1	18.5	84.0
	4	8	9.6	9.9	93.8
	5	5	6.0	6.2	100.0
	Total	81	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.4		
Total		83	100.0		

Test – one-sample t-test

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country	81	2.15	1.246	.138

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country	-6.153	80	.000	-.852	-1.13	-.58

B5 Indicate your agreement that the church's engagement with socio-economic and political issues is also a mission of the church

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	1.2	1.2	1.2
	Disagree	2	2.4	2.4	3.6
	Neutral	8	9.6	9.6	13.3
	Agree	27	32.5	32.5	45.8
	Strongly agree	45	54.2	54.2	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B5 Indicate your agreement that the church's engagement with socio-economic and political issues is also a mission of the church	83	4.36	.849	.093

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
B5 Indicate your agreement that the church's engagement with socio-economic and political issues is also a mission of the church	14.603	82	.000	1.361	1.18	1.55

B6 When the socio- political situation is not good, the wisest choice is

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	B (pray)	9	10.8	11.1	11.1
	C (raise ones voice)	2	2.4	2.5	13.6
	D (raise ones voice and pray)	70	84.3	86.4	100.0
	Total	81	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.4		
Total		83	100.0		

Test – chi-square goodness-of-fit test

B6 When the socio- political situation is not good, the wisest choice is

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
B	9	27.0	-18.0
C	2	27.0	-25.0
D	70	27.0	43.0
Total	81		

Test Statistics

	B6 When the socio- political situation is not good, the wisest choice is
Chi-Square	103.630[a]
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 27.0.

Report as follows:

B7 Has your community ever been involved in political issues?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	35	42.2	42.2	42.2
	No	48	57.8	57.8	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

Binomial Test

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
B7 Has your community ever been involved in political issues?	Group 1	No	48	.58	.50	.187[a]
	Group 2	Yes	35	.42		
	Total		83	1.00		

a. Based on Z Approximation.

B8 Do you feel the need for socio-political involvement of the Church in the DR Congo?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	68	81.9	81.9	81.9
	No	5	6.0	6.0	88.0
	Yes, but not in times of political turbulence	10	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

Test – chi-square gof test

B8 Do you feel the need for socio-political involvement of the Church in the DR Congo?

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Yes	68	27.7	40.3
No	5	27.7	-22.7
Yes, but not in times of political turbulence	10	27.7	-17.7
Total	83		

Test Statistics

	B8 Do you feel the need for socio-political involvement of the Church in the DR Congo?
Chi-Square	88.651[a]
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 27.7.

B9 The best way for the clergy to be involved prophetically in socio-political affairs is …

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Inside	34	41.0	41.0	41.0
	Outside	49	59.0	59.0	100.0
	Total	83	100.0	100.0	

Binomial Test

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
B9 The best way for the clergy to be involved prophetically in socio-political affairs is …	Group 1	Inside	34	.41	.50	.124[a]
	Group 2	Outside	49	.59		
	Total		83	1.00		

a. Based on Z Approximation.

B10 Can the political involvement of the church be justified by the Bible?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	79	95.2	96.3	96.3
	No	3	3.6	3.7	100.0
	Total	82	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		83	100.0		

Binomial Test

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
B10 Can the political involvement of the church be justified by the Bible?	Group 1	Yes	79	.96	.50	.000[a]
	Group 2	No	3	.04		
	Total		82	1.00		

a. Based on Z Approximation.

Motivating factors to become involved in politics

B11.1 Need of power

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	43	51.8	62.3	62.3
	Disagree	10	12.0	14.5	76.8
	Neutral	10	12.0	14.5	91.3
	Agree	5	6.0	7.2	98.6
	Strongly agree	1	1.2	1.4	100.0
	Total	69	83.1	100.0	
Missing	System	14	16.9		
Total		83	100.0		

B11.2 Greed – want to earn more money

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	44	53.0	62.0	62.0
	Disagree	8	9.6	11.3	73.2
	Neutral	9	10.8	12.7	85.9
	Agree	6	7.2	8.5	94.4
	Strongly agree	4	4.8	5.6	100.0
	Total	71	85.5	100.0	
Missing	System	12	14.5		
Total		83	100.0		

B11.3 Disappointment with the community

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	29	34.9	40.8	40.8
	Disagree	12	14.5	16.9	57.7
	Neutral	23	27.7	32.4	90.1
	Agree	3	3.6	4.2	94.4
	Strongly agree	4	4.8	5.6	100.0
	Total	71	85.5	100.0	
Missing	System	12	14.5		
Total		83	100.0		

B11.4 Patriotism

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	3	3.6	3.8	3.8
	Disagree	2	2.4	2.6	6.4
	Neutral	6	7.2	7.7	14.1
	Agree	36	43.4	46.2	60.3
	Strongly agree	31	37.3	39.7	100.0
	Total	78	94.0	100.0	
Missing	System	5	6.0		
Total		83	100.0		

B11.5 To give back to the nation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	4	4.8	5.3	5.3
	Disagree	3	3.6	4.0	9.3
	Neutral	7	8.4	9.3	18.7
	Agree	39	47.0	52.0	70.7
	Strongly agree	22	26.5	29.3	100.0
	Total	75	90.4	100.0	
Missing	System	8	9.6		
Total		83	100.0		

B11.6 Political vision

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	5	6.0	6.8	6.8
	Disagree	9	10.8	12.3	19.2
	Neutral	18	21.7	24.7	43.8
	Agree	27	32.5	37.0	80.8
	Strongly agree	14	16.9	19.2	100.0
	Total	73	88.0	100.0	
Missing	System	10	12.0		
Total		83	100.0		

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B11.1 Need of power	69	1.71	1.059	.127
B11.2 Greed – want to earn more money	71	1.85	1.261	.150
B11.3 Disappointment with the community	71	2.17	1.183	.140
B11.4 Patriotism	78	4.15	.955	.108
B11.5 To give back to the nation	75	3.96	1.019	.118
B11.6 Political vision	73	3.49	1.144	.134

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
B11.1 Need of power	-10.121	68	.000	-1.290	-1.54	-1.04
B11.2 Greed – want to earn more money	-7.718	70	.000	-1.155	-1.45	-.86
B11.3 Disappointment with the community	-5.919	70	.000	-.831	-1.11	-.55
B11.4 Patriotism	10.676	77	.000	1.154	.94	1.37
B11.5 To give back to the nation	8.157	74	.000	.960	.73	1.19
B11.6 Political vision	3.683	72	.000	.493	.23	.76

Risks/Challenges

B12.1 Could become a liar

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	4	4.8	5.1	5.1
	Disagree	7	8.4	9.0	14.1
	Neutral	13	15.7	16.7	30.8
	Agree	32	38.6	41.0	71.8
	Strongly agree	22	26.5	28.2	100.0
	Total	78	94.0	100.0	
Missing	System	5	6.0		
Total		83	100.0		

B12.2 Could be seen by church members as false servant of God

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	1.2	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	10	12.0	13.3	14.7
	Neutral	21	25.3	28.0	42.7
	Agree	29	34.9	38.7	81.3
	Strongly agree	14	16.9	18.7	100.0
	Total	75	90.4	100.0	
Missing	System	8	9.6		
Total		83	100.0		

B12.3 Could be killed

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	8	9.6	10.8	10.8
	Disagree	11	13.3	14.9	25.7
	Neutral	20	24.1	27.0	52.7
	Agree	29	34.9	39.2	91.9
	Strongly agree	6	7.2	8.1	100.0
	Total	74	89.2	100.0	
Missing	System	9	10.8		
Total		83	100.0		

B12.4 They may not have time for service to the church and pastoral care

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	3	3.6	3.9	3.9
	Disagree	11	13.3	14.5	18.4
	Neutral	11	13.3	14.5	32.9
	Agree	35	42.2	46.1	78.9
	Strongly agree	16	19.3	21.1	100.0
	Total	76	91.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	8.4		
Total		83	100.0		

B12.5 They could side with corrupt politicians

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	3	3.6	4.1	4.1
	Disagree	3	3.6	4.1	8.1
	Neutral	17	20.5	23.0	31.1
	Agree	32	38.6	43.2	74.3
	Strongly agree	19	22.9	25.7	100.0
	Total	74	89.2	100.0	
Missing	System	9	10.8		
Total		83	100.0		

B12.6 Could be engulfed by the (political) system

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	7	8.4	9.3	9.3
	Disagree	3	3.6	4.0	13.3
	Neutral	12	14.5	16.0	29.3
	Agree	30	36.1	40.0	69.3
	Strongly agree	23	27.7	30.7	100.0
	Total	75	90.4	100.0	
Missing	System	8	9.6		
Total		83	100.0		

B12.7 Could engage in the occult

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	11	13.3	14.5	14.5
	Disagree	6	7.2	7.9	22.4
	Neutral	18	21.7	23.7	46.1
	Agree	26	31.3	34.2	80.3
	Strongly agree	15	18.1	19.7	100.0
	Total	76	91.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	8.4		
Total		83	100.0		

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B12.1 Could become a liar	78	3.78	1.112	.126
B12.2 Could be seen by church members as false servant of God	75	3.60	.986	.114
B12.3 Could be killed	74	3.19	1.131	.131
B12.4 They may not have time for service to the church and pastoral care	76	3.66	1.090	.125
B12.5 They could side with corrupt politicians	74	3.82	.998	.116
B12.6 Could be engulfed by the (political) system	75	3.79	1.200	.139
B12.7 Could engage in the occult	76	3.37	1.295	.148

One-Sample Test

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Test Value = 3	
					Lower	Upper
B12.1 Could become a liar	6.209	77	.000	.782	.53	1.03
B12.2 Could be seen by church members as false servant of God	5.268	74	.000	.600	.37	.83
B12.3 Could be killed	1.439	73	.154	.189	-.07	.45
B12.4 They may not have time for service to the church and pastoral care	5.262	75	.000	.658	.41	.91
B12.5 They could side with corrupt politicians	7.105	73	.000	.824	.59	1.06
B12.6 Could be engulfed by the (political) system	5.677	74	.000	.787	.51	1.06
B12.7 Could engage in the occult	2.481	75	.015	.368	.07	.66

All sig agreement except for 12.3 which is neither agreement nor disagreement...

1		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
B1 Indicate your agreement that the Protestant church in Congo must be involved in political issues	0-5	2	1.00	.000
	6-10	6	4.17	.753
	11-15	6	3.50	1.225
	16-20	10	4.10	1.101
	>20	57	3.88	.908
	Total	81	3.83	1.034
B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?	0-5	2	2.00	1.414
	6-10	6	1.83	.983
	11-15	6	2.67	1.633
	16-20	10	2.20	1.398
	>20	54	2.72	1.571
	Total	78	2.56	1.508
B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country	0-5	2	1.00	.000
	6-10	6	2.00	1.265
	11-15	6	2.50	1.378
	16-20	10	2.80	1.619
	>20	56	2.07	1.158
	Total	80	2.16	1.247
B5 Indicate your agreement that the church's engagement with socio-economic and political issues is also a mission of the church	0-5	2	3.00	1.414
	6-10	6	4.33	.516
	11-15	6	4.00	1.549
	16-20	10	4.30	.949
	>20	58	4.48	.707
	Total	82	4.38	.841

ANOVA

22		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
B1 Indicate your agreement that the Protestant church in Congo must be involved in political issues	Between Groups	18.207	4	4.552	5.134	.001
	Within Groups	67.374	76	.886		
	Total	85.580	80			
B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?	Between Groups	6.579	4	1.645	.712	.586
	Within Groups	168.600	73	2.310		
	Total	175.179	77			
B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country	Between Groups	8.073	4	2.018	1.318	.271
	Within Groups	114.814	75	1.531		
	Total	122.888	79			
B5 Indicate your agreement that the church's engagement with socio-economic and political issues is also a mission of the church	Between Groups	5.364	4	1.341	1.989	.105
	Within Groups	51.916	77	.674		
	Total	57.280	81			

A4 How long have you been in the pastoral ministry? * A2 Studies Crosstabulation

			A2 Studies					Total
			Bible school	Graduate	Licence	Masters/PhD	No theological studies	
A4 How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?	0-5	Count	0	1	0	1	0	2
		% within A4 How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?	.0%	50.0%	.0%	50.0%	.0%	100.0%
	6-10	Count	1	3	2	0	0	6
		% within A4 How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	11-15	Count	0	2	4	0	0	6
		% within A4 How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?	.0%	33.3%	66.7%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	16-20	Count	2	2	4	1	1	10
		% within A4 How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?	20.0%	20.0%	40.0%	10.0%	10.0%	100.0%
	>20	Count	2	7	37	10	2	58
		% within A4 How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?	3.4%	12.1%	63.8%	17.2%	3.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	5	15	47	12	3	82
		% within A4 How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?	6.1%	18.3%	57.3%	14.6%	3.7%	100.0%

Group Statistics

	A5.1 Provincial President	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?	Yes	11	3.82	1.601	.483
	No	67	2.34	1.409	.172
B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country	Yes	11	2.45	1.635	.493
	No	69	2.10	1.190	.143

Independent Samples Test

Table 7		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?	Equal variances assumed	.212	.647	3.157	76	.002	1.475	.467	.544	2.405
	Equal variances not assumed			2.878	12.675	.013	1.475	.513	.365	2.585
B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country	Equal variances assumed	3.828	.054	.866	78	.389	.353	.408	-.459	1.165
	Equal variances not assumed			.688	11.748	.505	.353	.513	-.768	1.474

Group Statistics

Table 3	A5.3 Member of Executive committee	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?	Yes	66	2.73	1.564	.193
	No	12	1.58	.669	.193
B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country	Yes	68	2.24	1.259	.153
	No	12	1.67	1.155	.333

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
B2 To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction, is politically involved in a prophetic way?	Equal variances assumed	14.325	.000	2.481	76	.015	1.144	.461	.226	2.062
	Equal variances not assumed			4.196	37.514	.000	1.144	.273	.592	1.696
B4 Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country	Equal variances assumed	2.068	.154	1.459	78	.149	.569	.390	-.207	1.345
	Equal variances not assumed			1.551	15.986	.140	.569	.367	-.209	1.346

B11 – motivating factors

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.620
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	124.210
	df	15
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.385	39.745	39.745	2.038	33.974	33.974	1.928	32.135	32.135
2	1.683	28.049	67.793	1.223	20.381	54.355	1.333	22.220	54.355
3	.789	13.147	80.941						
4	.572	9.539	90.479						
5	.351	5.857	96.336						
6	.220	3.664	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotated Factor Matrix[a]

	Factor	
	1	2
B11.2 Greed – want to earn more money	.870	
B11.1 Need of power	.862	
B11.3 Disappointment with the community	.584	
B11.5 To give back to the nation		.861
B11.4 Patriotism		.632
B11.6 Political vision		.424

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MOT1	73	1.9954	1.08936	.12750
MOT2	80	4.0563	.87870	.09824

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
MOT1	-7.879	72	.000	-1.00457	-1.2587	-.7504
MOT2	10.752	79	.000	1.05625	.8607	1.2518

B12 – challenges

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.855
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	241.583
	df	21
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.959	56.553	56.553	3.532	50.452	50.452
2	.946	13.517	70.070			
3	.693	9.893	79.963			
4	.474	6.770	86.733			
5	.454	6.483	93.217			
6	.290	4.143	97.359			
7	.185	2.641	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Only one factor seems to be found here.
Alpha = .865 which is reliable

One-Sample Statistics

Table 4	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CHALLENGES	83	3.6127	.90585	.09943

One-Sample Test

Table 5	Test Value = 3					
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
CHALLENGES	6.162	82	.000	.61274	.4149	.8105

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

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Title of the Thesis:

"The *Kairos* in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A prophetic voice in a context of socio-political instability »

SECTION I

PLEASE, PROVIDE THE REQUESTED INFORMATION BY FILLING IN OR TICKING THE APPROPRIATE BOX.

1. Gender

Male	Female

2. Theological studies

Bible school	Graduate (Undergrad)	Licence (Honours)	Master or PhD	No theological studies

3. Approximately how many pastors do you have in your community?

up to 50	51-100	101-150	151-200	200+

4. How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?

0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	More than 20 years

5. What is your current position in the ECC? (Tick **all** that apply)

Provincial President	Vice Provincial President	Member of Executive committee

6. What is your current position in your community? (**Select ONE option only)**

Presidency (President or Vice-President)	Executive committee or board committee	Pastor (without responsibility in the leading team in the community)

7. For how long have you occupied the position specified in question 6?

0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	More than 20 years

8. How many provinces out of 11 are reached by your community? (According to the ancient configuration of provinces of the DR Congo)

0-3	4-6	7-9	10-11

9. Which province is home to your community?

_____

SECTION II

1. Indicate your agreement that the Protestant church in Congo must be involved in political issues.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

2. To what extent do you think the ECC/General Direction is politically involved in a prophetic way? (Prophetic voice is to stand and speak impartially according to the will of God for the well-being of the people)

Not at all 1	2	3	4	To a large extent 5

3. Is the ECC engaged in political affairs in your province?

Yes	No

4. Indicate the impact of the church's involvement on the political instability and turbulence in the country.

No impact 1	2	3	4	Large impact 5

5. Indicate your agreement that the church's engagement with socio-economic and political issues is also a **mission** of the church.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

6   When the socio-political situation is not good, the wisest choice is: (**Select ONE option only)**

        A. To keep quiet ..………………………… ☐

        B. To pray …………………………………….. ☐

        C. To raise one's voice ……………………… ☐

        D. To raise one's voice and pray …………… ☐

        E. Other propositions (please specify) ----------------------------------

7   Has your community ever been involved in political issues?

Yes	No

If yes, please specify. --

8. Do you feel the need for socio-political involvement of the Church in the DR Congo? **(Select ONE option only)**

Yes	
No	
Yes, but not in periods of political turbulence.	

9. The best way for the clergy to be involved prophetically in socio-political affairs is ... (Select **ONE** option only)

from inside the political system	
from outside the political system	

10 Can the political involvement of the church be justified by the Bible?

Yes	No

If yes, explain how: --

11. Indicate your agreement that the following factors could motivate the church or its leaders to be involved in political issues:

Motivation factor	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
11.1 Need of power					
11.2 Greed – want to earn more money					
11.3 Disappointment with the community					
11.4 Patriotism					
11.5 To give back to the nation					
11.6 Political vision					

12. Indicate your agreement that the following are risks or challenges a servant of God faces if he/she gets involved in political affairs:

Risk/Challenge	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
12.1 Could become a liar					
12.2 Could be seen by church members as false servant of God					
12.3 Could be killed					
12.4 They may not have time for service to the church and pastoral care					
12.5 They could side with corrupt politicians					
12.6 Could be engulfed by the (political) system					
12.7 Could engage in the occult					

13. How do you think the church can improve its prophetic voice in political affairs for the benefit of the country in the future?

SECTION III

1. Did this topic make you uncomfortable? How did you feel when responding to it? Is this sort of reflection common among the clergy?

Thank you for your contribution

Appendix 3: Consent form for conducting the research

Project title: "The *Kairos* in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A prophetic voice in a context of socio-political instability »

Name of the investigator: Rev. Joel MBONGI KUVUNA

Contact details: joelkuvuna@gmail.com;

 Affiliations: University of Kwazulu Natal

Projects aims: The main aim of this project is to assess the involvement of the Protestant Church in DR Congo in socio-political responsibility. what should be a theological framework on church and socio-political responsibility in the DR Congo?

Dear participants

The present research is conducted in South Africa at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal in the fulfillment of the Degree of PhD in Theology and Development, School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics.

My academic supervisor is Dr Clint le Bruyns, Director and Senior Lecturer of Theology and Development Program. He can be contacted by email LeBruyns@ukzn.ac.za

This subject is very relevant in the African context of socio-political turbulence and the position of the church leaders which sometimes is ambiguous. A clear understanding is required in order to move on a sustainable position of the socio-politic responsibility of the church.

Participating in this research means that you agree to provide data in the questionnaire that will be used. I will use only a summary of these data.

Participating in this study contribute in the advancement of the degree of the understanding of the church and socio-political issues in our country.

Your participation in the questionnaire is completely voluntary. You can withdraw in any case you feel uncomfortable.

In case of necessity, an audio record can be used in order to complete our questionnaire. A strict confidentiality will be observed. In the report your name will not be included. The research is anonymous.

Once you withdraw from the study you won't be charged of any pain.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT

I…………………………………………………………………… (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.
I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I also allow my information to be recorded by audio if necessity, in order to complete your questionnaire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT………………………………….

DATE…………………………………………………

Appendix 4: Authorisation letter to the ECC

Rev. Joel MBONGI KUVUNA   Pietermariztburg, 22/03/2016

Doctorant à UKZN/Afrique du Sud

joelkuvuna@gmail.com

Concerne: Autorisation de recherche

A Mgr NYAMUKE ASIAL' UBUL Idore

Chargé de la Vie de l'Eglise et Mission.

Monseigneur,

Je viens par la présente, solliciter l'autorisation de mes recherches doctorales au sein de l'Eglise du Christ au Congo dont vous êtes le chargé de la Vie et Mission. Le sujet de mes recherches est : « **The Kairos in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A prophetic voice in a context of socio-political instability »**

Je pense donc distribuer un questionnaire à quelques leaders de quelques communautés membres de l'ECC.

Ces recherches seront d'une très grande importance sur notre rôle en tant qu'église surtout dans notre contexte de turbulence politique en Afrique.

Quant à la confidentialité, je vous rassure que toutes les données récoltées serviront uniquement à mes recherches, selon les normes d'éthique scientifique me liant avec l'université.

Je vous serais reconnaissant de motiver les leaders auprès de qui je me tournerais afin de me rendre cette tâche facile pour qu'ensemble, nous soyons capables d'amener, comme l'a dit un théologien, les discours théologique et académique au commun de la population qui veut vivre le bien être comme son créateur le veut.

Dans l'attente d'une réponse favorable, veuillez recevoir, Monseigneur, l'expression de mes salutations dans le Seigneur.

Rev. Joël KUVUNA MBONGI

PhD student

Appendix 5: Acceptance letter from the ECC

ATTESTATION DE RECOMMANDATION N°001/MF/DEVEM/PN/ECC/2017

Je soussigné, **Mgr NYAMUKE Asial'Ubul Idore**, 1er Vice-Président National et Représentant Légal 1er Suppléant de l'Eglise du Christ au Congo, atteste par la présente que le Révérend Joël Kuvuna, Aumônier Universitaire Provincial de la Province du Kongo Central et doctorant en Théologie et Développement à University of Kwazulu Natal en Afrique du Sud, est recommandé pour effectuer ses recherches auprès des Communautés membres de l'ECC.

En foi de quoi, la présente attestation lui est délivrée pour servir et faire valoir ce que de droit.

Fait à Kinshasa, le 07/02/Fevrier 2017

Mgr NYAMUKE Asial'Ubul Idore

1er Vice-Président National &
Représentant Légal 1er Suppléant

Avenue de la Justice (Face N° 75) B.P. 4938, KINSHASA, REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO
I.N. N° C 14061 L E-mail : eccdevempn@yahoo.fr

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Appendix 6: Ethical clearance

UNIVERSITY OF

KWAZULU•NATAL

INYUVESI YAKWAZUW-NATALI

24 March 2017

Rev Joel M Kuvuna 213573187
School of Religion, Philosophy & Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Rev Kuvuna

Protocol reference number: HSS/0983/016D
Project title: Understanding the *Kairos* in the Protestant Church in the Dr Congo. The challenge of a prophetic voice in the context of political instability: 1990-2016"

Expedited

Approval In response to your application dated 06 July 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years. The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

cc Supervisor: Dr CC Le Bruyns cc Academic Leader Research: Prof R Hewitt cc School Administrator: Mrs Catherine Murugan

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Appendix 7: Turnitin report

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PhD Thesis By Joel Kuvuna

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Appendix 8: The ECC political session pictures

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN CONGO

POLITICAL DECLARATION OF PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN CONGO