

**CONTEXTUAL EVANGELISM OF THE UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH IN BEMBA CULTURE: A MISSIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

by

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DECLARATION**Student Number: 5189-186-7**

I declare that “*Contextual evangelism of the United Methodist Church in Bemba culture: A missiological perspective*” is my own work and I have indicated all sources that I have used or quoted by means of complete references.



Signature

October 23, 2017

Date

(Kahakatshi Basua Ngandu)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my best companion and spouse Emeda Sebo Basua who has stood with me with patience and perseverance, until the Lord Jesus Christ, has finally made the dream becomes reality.

To my children, Obed Ngandu Basua, Ephraim Mulumba Basua, Emmanuel Konde Basua, Jonathan Kabengele Basua and Celine Mbiya Basua Ngandu, I love you all from the bottom of my heart, be blessed as you are growing up and you will serve the Lord when you become mature.

In memory of our late eldest brother Kabengele wa Ngandu, first-born of the Ngandu wa Mulumba family. The death snatched him away early. We lovely called him TUTU. He could see the achievement of his sacrifices of sending me to school at my childhood years. His encouragement inspired me evermore.

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ABSTRACT

The thesis demonstrates that the first Methodists missionaries to their arrival in Mulungwishi, unlikely did not penetrate the culture of the Bemba people and merely rejected everything that they could not understand because it was considered as heathen. As result, the missionaries' contempt of the Bemba's worldview and their fundamental values led to the proselytism and the syncretism. The study figures out the tension between the Gospel presented by the United Methodist Church and the Bemba Culture. Evidently, God (Supreme Being, Creator) had been known and worshipped before the expansion of the first missionaries in Mulungwishi and in the Democratic Republic of Congo at large.

Much has been said and done on the contextualization venture through different models and assumptions. Arguably, this missiological study agrees with the eminent scholars' stream that defends the pre-eminence of the word of God toward all cultures. This led the study to evaluate the missional tools and strategies used by the United Methodist Church missionaries to touch the culture of the people in depth and empower the Christian mission in Mulungwishi.

Least has been done for the community development facing the unstable economic, social, and political context of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Church still have a long way to go on the social mandate. The solution is to be originated in the theology of reconstruction (Kalemba 2008; Mugambi 1999, 2003; Maluleke 2002; Kä Mana 1999, 2002, etc.) which works out that it is possible to rebuild the Congolese society explicitly to its best image by teaching the gospel that touches the roots of the evils and lead the people to the proper change of mentality. Then, the thesis underlines the necessity of contextualisation of gospel and missional theology for good accomplishment of Christian mission everywhere.

KEY CONCEPTS

Church; Mission; Contextualization; Evangelism; Culture;
Community; Development; Communication.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|---|
| AIC: | African Independent Church |
| CAHF: | Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa |
| COP: | Country Operational Plan |
| CORDAID: | Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid. |
| DRC: | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| DSCRП: | Document of Strategies for Growth and Reduction of Poverty |
| Ed: | Editor(s) |
| GDI: | Gender Development Index |
| GECAMINES: | General of Careers and Mines |
| HDI: | Human Development Index |
| HDR: | Human Development Report |
| HDRO: | Human Development Report Office |
| ICU: | Intensive Care Unit |
| J.C: | Jesus Christ |
| KMNUM: | Katanga Methodist University of Mulungwishi |
| MEC: | Methodist Episcopal Church |
| MSF: | Medecins sans Frontieres/Doctors without Borders |
| n. d: | No date |
| N. T: | New Testament |
| O. T: | Old Testament |
| UCT: | University of Cape Town |

UMC: United Methodist Church
UNDP: United Nations Development Program
UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR: United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund
UNISA: University of South Africa
UNMO: United Nations Millennium Objectives
USAID: United Nations Agency for International Development
WHO: World Health Organization.

► Biblical quotes are taken from the Twenty-Eleven King James New Translation (KJV-2011), whereas the biblical references are used according to the model of the same version unless otherwise specified.

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE THESIS

1.1 Introduction

This study provides an overview regarding the statement of the problem of methods and contextualization practiced in evangelism's issues and experienced by the United Methodist Church facing Bemba culture in Mulungwishi. Mulungwishi is in Upper Katanga District, about 25 miles north-west of Likasi (Main City of the District), and 100 miles to the north-west of Lubumbashi, Katanga Province, Democratic Republic of Congo. Katanga Province is in Southern of the Democratic Republic of Congo and borders with the Republic of Angola, Zambia, and Tanzania.

Research questions, purpose, and research methodology as well as research design and theoretical framework are explained. The appropriate methods designed to address the research problem are provided. Literature reviews, objectives of the study and scope demarcation, and partial conclusion are formulated.

In fact, one concedes that in the nature, God (Supreme Being, Creator) had been known and worshipped before the expansion of western missionaries in Mulungwishi and around the Democratic Republic of Congo. Some Christians imagine that only believers in Christ can see God's general revelation in the nature, however others for instance Paul the Apostle affirms that unbelievers also know the existence of God (For when they knew God, Rom 1:21). Through the

nature and the human being conscience that distinguish between the good and the evil, God was made known. On the other hand, as valid as the general revelation for the world, it is not sufficient to *reveal* from Grec *αποκαλυψις* (apocalypsis) means to let discovered a truth or an instruction concerning the unknown things God's character and plan for the salvation of the humanity. Interestingly, Bultmann (1968:70) underscores that “divine principles such as love, forgiveness, and justice cannot be identified by the science”.

In line with Bultmann, one sensed to postulate that such values represent God into the human beings. Convincingly, the natural world is not merely a fact of pure hazard, as Ike (2011:326) observes that there is a “source of life” who is an intelligent designer; God. Thus, one assumes that the Gospel came and found the Bemba people with a culture, identity, and traditional religions. Naturally, Bemba people and the population of Democratic Republic of Congo at large knew the Supreme Being (God Creator) in their mother tongue; this is how Congolese people used to call him: *Nzambe* (Lingala), *Mungu* (Swahili), *Mvidi Mukulu* (Tshiluba), *Nzambi* (Kikongo); the one who appeared to them through the creation. In particular the Bemba people name him *Lesa* (Supreme Being, Creator of the heaven and earth in Bemba language). *Lesa* is considered as the one, who is above other gods (*mvidi*), thus he is called *Mvidi-Mukulu* simply meaning Supreme Being.

The Bemba traditional religion does not have sacred writing compared to other religions. The relationship between *Lesá* and the human in the Bemba's belief often takes place by the visible and audible facts other than the written letters. Therefore, the art, myths and rituals are the equivalent of sacred Scriptures in other religions. It would be important to underline that for the majority of people, Democratic Republic of Congo is the land of the oral tradition rather than the writing.

The core of the matter of the thesis is how the United Methodist Church carries on systematically in introducing the Gospel into the Bemba culture as Bediako (1990:32) sustains that the Gospel is "God's love shown everywhere people are; respectively in their culture and belief". Amazingly by creating people into his image, God always communicates with them to keep their relationship (Rheenen 2006:4). For Sanneh (1993:149), the encounter of the Gospel and the culture lies on the "respectful and transcendental embodiment of the Gospel in the given context".

The thesis pays attention to the exercise to which the Contextualization is dedicated in understanding between Bemba culture and biblical message, to find a correlation between two while the pre-eminence of last on the first one is demonstrated, since God, the Creator stays greater than any culture and the absolute authority. It is posed that the religious' relationship between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Africa at the large extent and the

West was marked by a mere rejection of cultural identity by the presumption of the complex of superiority as Wedepohl (2012:30) argues that “evangelization was important to many of them, but others wrongly thought that the local Africans had to be first civilized before they could be evangelized.”

The first Methodist missionaries could not stay away from this trap because for the majority of these missionaries, their culture was ideal norm to live better than Christian faith (Bosch 1995:600).

The research looks forward to the claim in the missiological perspective. It is important to embark on the study by setting accurately the statement of the problem of this research in the section below.

1.1.1 Statement of the research problem

The point is that western evangelism in Democratic Republic of Congo at large and in Mulungwishi particularly, mostly during the colonial period, was perceived in connivance with colonial interest, imperialism, religious racial background, as well as in the underlined words of Skreslet (2012:69) “already-worked-out theologies”.

According to Springer (1916: xii), the “Bemba in Mulungwishi met the gospel in the beginning of the twentieth Century”. David (2005) as well argues that “the period of the growth, the radiance and the rooting of the gospel on the whole territory will intervene when Leopold II will give up to Belgium the *Congo Free State* becoming

Belgian Congo (1908)". Several missions' stations have been implanted in Mulungwishi, among which the Catholics and the Protestants. The first Methodists missionaries to their arrival in Mulungwishi, tried to translate the gospel in the local languages [*Ichibemba* and others] to make the Gospel understandable to the natives (Kurewa 1997:79). However, unlikely these missionaries did not penetrate the culture of the Bemba.

The point to consider is that by the ignorance of the Bemba culture, missionaries merely rejected everything that they could not understand (David 2005). However, Bemba people have their culture. They have divinities and traditional values. To name one of the methods used by the Methodist missionaries (Evangelism methods presented in chapter three), they urged the Bemba to give up their culture; in other words, they prohibited all traditional practices, because they were assimilated to the paganism. In this regard, Kalemba (2010:51) is right to point out that "during the colonial period and the first catholic and protestant mission in Africa, the Africans at large were dispossessed of their cultural soul, meaning their identity". As result, the missionaries' misunderstanding of the Bemba's worldview and their fundamental values led to the mistrust each other.

This was a biased evangelism in the middle of the Bemba. Notwithstanding this challenge, the first Methodist missionaries constructed schools, clinics, and the sport's ground for the young

people, as well as other activities focusing on the proclamation of the gospel. The attractive activities had encouraged the growth of mission's stations but not the in-deep transformation of the people in the light of the Word of God (Kaleya 2014). Due to the weight of the above considerations, one figures up the tension between the Gospel presented by the United Methodist Church and the Bemba Culture.

One inclines to reason that the challenge of the UMC in Mulungwishi is the syncretism; the community development and the ways used to bring gospel to the Bemba people. The contextualization of the gospel toward the Bemba culture leads this research to re-examine the methods and strategies used by the UMC missionaries to touch in depth the people by evangelism in depth and empower the Christian mission in Mulungwishi. N'kwim (2002:34), arguing on the protestant mission in the colonial period states:

The western missionary approach had remained mainly on intellectual and ethical levels of man's knowledge, without touching the deepest emotional levels through myth and ritual, rhythm, and music. We can also speak about Christianity that tries to implant quickly in a conquered kingdom rather than in the inhabitants' souls.

With good reason, the United Methodist Church ought to deal with the evangelism which is holistically contextual in order to develop Bemba community in Mulungwishi and the transformation of the Democratic Republic of Congo at the large extent as Diakite (1986:51) rightly underlines that:

The most famous case - probably an extreme case - is the one of Zaire, this former Belgian colony that, at the day following its

independence in 1960, after more than one Belgian presence century, did not count among its nationals nor only one physician, nor only one engineer, nor only one lawyer, nor only one officer.

However, Strenström (2009:169) recalled that “the mistake was especially that of the Belgian colonial power in Belgium and in Congo, but the Catholic church and Protestant missions are not without critique since it was them who were responsible for education in the colony since 1880”. David (2005) emphasizes and notes that to put it otherwise, a contextual theology may touch the people in their context as Kalemba (2008:39) indicates for the African context that “to contextualize is the process by which the Christianity is received in African models of thought and behaviour, also establish a relation between the Christian faith and African realities”.

In the light of the preceding discussion, despite a lot of efforts made by the government, private sector, and religious confessions; one observes that the education of the population still a challenge for Mulungwishi city that endures in this twenty-first century, a lack of viable schools, modern academic infrastructures and an education system not supplying in the country’s development needs. Considering the paradigm shifts theory developed by David Bosch, it might be underlined that for the United Methodist Church to be involved in the *missio Dei* in Mulungwishi is not merely an activism in routine church activities, but also the gospel’s social embodiment in the Bemba community development.

The topic of this study: *Contextual evangelism of the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi's Bemba culture: Missiological Perspective* is an original work as other previous work on this specific topic is unknown. The thesis is therefore embarking on a deep Missiological survey of this topic.

1.1.2 Research questions

Many questions were asked on the United Methodist Church's mission in Mulungwishi, Katanga Province, DRC, particularly as concerns contextual evangelism in the Bemba culture. More clearly and logically the main and secondary research questions are presented below:

The main research question of the thesis is: What contextual evangelism methods can the United Methodist Church use to develop spiritually, morally, and socially the Bemba people in Mulungwishi? To unpack the main question, subsidiary research questions which constitute the chapters' framework of the study areas follow:

1. Who are the Bemba people in Mulungwishi?
2. Who and what is the United Methodist Church?
3. What approaches did the United Methodist Church use to implant churches as part of Christian mission, before and after the colonial period?
4. How can local leaders and ordinary members of the UMC become involved in contextual evangelism?

5. How can the Pastoral Cycle be used to equip the members of the UMC to reflect on and find practical approaches to evangelism?

The findings to the main question and to those secondary serves to the development of this thesis in six determined chapters. The principal and subsidiary research questions of the study adequately demonstrate the relevance for this research.

1.1.3 Relevance of the study

It is pertinently suitable to study the impact of the United Methodist Church to the cultural, spiritual, and social development of Bemba people in Mulungwishi considering the emergence of the African independent churches (AIC) which are pretending to answer to the existential questions of their members by the gospel of deliverance, prosperity, and prophetic messages.

However, the socio-economic diagnostic in Mulungwishi and in Katanga at large is troubling: poverty, unemployment, and violation of human rights, corruption, diseases which are still raging the city (e.g., malaria, typhoid, cholera, HIV/AIDS and so much more). To the preceding, it is relevant to study how the United Methodist Church should become proactive in accomplishing its prophetic and holistic mission in the context of Bemba people in Mulungwishi. Though everyone is aware of the worldwide economic crisis, Katanga is well-known the wealthiest province of the DRC in mining. Despite this geological resource, paradoxically Kiubo (2014) notices that:

Decaying infrastructure is a fact of life across DRC, the legacy of multiple wars and a chronic lack of investment. But the condition of the R617 highway in the southern province of Katanga, as well as recurrent cholera epidemics, seems grotesque given the region's lavish natural resources. Katanga, a province the size of Spain, holds many of DRC's reserves of copper, cobalt, and other valuable minerals. Scores of trucks thunder daily along its few paved roads laden with metals bound for export and shipping through Durban and other distant ports. However, few of the many millions of dollars in taxes paid by mining companies to DRC authorities are invested in Katanga's economic or social development, leaving swathes of the population mired in poverty.

Facing the statu-quo of this paradox, it is relevant to study how the United Methodist Church should be involved in Mulungwishi development. Without jeopardizing its identity, the Church has a prophetic mission to be the voice of the voiceless, as the prophets of Israel, to be on the side of the oppressed, and those who live in difficult situations as Kalemba (2012:3) underlines that "the Church can play a major transformative role in this situation as it fulfills the *Missio Dei* by educating people and their leaders, eradicating ignorance, poverty and corrupt political leaders, and by promoting discipleship".

With an analytical objectivity, it is worth to admit that the crisis of the governance is not a problem of the political governments only, but also a concern within the Church as well. The following section demonstrates the objectives of the study.

1.1.4 Purpose of the study

From the abovementioned crucial research questions, the purpose of this research is therefore, to present an innovative work in bringing a contribution to the Missiological discipline in Africa and worldwide.

Thus, related to the research questions, the objective through this study is set out, to analyse and evaluate the methods used by the United Methodist Church to develop holistically the Bemba people in Mulungwishi and examine the ways the church is negotiating the tension between the Word of God and Bemba culture when bringing the Gospel to the people. In addition, this study intends to also evaluate the involvement of the church in community development and the socio-political transformation of the DRC before and after the colonial period as well as in this century of globalization.

While studying strengths and weaknesses of this church in accomplishing its mission in a contextual evangelism, future perspectives are raised. To the end of the investigation some Missiological solution tracks proposed that can assist this church in accomplishing its mission and efficiently make Christ's disciples of all nations. Studying the growth of the Church, McGavran (1976:88) observes that "in every country, attitudes of the society before the church are important in the determination of its growth degree". In line with McGavran, some elements can be considered in targeting society, for example considering the lifestyle of the people living in Mulungwishi.

However, Gitari (1989:101) points out that “the good News is also the culture’s saviour, cherishing some sections of the African culture and transforming them for Christ's service”. In Flemming (2005:118) words “the contextualization allows to confirm, oppose, revitalize or transform the established cultural elements”. Ways and means regarding culture must be studied to bring the Gospel in a specified context as Bediako (1990:32) stated that “the Gospel has to do with grace and personality, with God manifesting his love for us in and through his Spirit so that we can respond to this love where he finds us, in our heritage of culture and religious tradition”.

It is therefore rational that the Bemba people in Mulungwishi needs preached Gospel which considers culture, world-view, beliefs, and so forth. If not, all Gospel communication not taking this into account and fashioned for the people are doomed to failure, as Fenton (1968:218) is convinced that “an evangelism that refuses to see the social problems is by nature an incomplete and non-biblical evangelism, and it will very probably end up touching nobody”. Bakke (2002:29) considers that probably “90% of gates to touch cities is not at all in cities; it is inside our churches”.

However, the purpose of practicing contextualization is not to compromise intrinsic and inalienable values of God’s Word in the name of a given culture, but rather to move away from syncretism. It is yet necessary to set a cut-off point for spatial-temporal research and it is important in a scientific work.

1.1.5 Scope and limitations of the study

The study is conducted with the United Methodist Church and the Bemba culture in the well delimited setting of Mulungwishi city in Katanga Province, Democratic Republic of Congo. However, the United Methodist Church being a large congregation in Mulungwishi is not possible to study the whole circuit, reason for why, this study is limited to the Kamango United Methodist Church, one of the planted churches by Mulungwishi missionary station. The period under investigation is from 1990 to 2010. Evidently, 1990 was chosen as it was the year freedom of speech opened democratically following the previous crisis period, as described by Ngbanda (1998:355):

The national economic environment's dislocation makes all planning impossible; the dilapidated state of roads, lacustrine and railway infrastructures; the nearly total agriculture abandonment by peasants attracted to big city pleasures and by easy gain of the of the precious ores artisanal exploitation; the quasi - stop of the secondary and tertiary industrial sector following different depredations; the reduction of the mining industry to simple expression because of poor resource management and lack of rehabilitation and development investment; the insufficiency of State funds gnawed by all kinds of predations, the incompetence, the voracity and proxies poor management; a currency that lost all its attributes following unbalanced payments and the excessive use of the board of banknotes; the distrust from international financial circles and investors.

The depicted dark picture above disappointed the Congolese population and led to the downfall of President Mobutu's regime. The year 2010 characterised 50 years of independence for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Mulungwishi United Methodist Church's

92 years of existence. This, in turn led to a half century of assessment depletion in terms of the country's dissolving general situation on national and international plans. Henceforth a provisional literature is necessary to canalize work scientifically.

1.1.6 State of the research

1.1.6.1 Literature review

There are no previous studies on how the United Methodist Church dealt with cross-cultural problems in Mulungwishi. Several descriptive studies were carried out that proven helpful but did not put forward concrete solutions on the topic of this research. The thought is therefore to present an original and valuable work in bringing missiological knowledge and empirical data to this topic. However, the necessity existed to browse through different scholars' previous research and works for opinion information linked to this topic. Sources consulted among others:

1. **Pieter, Verster. (2015) on "A Christology approach to poverty in Africa: Following Christ amidst the needy"**

The author of this article pleads for the Church to be a house of hope for the poor. The work of Verster reminds the scripture of Luke 10:30-37 where Jesus teaches the compassion for our fellow creatures in need. The church is the continuation of Christ mission. To this title, the UMC cannot merely bring the gospel to Bemba people without compassion for those in need. However, one thinks that the social responsibility of the church should not jeopardize the

salvation of the humanity from sins; otherwise, the church is confused to a philanthropic organization.

In view of this concern, Verster paid attention to the fact that the Church did not always inspire entrepreneurship. At the end of the day, one suggests after the findings of this research, how the UMC can address the issue of poverty in Mulungwishi. The Christology approach of this article is to address the issue of poverty in Africa; thus, one concurs with Verster when he takes in account the Christology in African context and points out that 'The full redemption, however, is both spiritual and material'. This is to say that the gospel has two sides of coin: proclaim the spiritual salvation and alleviate the crisis of poverty as much as possible.

To conclude, Verster acknowledges that there are many challenges in Africa and the possibilities of alleviating poverty on the continent still leave much to be desired. Attention is given to the works of several scholars on poverty in Africa, as the President Obama (2013) at the University of Cape Town, remarks that:

Africa is on the move, but it is not moving fast enough for the child still languishing in poverty in forgotten townships. It is not moving fast enough for the protester who is beaten in Harare, or the woman who is raped in Eastern Congo. We have got more work to do because these Africans must not be left behind.

Nevertheless, the message of hope in Jesus Christ as God became human and saviour of the world can strengthen the DRC to see the

change related the poverty in the country at large and in Mulungwishi particularly.

The volume of materials on this topic could never be exhaustive; yet this synthesis illuminates the Missiological watermark for this topic. Through the chapters of this study, other scholars that have write on the Gospel and the culture as Bediako; Lamén Sanneh; Stuart Bates; Tinyiko Maluleke, Mugambi, Bujo (to name few) and many more are consulted.

Above everything that is analyzed, God wants all men and cultures to know Him, and come to Him through the church, as Paul stipulates: “It is good and pleasant to God, our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and arrive at the knowledge of truth” (1Tm 2:3-4).

The present study is missiological, and hence fills the vow in the research, and can make a useful contribution. To achieve this, the research relies on the scriptures to dissect and provide essential missiological perspective on positive transformation of Democratic Republic of Congo at large and Mulungwishi in particular, and strengthen the Christian mission, according to God’s ordinances.

2. Wim, Dreyer. (2015) on “The real crisis of the Church”.

Dreyer is concerned by what is happening to the Church as an institution after modernity and the effects of the Enlightenment more specifically in Europe and USA where people are leaving the Church for personal gain. To the contrary in Africa, Dreyer underlines the growth of the church. Although the number of believers is growing up

in Africa and Asia, Dreyer notices the fact that some 'churches' function as commercial enterprises with huge revenue, generating hundred million dollars in revenue per annum. To this statement, one adds that the crisis in some African churches can be observed while the community remains poor; those generated millions of dollars are the advantage of a certain class of the leaders called 'visionaries, spiritual fathers, prophets, founders, and so on'.

Comparing different scholars' points of view, this article inspires this research to rediscover the real nature of the Church for example the case of the UMC in Mulungwishi. Although the scepticism of some scholars predicting the end of the church, Dreyer remarks that the Church is always living in the crisis since the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Dreyer calls the church to be a church; this means that the Church must be more a community of the people of God, the family of the Father, the body of Christ, and the community of the Spirit. To find again its initial call or to safeguard its credibility and integrity, Dreyer proposes to the Church the unity between Christ and believers which implies the identification to death and resurrection and living the holy life without complacency.

In fact, Dreyer is right when he concludes his study that "a triumphant church which goes peacefully and majestically on its way is quite the opposite of what we read in the New Testament". Even if the crisis is part of the church realism, Dreyer emphasizes the fact that the church must revise and frequently improve its methods and

strategies to maintain its ideal. It is in this logic that one gets on studying the old methods used by the UMC and the modern ones so that the gospel must be rightly contextualized in Bemba culture.

3. Kalemba, Mwambazambi. (2012) on “The church mission relative to socio-political issues in Francophone Africa”.

Discussing the role of the Church toward the socio-political issues in French speaking countries in Africa, Kalemba goes to the heart of the matter of this study on the involvement of the United Methodist Church in the integral development of the Mulungwishi community when he makes the list of what he is expecting from any church wherever it is operating in *missio Dei*: evangelize people, bring them to a deep peace, promote the truth, justice, reconciliation, reconstruction, development and defend the poor and oppressed.

Looking at this above-mentioned list of tasks, the study investigates pragmatically the average of the accomplishment of such expectations from the UMC in Mulungwishi. However, Kalemba suggests that for the Church to be the voice of without voice, particularly in DRC to the large extent where 89% of people are unemployed, the UMC for example must insist on the political leaders' ethics and strengthen the believers and equip them for Christian responsibilities toward the multi-facets crisis the DRC is going through.

The conclusion to this article is a call to the mobilization of the Church consciousness to be redefined as a people-liberating mission.

This is what this research is tracking the pastoral praxis analysis framework for the UMC in Mulungwishi.

4. Stanley, H. Skreslet. (2012) on “Comprehending Mission: The questions, Methods, Themes, Problems, and Prospects of Missiology”.

Skreslet underlines that “the need for new terminology contextualisation was prompted by closing of the modern colonial ear”. He argues that missionaries took with them “already-worked-out theologies, which needed only to be adjusted slightly to fit novel circumstances”. Obviously, in continuity and discontinuity of its methodology and evangelism practice facing Mulungwishi’s Bemba culture, the United Methodist Church is confronted by what Skreslet contemplates that “since no culture is static, one can assume that even established theological positions have to be in constant conversation with matters of culture, whether explicitly or not”. Skreslet work is important to this study when he states that

Missiology is a systematic study of all aspects of mission that all mission aspects are related. The focus of this study on contextual evangelism is not leaving behind other aspects of mission like Church and Politics, inter-religions dialogue, Theology of liberation, Church and HIV/AIDS, etc. the list is not exhaustive.

5. Beth, Snodderly & A. Scott, Moreau. (2011) on “Evangelical and frontier Mission: Perspectives on the Global Progress of the Gospel”.

Yong Cho and David Taylor as contributors in this publication affirm through the article *Tokyo and Cape Town 2010* that “mission is no

longer the predominant domain of western Christianity. Rather, the preponderance of mission activity today has been engaged by the majority of the world's Christians outside the west". This article is helpful to this study in terms of evaluation on the ground, if the United Methodist Church is effectively encouraging the local initiative in sending the missionaries from Mulungwishi all over Katanga and in DRC.

6. Kalemba, Mwambazambi. (2011) on "A missiological reflection of African ecclesiology".

Through this article, Kalemba considers that the message of the gospel must be embodied in the African culture to make pertinent the liturgy by dissociating the African culture and the Christian faith. By doing this, Kalemba is of the opinion that the Church would play its role of being the light and salt of the world. The UMC as a Church operating amid Mulungwishi can avoid falling in the trap that Kalemba bring out by the comparative study of Catholic and Protestant ecclesiology in making the Church a real community of brothers and sisters.

Furthermore, Kalemba presents a new African approach to the Christian mission that consists of the training of the African missionaries aiming the transformation and rebuilding of Africa. However, Kalemba argues Africans to be self-critical and to be transformed themselves before looking to the transformation of other continents. One concurs with Kalemba when concluding his article, he demonstrates that unity in the missionary work still a challenge

for the protestant ecclesiology. However, it is reasonable that this is due to the different worldview of the leadership of each denomination.

Putting together the different Christians values united for the *missio Dei* is an ideal to be reached.

7. Michael, W. Goheen. (2011) on “A light of Nations: The Missional Church and biblical story”.

By experience as a pastor and church leader, this book is interesting to the study when the author estimates that “when the church takes up the role assigned within a consumer culture and allows itself to be shaped by that story, it merely becomes a vendor of religious goods and services”.

From the Old Testament’s mission meaning until the death and resurrection of Jesus, Goheen underlines that “in missionary encounter, the Gospel challenges the cultural story instead of allowing the cultural story to absorb it”.

Indeed, Williams (1998:243) considers that the church, instead of worrying about the world’s social conditions changing as if it was the end of its mission, “Christians are called to confront the condition of the sinner that produces the selfishness, exploitation, division and the despair. The good News takes care of the problem’s root rather than just the symptoms”. For his part, Santedi (2005:22) affirms that “evangelism in depth is an efficient manner, the transformation of the one to whom the Gospel was announced as well as the transformation of his environment”.

What attracts attention in Goheen's work is the way he explains evangelism emphasizing that "no wonder uneasiness arises; we cannot all be persuasive salespeople, quick-witted apologists and eloquent speakers. One wonders if this kind of technique evangelism arises from a situation in which unbelievers seldom ask what is different about our lives, thus creating opportunities for us to verbally witness for Christ".

8. Kurewa, John Wesley Z. (2010) on "Methodism in Africa".

According to Kurewa, "Methodism came to the Congo (RDC) via two fronts: firstly, Central Congo, and secondly, Southern Congo". In the southern Congo, John M. Springer (1873-1963), a missionary in Zimbabwe, believed that he had a divine vision to start missionary work in Southern Congo. In this historical study, Kurewa notes that Springer, who relocated to Zimbabwe, was elected Bishop for Africa in 1936. Upon his return to the Congo in 1937, his long-time friend Joseph Ellis, sold a farm to Springer in exchange for a life annuity of \$US 100 a month.

Later, the mission took ownership of the farm on which the Congo Institute-Mulungwishi offered Degree Programs. Kurewa concludes that in every country where Methodism was established, they struggled with various cultural and social needs. Therefore, within the missionary venture the awareness needs for a mission in the African context (i.e., culture, religion, and traditional values) has always existed.

Along the same line, Kurewa adopts that earlier missionaries' evangelisation included not only the Gospel presentation, but also education, medical care and industrial or practical training. This historical article is the doorway to methodically evaluate the missionary work of the United Methodist Church in all aspects of the Mulungwishi mission deeper to unpack the multiple facets of God's mission.

9. Craig Van Gelder. (2007) on “How Missiology can help inform the conversation about the Missional Church in context?”

This interesting article is included in the study, especially Gelder's statement “Missiology framework is helpful to congregations as they relate to their contexts because contexts are always changing. Change is very the nature of life, and it is important for congregations to anticipate change in their contexts so that they can intentionally continue to contextualise their ministries in addressing new emerging conditions”.

Answering the above question is another way of expressing Bosch's theory of paradigm shifts in mission theology. In this way Missiology can help the mission practitioner by proposing solution tracks on how to carefully participate in God's mission.

10. Kapolyo, Joe M. (2007) on « L'homme. Vision biblique et africaine ».

Kapolyo wrote that “to understand different contexts through the Scriptures' light will help to clarify and establish the identity of the

‘coming Christianity’. He underlines that Christian students from the emerging church majority and those studying the Bible and culture must be committed entirely to this task.

However, he argues that this process, namely the theological categories, should be readjusted in a certain measure, while Kalemba (2008:30) notes that “in the academic research field, either Missiological or other human sciences, it is important not to think in terms of mutually exclusives categories”.

11. Seth O. Asare. (2001) on “Convenience, Relevance, and Transformation: An African response to Christian mission”.

Using the mission history in Ghana as an illustration, Asare demonstrates that “convenience in a certain context designates a situation in which a group welcomes the Christian faith because they do not have much choice. The close relationship between colonial power and mission activity often warrants this type of response to the Christian message”.

Opinion is that if such above-mentioned convenience unconsciously took place in Mulungwishi United Methodist Church’s mission history, the difference would be to lead the people to consistent commitment and transformation and change their worldview to the biblical view in a compassionate way.

12. Watney, Paul B. (1996) on “Contextualisation and its biblical precedents”.

According to Watney, the term contextualisation is a fundamental and biblical principle used to make Gospel more understandable to

the various cultural and sub-cultural groups to which it spread, while Gilliland (2005:493) consider that “Jesus-Christ embodiment is the matrix of all contextualisation”.

Considering that man participates in the ministry of making God known, Watney argues that man does this work with the primary objective of being understood by his fellow man. For instance, at the time of their first ‘missionary journey’, Paul and Barnabas became aware that they had cleared a linguistic border between Iconium and Lystres, because in this last city they heard the local population speaking some Lycaonian language (Ac 14.11). As Greek and Aramean speaking, Paul and Barnabas could not spread the Gospel normally in that area of Roman Empire if somebody did not translate the local language for them. This is how Kaiser (2008:185) demonstrates the importance of language in a culture and stipulates that “it is the language that they use, that as element, has the most weight to allow them to be identified like ‘equals’ to members of their grouping and as ‘different’ to strangers”.

13. Hiebert, Paul G. (1994) on “Anthropological reflections on Missiological Issues”.

Hiebert points out that in mission we must study the scriptures and the socio-cultural context of people we serve, so that we can communicate the Gospel to them in ways they understand. According to Hiebert, one major contribution of Anthropology has been the awareness that all people have views of themselves and reality and that we must comprehend these if we want to understand and

communicate with them. At this point, the emic analysis must be done from biblical worldview to build not upon secular revelation but on a scriptural basis.

Finally, Hiebert notes that “much was written about the three selves: Nationals were to become self-propagating, self-supporting and self-governing. But little was said about the fourth self: self-theologising”. This ‘fourth self’ of Hiebert is a point of interest and helpful in this study when it comes to investigating which philosophy and methodology the United Methodist Church have adopted in contemporary context of Mulungwishi’s Bemba people.

1.1.6.2 Sources

Appropriate books, specific interviews, field surveys and scientific articles are the major sources used to analyze, criticize and evaluate the contextual evangelism methodology and practice applied by the United Methodist Church. As Mouton (2001:88) studiously asserts it “consulting books, monographers’ works, conferences, articles and newspapers related to scientific research is important”.

The field survey helped to grasp the United Methodist Church’s contribution and its missiological evangelism challenges regarding people from different cultures in Mulungwishi. However, these sources come from the writings of various theologians and Missiologists, scholars, universities, theological conferences and seminars, various websites, and churches; they were used after a

viability check. Otherwise, a very suitable methodology and research design for the realisation of this thesis proves to be necessary.

1.1.7 Theoretical framework of the study

The ‘praxis cycle’ presented by Kritzinger & Saayman (2011:4-6), is used as an analytical framework to study the work of the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi amongst the Bemba people. This helps to demonstrate reflexivity between all components of the ‘praxis cycle’: spirituality, personal commitment, ecclesial scrutiny, contextual understanding, theological lenses, and strategic planning.

In short, what each of dimension of the pastoral cycle presented in the figure below means?

Figure1: Praxis Matrix (Kritzinger 2011).



1.1.7.1 Spirituality

The spirituality as the centre of the praxis cycle, it is the heart of the United Methodist Church which unpacks the motivation of their actions and their experience of God. Scorgie (2011:28) points out that “Christian spirituality is a glance to the God’s will when the Gospel is

shared with others”. To achieve this goal Scorgie (: 29) takes a step further in highlighting that “the Christian Spirituality mostly intents to the encounter with the living Christ”. According to Kritzinger and Saayman, the spirituality is the centrality of the pastoral cycle of mission praxis (Kritzinger and Saayman 2011:4) because the substantive of the term implies the spirit of the human which is the inner person.

For Banda (2010:132), the spirituality is the “inner voice that induces actions”. In line of Banda, Hammond (2011: 834) looking at Wesley spirituality reports that “the focus of founder of the Methodism was the unusual love of the poor and the concurrent mistrust of riches”. Likewise, Haight (2014:4) defines the Christian spirituality as “the exteriorization of the faith”. Demarest (2012:18) by uttering that the Christian spirituality includes vocation and surrounding of human life. What the UMC believes is the motor unit force that is driving the missionary’s undertaking in the set of aspects drawn above by Demarest and biblically oriented.

1.1.7.2 Agency

The agency is the set of individuals and organizations involved in the mission as instruments of the transformation of Mulungwishi community, both Christian and secular. Saayman (1994:1) explicitly came to realize that “the involvement of people in the *missio Dei* is an answer to God’s graceful love”.

This mission praxis component is dealing with the UMC leaders, the Church members as well as the Bemba people in the context under investigation. The multi-sectorial development of the Bemba people also engages the involvement of the public administration and political leaders of the community and others social actors, one and all have an important responsibility to assume as different parties of the body.

One realizes that the interaction between the development's agents entails the mutual knowledge of each world view, respectively. From this understanding, the agency becomes a symbiosis of the people engaged headed for the development of Bemba community in Mulungwishi.

1.1.7.3 Contextual understanding

Since the context in Missiology must be taken carefully, how do the instruments of change (Agents) understand their social, cultural, economic context?

Evidently, the theology of the UMC is to fit and transcend the Bemba culture since the context ought to be taken carefully to understand their spiritual experience, social challenges and needs of the people. Kritzinger (1994:151) put the contextual understanding in this way: "to be good news in the concrete situation in which it [the church] finds itself". Kritzinger goes on to meaningfully insisting that 'the church's life is the struggle with the evil of society.'

The study devotes the fifth Chapter to deeply discover the way the UMC considering the context, has brought the Gospel to the Bemba people. It should be indicated in regard of contextual understanding that God is the main agent for the human well-being condition. For instance, the act of covering the nudity and the shame of our first parents (Adam and Eve); as well as for him to stand on the side of Israel, an exploited and humiliated people to save them from the powerful hand of Egypt. These acts testify the mission of God which wants to integrally set free the people. The analysis of the context under investigation demonstrates that the UMC is facing many challenges for the fulfillment of its mission namely the poverty, the unemployment, the violation of human rights, the corruption, and the diseases which are still raging the city (HIV/AIDS and many more).

The contextual understanding of the UMC is the twofold dimensions of its mission amongst Bemba people namely the centripetal dimension (that consists to live the holiness and solidarity toward the people in order to attract non-believers to God) and the centrifugal dimension (that is emphasizing the evangelism activities). Doing theology amongst Bemba people, the UMC is using its theological insights inherited from the long-time guidelines of the Church.

1.1.7.4 Theological lenses

The theological interpretation determines how different contexts are viewed. Wilson (2001:9) states that “people need the new lenses”, in other words, the lenses are the different worldviews depending on who defining and use those lenses (Hannes 2014). Referring to the physical science, Wilson demonstrates that “light passes through a lens and is bent or is otherwise altered by it”; this is exactly what happening with different schools of thought.

The theological lenses determine how different contexts are viewed. In fact, the culture it acquired since the childhood until to become a strategy of resolution of existence problems. It is not therefore easy to evaluate members of different culture by one’s culture. The world views are various, and every people possess their own.

However, every worldview has its particularities. The one animist is linked to its consideration of the Supreme Being, the spirits, the ancestors and cannot be limited to aspects in relation with humans, animals, and plants. These elements and so many others are part of deep layers of the man to be targeted by the Gospel. The theological lenses are influenced by what Bürki (1977:13) called the “cultural skins”. These cultural skins are namely according to Bürki: values, systems of thought and styles of behaviour transmitted by parents; values and systems of thinking of the ecclesiastical culture [Christian in this context]; values and systems of thinking of

the society. The next knot of the mission praxis is inquiring the Church's hermeneutics.

1.1.7.5 Ecclesiastical scrutiny

This is to examine how the Bible is understood and applied under different contexts by the United Methodist Church as an agent of mission.

The role of the United Methodist Church, in Mulungwishi, is examined in terms of its biblical view. The UMC is concerned by the Ecclesial scrutiny to know the way the agents of the transformation of the community are informed about the context under investigation. Being an ecumenical church by its roots the United Methodist Church is to be in relationship with other churches in the community. The leaders of this Church are the most informed about the history of the UMC in general and in Katanga particularly. It is already underlined that the study is mostly focused on the UMC agenda for the practical transformation of Bemba people because the Gospel is embodied in a culture to transform it in a biblical world view.

Here the church fully plays its prophetic role to avoid deviations and abuses of the community leaders to the detriment of the people. The church, in this mission, is neither a political party nor an association in antagonism with the governing leaders, but strength or a support that can help them to really accomplish their

mission. To help to the development of the community and the nation is the duty of the church as Bosch (1995:521) asserts that “the church is called to be a prophetic sign, a prophetic community in which and by which can operate itself the transformation of the world”.

The action of the UMC could consist here in giving the biblical world view to the people and to be a light and salt of the world. It is therefore logical for the UMC to encourage the Christians to imply themselves positively in the management of the community not for the personal interests, but for the well-being of the population. The Church is at the same time spiritual and also an organizational and decision-making enterprise by planning its activities to achieve the multiple goals.

1.1.7.6 Strategic planning

It is the synergy of theory and practice of all the activities of the United Methodist Church to establish God’s reign in Mulungwishi. The approach of the holistic mission is relevant, realistic, biblical, and logical because it is necessary to consider the human's needs in his entirety and in his historic, social, and religious context. The balance between the theory and the practice makes realistic the mission of the UMC in encountering of the problems that the Bemba people faces day to day.

They can be various strategies to attract the lost and to unite them in a local church. However, everywhere where the church is planted, it exists some objectives destined to assure the good beginning and toward which the work it is essentially intended. While trying to achieve them at the starting time, one allows the church to arrive to the goal to which God destines it. These objectives can be considered as the fundamental principles of the church.

The missionary strategies of the UMC are the response to the needs of the population through the social works and education as means of evangelization. For this reason, N'kwimi (2002:79) wrote that “the Gospel while standing on biblical premises will be efficient if it is considering the realities of the target people where they are”. There are many examples of strategic planning in the Bible. For instance, in the book of Luke 4: 18, Jesus reveals his program: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to poor; he sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to blind, to free those who are oppressed (KJV-2011).

This Scriptures demonstrates Jesus complete plan for his mission. Another example of biblical plan is the great commission given to the Church in the book of Matthew 28.19-20: Therefore go, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Teach them to observe everything I have commanded you: and remember, I will always be with you, even

to the end of the world. This is Jesus's strategies to spread the gospel. Nevertheless, Schwarz (1996:194) underscores that the strategies for the Church's blooming can be determined by the elements below:

That the leaders are devoted to the development of the church; that all Christians use their spiritual gifts to edify the church; that most of members live their faith with an overflowing and contagious enthusiasm; that structures are adapted to serve to its development; that for many the Sunday service is the summit of the week; that one can experiment the power of the love and the consolation within groups of house; that nearly all Christians, according to their spiritual gifts contribute to the announcement of the gospel; that Christ's love impregnates all activities of the Church.

Being a Church leader, I consider valid what Kritzinger (1994:25) highlights that "the ministry is in essence communal", more fully this mean that the development of the Church and the target community is not only the duty of the clergy but the vocation of every member of the church.

Finally, the correlation of the parts of the praxis cycle enhances the dynamic transformation of the community and shows therefore the good management of the Church. This correlation is the final knot of the pastoral cycle which enables the findings of the study.

1.1.7.7 Reflexivity

The reflexivity is the interaction between the parts of the matrix for a coherent and well-coordinated movement in order to positively transform Mulungwishi community. As the rings of a chain, the seven dimensions of the pastoral cycle are tied each and other revolving

around the spirituality of the United Methodist Church to make its missions more efficiently working for the integral development of Bemba people in Mulungwishi.

1.1.8 Research Design

As a Missiological study, the research framework used is the 'praxis cycle'. The United Methodist Church is used for study and interviews with the leaders of the church to know what kind of programmes have been used in the spiritual, social, and economic development of the city of Mulungwishi, the province of Katanga and the Democratic Republic of Congo at large. The praxis cycle above is used to evaluate how the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi, analyze who are the agents that are involved and what real projects are implemented by the same church. The qualitative approach is used to evaluate the data collected from different sources.

The methods and practices that inform its mission can be analysed by using the praxis cycle as an analytical tool. Such a research design helps to understand and analyze the United Methodist Church's plans for the positive transformation of the Bemba people in Mulungwishi. The research methodology where details on the research design is explained below.

1.1.9 Research Methodology

As theoretical instruments, the research questions and the pastoral cycle are used in this study in appropriate methods to address thoroughly the research problem for the positive transformation of Mulungwishi community. The following tools are used throughout the research: selection of the organisation for study, collection of materials, conduction of interviews and interpretation of the gathered data before the final analysis, integrating results and writing the report.

After collecting information from the library and other sources, a critical and analytic approach are used on the specific context of Bemba and the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi congregation to describe facts and draw the necessary conclusions. The subject of this thesis is in fact a reflection of Missiological, theological and social development concern. In the social and historical development aspect, it also appeals to the social and anthropological approach to understand the context of Bemba culture, the United Methodist Church and different people who played certain role which have brought the people of Mulungwishi to the present spiritual, social, and economic situation.

Furthermore, personal knowledge and experience as a church leader are exploited in developing this study, as Mouton (2001:63) advocates, that “personal experience is a major source for a winner”. Then, the methodology subdivision is broken down into the following:

selection of organisation for study, observation and participation, interviews, and analysis of data.

1.1.9.1 Selection of the organisation for the study

The United Methodist Church is selected for this study, especially the Kamango United Methodist Church as already noted in the choice of the research area. The church organization is chosen based on its involvement in evangelism and in socio-economic development in Mulungwishi community and elsewhere in the province of Katanga.

1.1.9.2 Observation and participation

An attentive observation was given to the Doris Bartlett Women's School, Health Centre, and Agricultural project with the local community, United Methodist Church's Mulungwishi District head quarters which are wholly run by the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi. Some activities of the Kamango United Methodist local Church gave a broader understanding of the church's involvement in evangelism.

1.1.9.3 Interviews

Group and individual interviews were used for data gathering with people who are involved in United Methodist Church evangelism and social development for a positive transformation of Mulungwishi community. Mouton (2001:81) boldly asserts that the

“interview/conversation is one of the sources” most necessary, because it “provides additional information to the research”. During these interviews, field notes were taken. A tape-recorder to save some of them was used after obtaining permission from the interviewees before using it.

Interviewees were given assurance that their information could be treated with complete confidentiality and their names could be used in the study only with their express permission. Given that the questions asked aim to determining specific involvement in ‘praxis cycle’ of the church in terms of the evangelism programs used to develop the Bemba people, they were asked specifically to leaders of the chosen church (Appendix B).

The leaders of the United Methodist Church were used for interviews because they could better explain the contents of their programs and why a specific program is used. Within broad target group, sub-target groups were interviewed: Women’s organisation, Youth, Management, and so on.

Copies of the letter of introduction from the Supervisor, of Informed consent form as well as copies of interviews with the leaders of the church are provided (Appendix B).

1.1.9.4 Survey questionnaire

A set of more structured questionnaire accompany the introducing letter from the promoter to the respondents (Pastors, Governing

Board of United Methodist Church's Mulungwishi District headquarter) are attached in the Annexes of this study. The questions were relevant and intended to obtain accurate information that was useful to the study. Therefore, the questionnaires were adapted to the public, clear and understandable. The survey by poll, which consists in studying a small randomly taken number (called Sample), was used because it cost less, giving rapid answers and one can restart a stranded survey. In relation with the basic - 4 - steps Pastoral Cycle, the following preliminary questionnaire designed for the Ministry are:

- How does the United Methodist Church help people know understand and apply the Word of God in their lives?
- What must the United Methodist Church do to be efficiently involved in Mulungwishi community?
- What are the greatest challenges facing people in Mulungwishi and what is the role of the United Methodist Church in relation to those challenges?
- How can positive transformation take place in terms of Bemba cultural values towards the Gospel?

1.1.9.5 Analysis of data

An analysis of the church under investigation and of its programmes designed for the evangelism and social development of Mulungwishi are carried out. The analysis of this church is carried out through the seven dimensions of the 'praxis cycle' and leads to missiological

reflections and findings. The content of its programmes is analysed to see their contributions to the spiritual, social and economic transformation of Bemba people and the Mulungwishi community.

1.1.10 Chapters outline

This study is divided into six chapters summarized as follows:

The Chapter one introduces the general considerations of thesis and this Chapter provides an overview regarding the problem statement of the study; the research approaches; and the choice of the study area.

The second chapter presents the Bemba people in Mulungwishi (context) in its first section and the United Methodist Church in Katanga particularly in the second section. The identification of the context and the agency or people involved in this study being the first stage of the pastoral cycle of the mission praxis encompass the content of these two first chapters.

The third Chapter concentrates on a Missiological analysis of the contextualization problems and the role played by the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi. The chapter three lies on the second stage of the pastoral cycle of the mission praxis which concerns the contextual understanding of the spiritual experience, social challenges and needs of Bemba people.

The fourth chapter examines systematically how the United Methodist Church is dealing with the tension between the Word of God and the Bemba culture to establish the God's reign amongst

Bemba people. This chapter concerns the third stage of the pastoral cycle related to the strategic planning.

The fifth chapter concerns the evangelization methods applied by the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi to make the Gospel Good News for the Bemba people. The fifth chapter concentrates on the missiological reflection on the United Methodist Church theological lenses and its ecclesiology as the fourth stage of the pastoral cycle. This chapter evaluates the contextual evangelism methods of the United Methodist Church to ascertain the significance of the problem statement of this study.

By recapitulating the parts of the pastoral cycle of the mission praxis in their reflexivity; the chapter six summarizes the findings; concluding the investigation by proposing missiological recommendations and suggestions for further research on the mission of the United Methodist Church among Bemba people in Mulungwishi.

1.2 Partial Conclusion

The chapter one provides the general considerations of the thesis. It was important to situate the location of the research which is Mulungwishi in the Upper Katanga District at the North-West of Likasi. Mulungwishi is about 100 miles to Lubumbashi, the main City of the province of Katanga. Katanga province is in the Southern

of the Democratic Republic of Congo and it shares the borders with Angola, Tanzania, and Zambia.

As I expressed in the introduction, it is certain that God, the creator was known in Mulungwishi before the arrival of the missionaries. This is proven by the fact Bemba people called him Lesa, the Supreme Being respected as the one who is above the ancestors and other spirits. The knowledge of Lesa (God) is conveyed from the generation to generation by the oral tradition. The problematic of the thesis is how the United Methodist Church is theologically and systematically dealing with the Bemba people culture to efficiently introduce the Gospel considering their culture and their worldview.

It is also underlined that the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi is facing many challenges towards the actual social, economic, and political situation in the region. Despite the biased evangelism tainted by the western cultural worldview, the United Methodist Church all the same did remarkable efforts in the diaconal wing of the Gospel by different activities focused on evangelism.

The pertinence of this research is showed by the fact that an objective analysis of the disquieting socio-economic situation in Mulungwishi particularly and in Katanga at large could not let the Church apathetic. Therefore, its involvement in the holistic mission is to be assessed. To achieve the goal of the study I chosen a methodology for this research which comprises the selection of the

organization for the case study, the collection of data by the materials from the library, observation, and participation through the interviews on the field and personal knowledge and experience.

All this it is basically done on the praxis cycle as the theoretical framework. Hopefully, the Gospel incarnated in the Bemba culture plays its transformative role in this specific context. One acknowledges that valuable scholars' works are helpful for their interdisciplinary input to this study as the literature review highlighted some of them, but the list is not exhaustive due to the tremendous volume of materials on the contextualization endeavour.

In fact, the relevance of the research is demonstrated and therefore the findings of the research are a contribution to the missiological debate.

In Chapter two, the study outlines an overview of the Bemba people in Mulungwishi in its first section and the United Methodist Church background in the second section. It may be necessary to bear in mind that the identification of the context and the agency or people involved in this research constitutes the mainstay of the second chapter.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND OF BEMBA PEOPLE AND THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN MULUNGWISHI

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an historical overview of Bemba people as well as a geographical location in the first section. The second section outlines the history, organization, and structures of the United Methodist Church globally and its implantation in the south of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The term Bemba or Babemba broadly and inclusively in this study refers to the Bantu ethnic group living more precisely in the Southern-East of the Democratic Republic of Congo (in the South-East of Katanga Province). The same people are also found in the North-Eastern of Zambia (Cunnison 1959:x; Roberts 1966:63; Bobb1999:59). For this research, the Bemba people considered are populating the South-East of Katanga to a large extent and particularly in Mulungwishi.

2.2 Overview of Bemba people

It is a tough task to do an historical review of Bemba people in Mulungwishi without written records by the natives in his evolution. But the work of Roberts (1966:vi) on the Bemba of Zambia shows that “the Bemba belong to a large group of peoples in north-eastern and north-western Zambia who trace their origins to the Luba and Lunda states of the upper Congo basin in what is now Katanga”. In view of

this concern, the thesis intends to trace the history of Bemba people with its available data.

It is already noted that broadly the Democratic Republic of Congo is the land of the oral tradition as Mbiti (1980:817) affirms that “Jews thinking, and experience of people produced a written record. But in the case of African people no such written record exists”. In the same line with Mbiti, Barenkenguje (2012) concludes that “African people have to preserve their cultural patrimony [oral tradition] and convey it to the current and future generations”.

The history of Bemba people in Katanga is consecutively shown in many precarious periods. The principal sources are the oral narration, missionaries, and explorers. Data are gathered by interviews and readings presented in the historical background of Bemba people.

The spoken language of Bemba people is the *Ichibemba*. In Katanga, this language is spoken by a big number of people (Kaleya 2014). Several other languages affiliate themselves linguistically to *Ichibemba* and are different by minor characteristic features in the pronunciation and phonology. In the territory of Pweto and Mulungwishi, the *Ichibemba* takes the form of *Kibemba* while in the territory of Kasenga, one call *Chibemba*, as well as Kaleya (2014:89) argues that “the two variants constitute next to Kiswahili, the language used by the Bemba living in the main urban cities as

Lubumbashi, Likasi, Kipushi, Kambove, Kasumbalesa, Mokambo, Kasenga and Pweto”.

Hinfellar (1994:78) assumes that “the Bemba history does not have a global empirical and written data so far. It is done by broken parts of some cultural, administrative, and scientific compilations”. In this set of information, great axes of history are chronologically indicated in the sections as follows.

2.2.1 Genesis of Bemba people

2.2.1.1 Narration by the myth

The oral tradition of Bemba people demonstrates that in their genesis, Bemba people from Lualaba River in the country called Kola, were under the authority of the queen *Mumbi Liulu*, niece of *Lesá* (God), fallen from heaven and belongs to *Bena Ngandu* (Crocodile clan). During the time they were living together, the impetuous Chief *Chiti Mukulu* had three sons (*Katongo*, *Chiti* and *Nkole*) and a daughter *Chilufia Mulenga*. He had also several sons with different wives.

The three sons conceived and built a big tower which fallen and killed many people. After a disagreement with their father, Chiti and Nkole fled to the East until they came to the middle of the Luapula River; they were joined by their half-brothers Chimba, Kapasa and Kazembe (Roberts and Reefe 2015). The photo below shows Chiti Mukulu carried on the hammock (Kwekudee 2015).



After the death of Chiti and Nkole in the battle, the son of Chilufia became a Chief. When they were buried, they had fallen on the crocodile corpse. Therefore, their descendants decided to get settled there saying that they are from the Bena Ngandu clan (Robert 1973:49). When they arrived at the Luapula River, Kazembe decided to settle there, but Nkole and Chiti were indecisive. This legend is a myth that gives probably the territorial origin of the first Bemba couple (Roberts and Reefer 2015).

According to the legend, this people come from the niece of God, this is to say that their origin is divine. This mythic explanation of the origin of the Bemba people is difficult because it is by an oral tradition (www.google.com).

The historical origin in the next paragraph gives more credible records in the knowledge of the Bemba people located in southern-East of the Democratic Republic of Congo (in the south-East of

Katanga Province) and in Mulungwishi, the setting of this research.

2.2.1.2 Historical background

The Bemba belong to a large group of Bantu peoples mainly in the Northern, Luapula and Cooper belt Provinces of Zambia who traced their origins to the Luba and Lunda states of the upper Congo basin in what became Katanga Province in southern of Democratic Republic of Congo (Roberts 2015). After the end of the Luba Empire, the share of the royal power of Lunda Empire to the strangers and migrations around the end of the seventeenth Century, these two big Empires faced many difficulties that pushed princes and notables to immigrate (Sauvy 1961:63). It is within this emigrational movement of the seventeenth Century that many warriors went away from their natal lands, for instance *Kibinda Ilunga*, *Chinyama*, *Chinguri*, *Kanongesha*, *Fota*, *Kazembe wa Lunda*, *Mutombo Nkola* and many more (Hinfellar 1994:89).Sauvy (1961:65) reports that:

Probably the immigration of the princes Luba and Lunda took place before 1700 AD. Long time ago, autochthons habitants were speaking a Bantu language which was alike *Ichibemba* with certain cultural practices and economic similarities to whom found after the Luba and Lunda conquest. These princes did not modify the cultural and economic practices of the habitants. They adopted and adapted them to their original traditions while they spilled and looked for legitimating their domination.

Besides, it is noted that before 1840, the biggest challenge of Bemba territories was the conquest of the Lunda Empire led by the prince and warrior *Kazembe*. He was settled in the Luapula valley,

monitoring the actual Pweto, Kasenga, Sakania and Kipushi territories (Sauvy 1961:70). Roberts (1968:57) points out that:

The first written reference to Bemba people is dated in 1798, when the Portuguese expedition conducted by Fide Lacerda against Mwanta Kazembe. The first contact registered between Portuguese businessmen and chiefs Bemba took place in 1831, when another expedition under Garnito against Mwanta Kazembe, encountered the expansion of Babemba toward the south. Tippo-Tip, a Swahili slaves' merchant, had been in contact with Babemba around 1860, and David Livingstone had crossed the Babemba region in 1867-1872 few times before his death near Bemba country.

From this succinct mythical and historical record, it becomes understandable that Bemba people are originally from Luba-Lunda empires and both sides of Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia are the same people. This is what Richards (1937) confirms that "traditions describe the first immigrations of this people from the Congo into their present territory in small lineage groups which settled, grew in numbers, split and then move on". In the line with Richards, Roberts (1966:63) emphasizes that,

"Traditions ascribe the origin of the Bemba to the Congo, and this is borne out by the broad linguistic and cultural resemblances of the Bemba and their neighbours to the Luba and Lunda peoples of Katanga".

2.2.2 Location

The Bemba people are situated in the territory called *Ulubemba* which is stretched in two countries, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia. According to Cunnison (1950:1), "there is little different ethnically between the Bemba people of the Democratic Republic of

Congo and Zambia” But, the Bemba people of Mulungwishi in Katanga Province are the focus of this thesis.

The *Ulubemba* in the Katanga Province is extended in two districts: Tanganika and Upper-Katanga. In Tanganika, the Bemba people are occupying three following territories: Kalemie, Nyunzu and Moba. In the District of Upper-Katanga, one encounters them in five following territories: Kasenga, Pweto, Mitwaba, Kipushi, and Sakania (Kalenga 2013:85).

This region is limited to the northern side by Lukuga River and to the south by the borders with Zambia, to the East by the Tanganyika and Moero lakes, and the Luapula River which constitute the natural borders with Zambia and to the west by the Lufira River. The Bemba region is comprised between 27°30 and 29° of longitude East and 6°30 to 13°30 of latitude south. It is here a vast territory with a low density (Sauvy 1961:24).

The relief of the Bemba region is dominated by the upper tray Kundelungu, elevated to more than 1800 meters of altitude, which is submerged by numerous hills and bordered to the west and north by the mountains called chains of Mitumba. Her hydrography is very rich. Several rivers surround the region. Two big lakes deepen themselves and countless swamps implant themselves. This is to say that this hydrography makes the region a real pond of fishes (Chi-Bonnardel 2010:25). The soil is generally clayey. Valleys of its rivers are alluvium. The plains are fruitful on which grow marvellously

cereals and tubers (Yahmed and Houstin 2010:16).

In climatic view, the Bemba space is situated entirely in the tropical zone with two annual seasons almost equal: dry and rainy season. The landscape is dominated by an erected savannah sprinkled by grassy savannah covering mostly valleys perched, and rivers borders that are covered by the forests (Chi-Bonnardel 2010:34).

The Bemba region it is a part of Katanga mining, her soil containing different and fabulous mineral resources. The sub-soil presents itself as a real room of treasure overflowing all kind of ores: copper, cobalt, zinc, iron, uranium, manganese, gold, diamond, nickel, and coal, salt and so forth. Some ores are not found anywhere in world, only in Katanga. This is the brief geographical situation of Bemba people in Katanga. According to Käser (2004:55) “every people have their own worldview”. As discussed in the Chapter one of this thesis, the encounter of the gospel and the Bemba people took place in the life of individuals and the community through their culture.

2.2.3 Population

The DRC shares a 200 kilometres border with Zambia. None of the other eight neighbours (Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda) comes close to this length. Additionally, half of Zambia’s urban towns are within 200 kilometres of the Congolese border (Munshya 2012)

Zambia shares more tribes with the DRC than any other neighbouring country. The ethnic groups that are found on both sides of the border stretch from Mwinilunga to Mwansabombwe. Among these ethnic groups are the Lunda, Luvale, Kaonde, Lamba, Lala, Ushi and Kazembe (Munshya 2012). The Bemba language, spoken in more provinces of Zambia, is the staple language for much of the Congo's Katanga Province. In fact, Katanga's major city "Lubumbashi wa Ntanshi" is a Bemba name (Munshya 2012).

The work of Munshya, to some extent enlightens this research in considering the statistical projection as figurative although the demographic data on Bemba living in Katanga is not available due to the lack of census during the political unrest in recent years that followed the fall of the tyrannical administration of the former president Mobutu as the National Institute of Statistics of DRC (*Institut National des Statistiques*) acknowledges that:

We cannot however grant full confidence to these projections because they are too old of 20 years. Concerning demographic projections, one cannot be able to reasonably think, to go beyond 10 years being given uncertainties that can be on the line of the time. Then, many events modified results of the natural growth of the population. It is notably the two wars of Kabila, 1996 to his arrival in power and 1998 to tempt to destabilize his regime. These wars cost life to the millions of people, the displacement 3,5 million of other people of their origin place to other places of refuge; the end of the war in Angola, that returned some Angolan that had taken refuge to Congo and the Congolese that had taken refuge in Angola; the VIH/SIDA exacerbated by strengths fighters come from the outside of the country, the repression of the people of Kasai, the enrolment of the young in the army, to the entry of Kabila father; and so on. Otherwise, an administrative census first organized by the mayor of Lubumbashi, with the help of Liege city (Belgium), already gave for Lubumbashi 1.300.000

inhabitants in 2001 either superior to projections of the INS. What can carry to think that the population of Katanga cannot be quite compliant to these projections (Monograph of Katanga 2005).

The core Bemba group's population is approximately 400,000, excluding those who have permanently settled in urban areas. The first colonial census between 1910 and 1930 estimated the number at 1,000,000; in 1963 the figure was 250,000. Including those permanently settled in urban areas, the number of people who identify themselves as Bemba is 741,114. However, those who speak Ichibemba as a first language number approximately 3.7 million, accounting for nearly a third of Zambia's population and a significant proportion of the million inhabitants of southern Katanga (Gordon 2002).

2.2.4 Social organization

It is underlined in Chapter one of the thesis that; the oral tradition is the major source of information of the Congolese people at the large extent. The written records on the social organization of Bemba people in Mulungwishi are not available for the moment. During the field investigation, one discovered that the Bemba social organization is rooted in the kinship. Many of informants have been interviewed for the first time at the occasion of this research.

Being the offspring of Luba and Lunda empires, Guene (2013) literally describes the social and political organization of Bemba

people that “the most important political idea of the Luba was their approach to kingship and authority. Luba kingship was based on the concept of *bulopwe*, an inborn and sacred quality which was vested in the blood – it was transmitted from father to son and gave chiefs legitimacy as rulers”.

Guene (2013) also underlines that “in this way, when a chief or headman succeeded to a title, he regarded certain other title-holders as father, brother or son, regardless of their actual relationship to him”. Thus, a village headman who is appointed by village elders or by the chief runs each village and mediates conflicts and access to land. Chiefs are drawn from the royal matrilineal Crocodile Clan, and this has contributed to greater centralization than is found among the neighbouring groups. Chiefs and headmen are generally male, but it is not unusual to find women in such positions. Chiefs have their own councillors elected by the old men of the royal village (Gordon 2002). In addition, Kaleya (2014) asserts that “the Bemba society is matriarchal. All the children belong to their mother’s clan, but the father and his clan have some rights on the children that cannot be neglected”. The Bemba people have about thirty matriarchal clans generally named after animals according to some of informants (Appendix A).

2.2.5 The Bemba family

It is already pointed out that, membership in a clan (*umukowa*; plural *imikowa*) and positional succession are still matrilineal. However, it is common for a child to adopt the father's name and ancestral spirit (*umupashi*), and this is suggestive of a strengthening of patrilineal elements. In the past a man worked for a period in the homestead of his new wife and chose to remain with his wife's family or return with her to his mother or father's homestead. However, today newlywed couples may stay with the husband's family. A money economy and Christianity have strengthened the control of men over their children and weakened attachment to uterine kin (Gordon 2002).

The way the Bemba people perceive the life is the focus of the following section.

2.2.6 Towards the Bemba Culture and beliefs

The culture of people is their way of looking at the reality. Knowing profoundly the people is to get into their way of life, their beliefs. The study focuses mostly on the belief of Bemba people related to God and the human being's life. The purpose for doing this is to understand how the UMC approached this culture while presenting the gospel to the Bemba in Mulungwishi. These beliefs are drastically respected in the complex practices of Bemba animist religion as highlighted in the following points.

2.2.6.1 *Lesá*: The Creator

Through the Chapter one of this text, it is demonstrated that God the Creator is known in Africa under different titles according to culture of the people. Needless is to evoke here that Bemba people believe in a Supreme Being in their worldview though they also believe in ancestors and other spirits as Gordon (2012:2) argues that “for many people, ancestral and nature spirits have wielded power in the world. And yet the notion of African traditional religion implies a primordial set of beliefs that are static, closed to outside influences, and unengaged with historical changes”. Thus, Labrecque (1979:6) points out the Bemba belief in the Creator as follows:

Bemba believes in a Supreme and High God, called *Lesá*. He is a nonchalant personage who has abandoned the world itself after creating it. It is the reason why; the Bemba are not worshipping him. He has neither a temple nor a priest. Everybody recognizes his attributes and thanks him in his own manner.

In an ethnological survey led in Micronesia (Oceania) among the animist people of the island of Chuuk, Käser discovered that for this people “after the creation, the Supreme Being lived even sometimes among men, but he retired well far, to the haven, because of the corruption of men and since then he is not interferes in the humans affairs” (Käser 2004:160).

Similarly, by calling him the High God (*Lesá*), the Bemba have a monotheist concept of God who is above every spirit and above the ancestors. This worldview makes the High God far from human beings; this is the reason why the Bemba passes through the

Shinganga to consult him for their existential matters. Khorommbi (2001:55) is of the same view when he writes that “the Vhavenda concept of God influences their world-view”. Therefore, referring to the text of Rm 2.14-15 that stipulates.

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another (KJV 2011);

Mbadu (1986:245) affirms that “this eternal presence of God inside of the human hearts allows establishing the junction between the cosmic revelation and the supreme revelation which the Christ is the author”.

2.2.6.2 The ancestors

Among the spirits of nature, ancestors’ spirits are found. The Bemba believes in the existence of the spirits called *Imilungu* or *Ngulu*. They got the power to give good luck or bad luck to the living. This component has a great importance which making the Bemba religion, a religion of animist character or domestic (Labrecque 1976:6). Cults are observed in honour of the spirits. The celebrants are very meticulous in their routine worship as observed in Mulungwishi during field work. The belief that it is possible to communicate with the spirits of the dead rely on the fact the animists believe that all-natural things have a soul as Gordon (2012:35) shows that in Bemba

tradition “Mipashi, by contrast, were the ancestral spirits of dead, freed from their corporeal form. Mipashi could control phenomena in natural world, and at times they inspired people to act in certain ways. It was most important that an ancestral Mipashi return to its original clan”. For Käser (2004:96), “these spiritual beings are ordinarily invisible. Mostly one can only listen to them. They also are seen through the dreams, in the drunkenness of the drugs or in the ecstasy, in trance”.

Moreover, Gordon (2012:38) notes that “while Lesa may have been thought of as the original spirit, omnipresent and allowing life and death, it was marginal compared to the ancestral and nature spirits who intervened directly in the affairs of family and in immediate bounties of nature, or who were agents in causing illness and death”.

It strongly accepted that any cultural thing outside of reverence of God ought to be evaluated in the light of the word of God because animism was the religion of Canaanites and God commanded Israel to extirpate it right from the roots (Deuteronomy 18:9-14).

2.2.6.3 Other spirits

The Bemba believes in intrinsic efficiency of some animal or vegetal substances called traditionally *medicines*. These substances have a helpful or harmful action in conditions to be prepared or used by the

qualified practitioners called *Bashinganga* in a ritual way. This intrinsic *medicine* power remains hidden or latent if it is not liberated by whoever has acquired the appropriate ritual competence (Labrecque 1976:6).

It exists in Bemba culture, several types of rites which are celebrated by different cultural associations to help those who are hit by illness from the ancestors' spirits, witches, or magicians. The one who is guilty of a misdeed is, according to the Bemba expression 'seized' by a spirit in a particular affliction mode. Often in the midst Bemba, the living is seized by the spirit of death which is plunging them in afflictions mode. To be set free, one must consult the soothsayer, called *Shinganga*, who firstly diagnostics the mode of affliction by certain manipulations and afterward by the rites of deliverance, try to heal the patient (Turner 1972: 14). To avoid such case, the Bemba people observe the rite of purification after burial in order that the shadow of the death may not be used by the spirits to haunt the living (:16).

The photo below shows a Bemba man (*Shinganga*) performing traditional ritual (Gordon 2002).



Therefore, it is helpful to know the Bemba conception of the death.

Bemba people believe that the death is the separation of the soul from the body, more precisely the disembodiment of the soul. The human does not die, but he is moving from the visible world to the mysterious said invisible world (Labrecque1979:78). In the line with Labrecque, Khorommbi (2001:59) is convinced that ‘besides God and human beings, there are other beings who populate the earth, namely spirits. This is what is expressed by Diop (1967:64) in his poem titled *Souffles*’ when he sung:

Those who are dead are never gone.
 They are in the Shadow that is becoming clear.
 And in the shadow that is thicken out.
 Dead persons are not under the Ground.
 They are in the Tree that is rustling.
 They are in the Wood that is groaning.
 They are in the Water that is flowing.
 They are in the Water that is still run deep.
 They are in the Hut; they are in the Crowd.
 Dead persons are not dead.

In the light of the above-mentioned poem, the dead persons have the power to monitor the nature and the living as Hiebert (1976:382) points out that “the belief in spirits is found in several cultures around the world”. Labrecque (1979:79) shows that “in Bemba culture the dead persons are divided into two groups: the good souls called *Mipashi* and the bad souls called *Ciwa*. The *Mipashi* are available to do well if they are worshiped in the right traditional way. The *Ciwa* are always breathing the revenge”. This belief is so encrusted in the spirits and hearts of Bemba people. The dead person’s souls are powerful, and the power they have is more feared. The livings do not understand anything in the operating modes of *Mipashi* and *Ciwa* by the fact that these last are dealing with the invisible world. For that reason, the living must faithfully follow what is recommended by the tradition or the culture in terms of worshipping the spirits.

In addition, Thomas and Dumeux (1966:216) argue that “the livings are called to be very careful towards the rites that they are performing in the honour of the dead persons by the fear of terrible reprisals”. Thus, the Bemba believe that the souls of the deceased remain in the world and they are free to walk around to intervene in the life of the members of their families as Diop sung it in his poem above mentioned. Moreover, Bemba people admit that the death is mysterious and terrifying because the death never been understood.

In Bemba culture, if an old human die, it is a natural death, and they call it *Mfwa Lesa* meaning death caused by God. All kind of death are result of one of two possible causes, either an evil spell expressed by wicked persons, or an act of revenge of a deceased called *Ciwa* who beard hatred against the person who died.

By investigation on the field, one discovered that in Bemba culture it believed that the death is in the vicinity, in other words, the *Ciwa* is present in the patient's house. The family's members go outside of the village, in the bush, to construct a hut of branches (*kusalikisha nsakwe*) in which one must shelter the one who is going to die, because no one must pass away within the village. To die in a village is an act that firstly soils the village, secondly profanes all fetishes, and thirdly makes whole the village unclean (*wa bundwa mushi*). To avoid all these impurities, the family being aware of the state of the patient, must erect for the deceased in the bush (Appendix A).

To the last breath, the patient is agitated (*Ale pumbuka pa kufua, ale sambaka pa kufua*). If it is a woman, she counts men with whom she slept with during her lifetime. All her next of kin surround her in silence listening to her. Then two or three women put their hands on her arms and her legs. If it is a man, two or three men do the same. The head of the patient is held by someone who is bowed down to the bed head. The young people are not allowed to attend such a moment, by the fear to be contaminated by his/her spirit at

the time of the death. The same interdiction is applied to the pregnant women, apart from the patient's pregnant wife.

As the person returns the soul, the people, more particularly women, burst explosions of lamentations, groaning and tears (*misoa* = lamentations). Men show their grief more discreetly. This moment of mourning consists mainly in wordless lamentations. Sometimes, a woman among the people plunged into mourning, must moan a complaint in a choir, and at the end of every sentence the public repeats the last word (Robert 1973:216).

Once the public certify the death, one closes the mouth and the eyes of the deceased, (*ku kupisha kanwa*) and the preparations of the funeral (*kuonga*), begin. In the meantime, one takes care to keep the hands of the corpse closed in tight fist. If one finger does not bend, pointing in a certain direction, it means that the person on that direction must be considered like responsible of this death. Directly the soul of the deceased becomes a *Ciwa* (Verbeek 1990:165).

Some physical exercises are observed on the corpse. It is straightened; arms are folded so that the closed fists are under the chin. Legs are first bent to knees so that heels are wedged against thighs, and then put back in the manner that knees touch the stomach. It is called *ku fuuka*. All parts of body are attached in a good position with ropes of tree barks. After, the corpse is enveloped in a piece of cloth like a shroud, and then rolled up in a carpet. It becomes ready for the funeral while lamentations are going on. If the

deceased person is an old man, his body is brought back to his slot to the village before the funeral. If the deceased person is a simple man or woman, the continuation takes place in the bush, where the death occurred (Labrecque 1979:98).

The funeral Testament takes place the following day in the morning. Children of the deceased do not participate in these preparations so that they are clean and do not see everything that happens. The next of kin bring tools, such hoes, and axes. These tools must be transported on only one shoulder by gravediggers. Before taking the corpse for the funeral, a *Munungwe* (member of the opposite clan) throws on it a handful of flour '*ku pupula u bunga*' (Richards 1937:188; Verbeek 1990:179).

To the exit of the corpse from the hut, a sacrifice is offered in the honour of the deceased's spirit. This sacrifice depends on the rank of the deceased. For a simple citizen, a rooster is killed. For a distinguished person, a goat is sacrificed. The body of the sacrificed beast is put down on the doorstep of the hut to encourage carriers of the corpse. This sacrifice is a signal to the deceased's children and parents of twins of the village to attend funerals while following the funeral procession from far, but not until the cemetery (Labrecque 1979:104).

If the dead person is an old man or an eminent person, his funeral procession must make a tour in the village to allow the deceased to greet for the last time his friends. People present to the

funeral follow carriers of the corpse until the cemetery, usually men in front and women behind, but there is not strict order of priority. Cemeteries are always far from villages, in a very shady sector of the bush, a *Mushitu* (a much-wooded grove that is the source of a river or a stream). Chiefs and members of the royal family have their own cemeteries. There are sometimes tombs in the public places, for example along paths, these are graves in which have been buried the strangers, sometimes the local people (*bakaya*), that had to be buried in hurry there (Lumbwe 2009:94).

When the funeral procession arrives in cemetery, men are going to prepare the tomb. Before entering to the cemetery the *Shimapepo* takes a handful of flour and throws to the four cardinal points in alternation, while saying: *Mutwiswileko* (opens to us), *Mwe batangile kuno* (you who preceded us in this place); *Mwa mona munensuna aisa* (you see our brother/sister comes here at this time); *Twisanga apa biipile* (do not permit us to choose a bad place for his rest); *twisanga libwe lya kutulesha kwimba* (we do not meet the rocky soil that Testament stop us from digging the tomb).

Then the *Shimapepo* (the minister of the ceremony) who is a member of the family of the deceased, look for an adapted place, preferably close to the tomb of parents, those who gave birth to the deceased person, so that they take their family life together and work over again in the invisible world. When the grave is ready and before the funeral, the *Shimapepo* checks if a hole is exercised on the mat at

the ear level of the corpse, so that the deceased can hear invocations and supplications of the living. Under his order the gravediggers take down the corpse and put it on the cool soil (*pa mufukwa wa loba*). Two gravediggers descend with the corpse and bend it with a pole inside the hole. They make sure that the head of the deceased is turned eastward, toward the rising sun, the symbol of hope, toward the ancestors' place (Lumbwe 2009:96).

To their exit of the hole, it is the ceremony called *Ku tembesha ntembo*, is the invocation of the soul of the deceased to find out the reason of the death. The *Shimapepo* seizes the basket of flour, takes a handful, and throws it on the corpse in the tomb, and accompanies this gesture with ritual words: *Tule fwa ya icikuliile* (we want to know who killed you), *Icikuliile* (the demon who ate you), *Ngaca fuma kuli bawiso na banoko* (if your death comes from your father or your mother's side), *balume ba nama* (we kill the male game). *Ngaca fuma ku mukashi* (if it is about the woman's family), *bakota ba nama* (we slaughter the female game).

This challenge to the destiny, this way of pulling to the fate, refers to results of the ritual hunt that they organize once more in the following days. The soul of the deceased must now live in the world of spirits and must be able to know what happens in this world. This soul possesses the mysterious power to influence the behaviour of animals in the bush and to force them to act in accordance with the

challenge expressed in the invocation of the *Shimapepo* to reveal to the parents the reason of the death (Lumbwe 2009:97).

It is only after this incantation of the *Shimapepo*, which allow the replenishment of the tomb. They do not make it with their hands, because it would be a bad augury (*Cintu ca fina*). They kneel on the piece of the cool earth. And they push several times considerable quantities of the earth of this clod while bringing it into the tomb so that could cover the corpse. The gravediggers finish this work with their hoes.

Once the tomb is full, the gravediggers place a *lifwasa* or small ant-hill to the side of the head of the corpse, and they put down pieces of bracelets, vases and other utensils dispersed on the tomb all around. In Bemba belief, these set down objects allow the soul of the deceased to remain permanently in this place. Parents throw shells (*mpande*), and pearls on whole the tomb. It is the last homage to their dead parent's, and it is at the same time a way to give to the deceased means to live in this other world. Labrecque (1979:98) concludes that “the funeral ends by the ritual called *Kunwa menshi* (the ritual consumption of water).”

After all this work, women push some big screaming, and go back home with those who came to conduct the deceased to the last dwelling. Men, who participated in the funeral, remain behind for a last ritual to assure their own security and the one of the graves. Any

person who participated, especially those who attended the funeral ceremony are impure.

The analysis of Bemba culture and their beliefs shows that the knowledge related to God and the death is helpful for the United Methodist Church to undertake a deep evangelism amongst Bemba people. Thus, it is necessary to briefly present the United Methodist Church to understand their methods and strategies used in evangelism in Mulungwishi.

2.3 The United Methodist Church

To understand the missionary work of the United Methodist Church amongst the Bemba people, it necessary at first to trace its historical background globally, in Africa, in Democratic Republic of Congo at large and in Katanga at the time. As the study went on, a glance to its theological profile and doctrinal foundation was undertaken.

2.3.1 Genesis of the United Methodist Church

This section draws attention to the great moments of the birth of the Methodism and the origin of the denomination. Barnett (1980:3) persuasively writes that “the Methodism traces its heritage by a direct, visible line, to the first New Testament Christians”. Seeking for holiness and deep Christian living, John Wesley, instrumental in establishment of the Methodism, Priest of Church of England insisted on the four basic facts of faith for his revival movement (:14):

1. All men can be saved (from their sins – the doctrine of the universality of sin and salvation).
2. All men can be saved by grace through faith. (The doctrine of the saving work of Jesus Christ; salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, and in him alone).
3. All men can *know* they are saved. (The doctrine of the indwelling Holy Spirit, the conscious joyous experience of God at work renewing his people in heart, Testament, life)
4. All men can be saved to the *uttermost*. (The doctrine of Christian Perfection, of Perfect Love; is meaning that there can be no heights of Christ-like character and witness, in personal life and society which are forbidden on inaccessible to the earnest disciple)

Townsend (1980:47) plainly considers the above statement as a “Wesley’s antagonism to Calvin’s doctrine of salvation”. To better understand the two almost opposite doctrines, Thorsen (2013:139) sums up the main differences contrasting Calvin and Wesley in the table below:

| Calvinism vs Wesleyanism | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Calvinism (T. U. L. I. P) | Weslyanism (A. C. U. R. A) |
| Total depravity | 1.All are sinful |
| Unconditional election | 2.Conditional election |
| Limited atonement | 3.Unlimited atonement |
| Irresistible grace | 4.Resistible grace |
| Perseverance of the saints | 5.Assurance of salvation |

Source: Thorsen (2013:139)

Interestingly Townsend (1980:47) holds that “the nature of salvation is so complex so that no model can appropriate its significance”.

Comparing the two schools of thought, the position of Townsend is not clear. The UMC asserts that from May 24, 1738, Wesley started to bring the Gospel to the world at that period as Cracknell and White (2005:6) state that “John Wesley represented an instrumental of hope of his time by his revival movement”. According to Van den Berg (Bosch 1995:373) the vision of Wesley to bring the Gospel to the world originated his formula of “*the world is my parish*”. Cracknell and White (2005:46) further show that “the American Methodist Episcopal Church became independent from the Wesley’s authority under the leadership of Francis Asbury who was elected Bishop in 1784”.

In fact, Cracknell and White (2005:53) continue to explain that:

Following the new United States of America with the promise of equal opportunity, many immigrants rushed there. Amongst them, the group of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ led by Philip Otterbein and a second group, the Evangelical Association led by Jacob Albright, both Methodists German-speaking.

Cracknell and White (2005:54) reassert that “the two above groups of Methodists, joined with the Methodist Episcopal Church (EMC) constituted what is called today the *United Methodist Church* in 1968”. Some argued that because of this union, the *United Methodist Church* is regarded as the biggest community of the Methodism stream in the United States of America and worldwide.

2.3.2 The United Methodist Church trajectory in Africa.

The research restrained as far as possible, the note of the establishment and burgeoning of the Methodism in the vast Africa continent because it is not the purpose to write a meticulous expansion of the United Methodist Church in Africa or in Democratic Republic of Congo. Mears (1973:5) shows that “1806 is the year of introduction of the Methodism in South Africa, this because of the soldiers [Methodists] in the army of occupation of Cape of Good Hope (Cape Town) from 1795 to 1802”.

Though the small society of Methodists led by a lay Christian Georges Middlemiss was not sent to South Africa as missionaries; Mears (1973:15) makes further clear that ‘it was in 1883, that the Methodist Church of South Africa was well established by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society’. On the other hand, Taylor (1895:327) in his book *Story of my life* ascertains that he arrived for the first time in Africa, precisely in Cape Town as an Evangelist on March, 30th 1866 from Melbourne (:753). For his part, Fisher (1917:64) indicates that “the trip which brought the first Methodist missionary in Africa precisely in Liberia was in November 1832”. Kurewa (1997:19) concurs with Fisher that “the Methodist Episcopal Church, the actual United Methodist Church came to Africa by way of Liberia through an American settlement of free slaves in Liberia”. Due to his providential trip and experience in South Africa, Taylor was

elected in the General Conference of 1884 held in Philadelphia, as a first Missionary Bishop of Africa (Taylor 1895:692).

The important point to learn here, is that coming to Africa as a Bishop, Taylor targeted the Bashilange country [in Congo/Kasai Province] to start his new missionary journey (:7-3). In addition, Nthamburi (2005:4) points out that “work in Angola started by the opening of the first mission station in Nanguepepo/Angola with Loanda as the port of entry with 40 assistants who had experience in evangelism, agriculture, translation, and printing”. After several mission stations established in Angola, Bishop Taylor (:715) asserts that “the mission stations were installed in DR Congo former Belgian Congo”. Fisher (1917:79) notes that “ending his missionary job across Africa, Taylor leaved behind him many Methodist United Church missions: Liberia, Angola, Belgian Congo, Rhodesia, Portuguese East Africa and North Africa”.

For the North of Africa, Bartels (1965:1) indicates that “Rev. Joseph Rhodes Dunwell was the first Methodist missionary in Ghana in 1835”. To Nigeria side, Ward (n.d:55), states that “the early Methodist missionary stations in the Southern of Nigeria were planted with Fairley and Brown on the 15th December 1893’. Kurewa (1997: 17) further concludes that ‘this is how the United Methodist Church came to Africa”

From the above succinct panorama of the early missionary activities of the United Methodist Church in the vast Africa, many

details and facts could be left out due to limited space. As it is stated already, this is not a detailed history on the penetration of the Methodism in Africa. Yet, one glanced at the necessary but not exhaustive tracks.

The endless development of the United Methodist Church took place in the following decades until reaching the south of Congo, more precisely the province of Katanga, the chosen area of this study.

2.3.3 The genesis of the United Methodist Church in Katanga

The Methodist bishop Joseph C. Hartzell introducing the book *Pioneering in the Congo* of John M. Springer, masterly concedes that “in 1910, he appointed the couple Rev. and Mrs. John M. Springer to the Lunda country” (Springer 1916: xii).

In agreement with Bishop Hartzell statement, Springer (1916:1) more accurately reported that “they arrived in Katanga by Kalulua, near the border between Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia”.

It is broadly known that Christianity in the Democratic Republic of Congo came with Livingstone; Nthamburi (2005:4) concurs with this statement and maintains that “David Livingstone is the pioneer missionary who opened the eyes of Europe and America on the missionary potential in what is today the Democratic Republic of Congo”. However, Springer (1916:2) is of opinion that “the Methodist mission in Katanga was an answer to the prayer of a native (slave), named Kayeke convert to Christianity in Angola”. Springer

further explains that “the wish of the native Kayeke was that a missionary work would be established in the Territory of Lunda Empire”.

Moreover, Springer (1927:67) adds that “Dr Julia Ferguson, of Huguenot University College in South Africa was also praying long time ago for missionaries to reach the Lunda country”. Probably these prayers got answered by the providential presence of Rev. and Mrs. John M. Springer in Lunda country (Hartzler 1960:9). As result, Springer originated the first mission station in Katanga Province more precisely in Kambove (Springer 1916:5; 1927:61). For his part, Kalemba (2005:15) affirms that “in 1913, the Methodist Springer J.M. (American) founds simultaneously the missionary stations of Kambove and Kapanga in the province of the Katanga”.

Thus, the Methodist Church was the second Protestant community implanted in Katanga after the *Church of Brothers in Christ Gareganze (Communauté de Frères en Christ Gareganze)* that pulls its origin from the Protestant Swedish Mission which was founded on February 14, 1886 in Bunkeya (Katanga) by the Scottish missionary Frederick Stanley (Kalemba 2005:15). Springer goes on to show that they started building a school with twelve young men who became, after training, pastors and teachers and they helped a lot in the expansion of the United Methodist Church in the South of Congo. According to Hoover (2010:2) “It is at this epoch that the evangelical

protestants were busy establishing their missions in central and tropical Africa”.

In this new field of mission, facing the environmental condition, Hartzel (1960:6) thought that “it was practically impossible to live in this part of the continent because of its climate supposed causing malaria. Surviving missionaries were transferred to Angola with certain Congolese Christians”. By his initiative, Bishop Hartzell sent missionaries to two specific places, the East of Zimbabwe, more precisely in Umtali which became his mission’s Head office in Africa and to the West in Angola (:8-9). Moreover, Richardson (1962:20) underlines that “protestant missions were the first to engage in education in Congo”. Importantly, Richardson goes further that:

The opportunity thus afforded of having so many of rising generation under daily instruction in the Word of God for six days a week has provided an unparalleled opportunity. The saturation of minds of the young in the eternal verities is not productive of immediate results but leads also to more distant fruit (Richardson 1962:19).

Robert (2005:286) leans in the same direction with Richardson and confirms that “the Springer’s pioneered the United Methodist Church higher education in Africa, having founded the Congo Institute (actual Methodist University of Katanga in Mulungwishi)”. In 1918, the Springer’s established the Methodist mission station of Mulungwishi, in the Katanga Province (www.umccongo, accessed 2014-10-24).

Precisely, Robert (:286) indicates that “John M. Springer remains in Mulungwishi until political unrest forced him to return to

America in 1963". The Methodist missionaries' stations are established almost everywhere in Katanga. Many people of south of Congo were reached by the Methodism teaching. As a result, the Bemba people of course were reached too by the Gospel preached by the United Methodist Church.

The implantation of the Methodism in Africa and its expansion in DRC is above traced, especially in Katanga in a shortened historical approach. The United Methodist Church is originally from the United States of America. The following section presents the theological profile of the UMC.

2.3.4 Theological outline of the UMC

This section is a succinct sketch out of the UMC's theology as Guy (1999:4) states that "theology is simply speaking and thinking about God". However, Chilcote (2004:15) remarks that "the theology is ultimately transformative". This is to say that by doing theology the purpose is to tell others about God for their salvation. How the UMC tells the Bemba people about God for their transformation it is the core of this section.

According to the Discipline (2012:63) the Wesleyan Theology emphasizes on the "practical divinity, the implementation of genuine Christianity in the lives of believers". Nevertheless Maddox (1994:88) maintains that "despite the *Prevenient Grace* still the beginning of the salvation process initiated by God, the human can persist in ignoring

or rejecting this Grace and may shut its benefits out”. Maddox (:88) goes ahead and argues that “even if humans could silence the *Prevenient Grace*; its presence would not be removed from their lives”. Moreover Maddox (1994:90) emphasizes the fact that “God’s initiative *Prevenient Grace* is a partial healing sufficient to sense humans to respond to God’s call”. The UMC holds the heritage of John Wesley as it is published in the understanding of the *Prevenient Grace* (www.umc.org) states,

Wesley understood grace as God’s active presence in our lives. This presence is not dependent on human actions or human response. It is a gift — a gift that is always available, but that can be refused. God’s grace stirs up within us a desire to know God and empowers us to respond to God’s invitation to be in relationship with God. God’s grace enables us to discern differences between good and evil and makes it possible for us to choose good. God takes the initiative in relating to humanity.

Besides, the Church leans on the Scripture of Paul in the Book of 1Corinthians 5.9 and Romans 5.8 to clarify the *Sanctifying Grace* and declares that “through the work of God in Christ our sins are forgiven, and our relationship with God is restored”. Wesley in his *Sermon 45* [Ed.1872] states that “if any doctrines within the whole compass of Christianity may be properly termed fundamental, they are doubtless these two, - the doctrine of justification and that of the new birth”. More clearly, Wesley (1984:127) stresses the New Birth as follows:

It is that great change which God works in the soul when He brings it into life, when He raises it from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the almighty Spirit of God, when it is ‘renewed after the

image of God in righteousness and true holiness'; when the love of the world is changed into the love of God, pride into humility, passion into meekness, hatred, envy, malice, into a sincere, tender, disinterested love to all people. In a word, it is that change is turned into 'the mind which was in Christ Jesus'.

Smith (1986:40) comparing the teaching of Whitefield and Wesley comes up to realize that "the conversion (new birth) is an instantaneous experience of faith in Christ". Beyond the conversion, there is a *Sanctifying grace*.

According to Discipline (2012:51) the Sanctifying Grace is described as follows: "Sanctifying grace draws us toward the gift of Christian perfection, which Wesley described as a heart habitually filled with the love of God and neighbour and as having the mind of Christ and walking as he walked".

Bawulski (2014:146) analyses the Wesleyan Theology from 1725 and remarks that "if the doctrine of Christian perfection is designed by a heart entirely full of love for God and for neighbour, how this teaching can explain the backsliding?" Therefore Bawulski (2014:146) is of the opinion that "the Wesleyan view still giving a logical problem". For this reason, Langford (1983:41) exposes the Wesley's construction of the Christian Perfection as follows: "Holiness is a gift of grace, not an achievement; it is the active work of the Holy Spirit to which the human spirit is called to respond, evoking love as the dominating motive of live Christian Perfection is progressive, a continual renewal of love and growth in love". Langford (:43) further

sustains that: “Wesleyan theology lies on the fact God who has begun the work of sanctification within the Christian’s life on earth Testament fulfil it in heaven”. The Wesley’s school of thought maintains that:

Scripture is the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine. Through Scripture the living Christ meets us in the experience of redeeming grace. While we acknowledge the primacy of Scripture in theological reflection, our attempts to grasp its meaning always involve tradition, experience, and reason. The close relationship of tradition, experience, and reason appears in the Bible itself (www.umc.org, accessed 2015-03-11)

Regarding the tradition of the Church, the UMC considers the tradition as a source of the reflection for its theology and states that:

The story of the church reflects the most basic sense of tradition, the continuing activity of God’s Spirit transforming human life. Tradition is the history of that continuing environment of grace in and by which all Christians live, God’s self-giving love in Jesus Christ. As such, tradition transcends the story of traditions. In this deeper sense of tradition, all Christians share a common history (Discipline 2012:83)

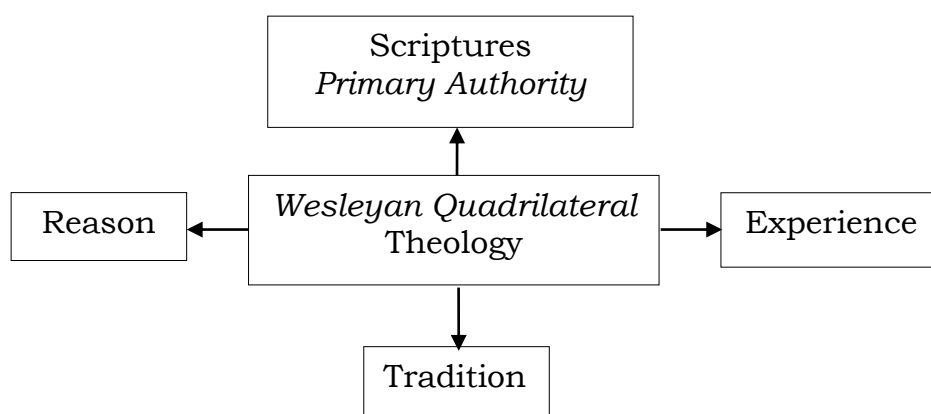
Regarding the Christian experience, the UMC underscores that “as a source for theological reflection, experience, like tradition, is richly varied; challenging our efforts to put into words the totality of the promises of the gospel”. Therefore, the Church believes that the daily experience, both individual and corporate of social relations still a serious theological topic of reflection (Discipline 2012:83)

For his part, Dale (1986:121) notes that “the eighteenth century was called ‘age of reason’ indicating further that “he *reason* was at time, the discourse of the day”. However, Wesley strongly

ascertains that “reason alone cannot finally be the true source either of true virtue or genuine happiness, as these must grounded in love of God and neighbour which issues from faith and love” (Dale 1986:135). In other words, Wesley confirms that “reason cannot generate faith” (:182).

The provisional synthesis of the UMC Theology profile, underlines that “evangelism, nurture, and mission require a constant effort to integrate authentic experience, rational thought, and purposeful action with theological integrity” (Discipline2012:89). Briefly, the diagram (Figure 4) represents the United Methodist Church theology as taught by his founder John Wesley named “Wesleyan Quadrilateral Model”

Fig. 4. Wesleyan Quadrilateral Model.



One of the key figures Methodist Theologian; Outler (1991:26) interestingly argues that “*Wesleyan Quadrilateral* ought not be regarded as a geometrical figure but a metaphor in theologizing which is unpacking the primacy of Scripture, it profits from wisdom of

tradition, it accepts the discipline of critical reason, and its stress on the Christian experience of grace”. For his part, Thorsen (1990:251) suggests that “Wesleyan quadrilateral can be considered as a critical model which provides invaluable insights for developing theology”. Many years later, Thorsen (2013:28) realizes the relevance of the Wesleyan quadrilateral or theological reflection in these terms:

Wesley valued the tradition of church history, which canonized the Bible as well as passed on orthodox Christian beliefs. He valued critical thinking and the need for persuasive argumentation and preaching. Finally, Wesley valued relevant experience that confirmed biblical Christianity as well as the ongoing presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of people.

To unpack the theological profile of the UMC, the next section discloses the doctrinal standards of the Church to which all members adhere.

2.3.5 Doctrinal Standards of the UMC

Stokes (1981:18) is of the point of view that the United Methodist Church is relatively a new organization which is goes back only in 1968 to Philip W. Otterbein (1726-1813), Francis Asbury (1745-1816) and Jacob Albright (1759-1808). Stokes (:18) goes on to argue that “the United Methodist Church does not have utterly doctrines because there are no affirmations that are not also believed by other Christians groups”. Yrigoyen (2005:95) underscores that “the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, the *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*, and the *Sunday Service* found in the Book of Discipline are the *Doctrinal*

Standards of the United Methodist Church making some differences with others Christian denominations”.

Being the set of religious or philosophical dogmas, the doctrines are the theories of the UMC and their worldview. Seemingly, all tendencies of the Methodism have the communal denominator, the vision of Wesley, the patriarch. Doubtless, the United Methodist Church grounds its doctrine on the biblical teachings of John Wesley. To more understand the beliefs of the UMC, one refers attentively to the *Book of Discipline* which is maintained as it is the heritage or the Constitution of the Church over 200 years. The following section presents the Articles that constitute the doctrinal foundation of the UMC.

2.3.5.1 Articles of Religion

The fundamental doctrine of the United Methodist Church is based on the 25 Articles called Articles of Religion, provided in the *2012 Book of Discipline* the most recent version (Available from: www.theturningpointe.com). Like mentioned already, the *Book of Discipline* contains the principles of the government of the Church reflecting the Wesleyan Theology and *ipso facto* that of the UMC. These Articles were modified as Barnett (1980:24) put in evidence that “Wesley revised the *Book of Common Prayer* and strictly removed paradoxical statements to the faith from the Thirty-Nine Articles of

Church of England”. Succinctly twenty-four Articles are presented as follows:

The first four Articles give the three parts of the Creed on the faith in God the Father, God the unique Son, made very Man and the Verb embodied and God the Holy Ghost. This brief description shows what Wesley (1831:323) stated in his terms “the work of redemption being the work of the whole Trinity”. Wesley maintains about the Trinity that: “I do not see how it is possible for any to have vital religion who denies that these Three are one” (Wallace 2005:301)

The fifth and sixth Articles care about the faith in the Holy Scriptures (Old and New Testaments) stipulate that “besides these books which are constituting the Old and the New Testaments of Protestant Canon, there is not another book which can equal them and cannot be used in preaching for the edification of the believer” (Discipline 2012).

Wesley revived indicates that “the Scriptures are an important authority as a complete rule of faith”. (Tabraham 1995:17)

In the seventh Article, the UMC believes that the human being by his own nature is inclined to evil and that continually because naturally he is engendered of the offspring of Adam. By this theological exposition, Collins (2005:233) argues, that “the guilty of original sin is communicated to all humanity, infants included”.

The eighth Article entitled the ‘Free Testament’. Simmons (2005:143) confirms that “even if the fall deformed the image of God in the

human being, but the free Testament was not destroyed”. In the same line; Colon-Emeric (2009:97) emphasizes the fact that “even the most depraved sinner never ceases to be a human made in the image of God because of the free Testament”.

The ninth Article states that the Church believes that “it is by the merits of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and by the means of faith that the Christian is justified”. This means that it is not by the own selves’ merits or works that the people are saved. For Whedon (1984:99) “the faith that justifies the believer implies as logical consequence the complete commitment to Christ for his salvation”.

The tenth Article stipulates that “works are agreeable to God who accepts them because of Christ, by the fact that they are from a sincere and alive faith and they reveal this faith with as much evidence”. This article emphasizes that good works cannot in any case justify the people.

The Article 11 notes that the United Methodist Church does not believe in works of supererogation or ‘extra-works’. According to Discipline (2012) the extra-work is:

A voluntary work next, more and on top of God’s commandments. By such a pretention, one presumes to give back to God, not only what it is must be given to him, but also, by pure love, something more. Christ expressly said in contrary: When you have done all, what is commended to you, say: We are useless servants.

In its Article 12, the Church asserts that “after justification a sin is always forgivable in condition that the sinner demands

honestly forgiveness to God”. The Article 13 takes back the last part of the Christian faith Confession on the visible Church. The UMC also notes that the Church is the believers’ community where the Word of God is preached in her purity, and sacraments are duly administrated according to the precepts of the Master and Lord Jesus Christ. The United Methodist Church explicitly rejects the doctrine of purgatory in its fourteenth Article of Religion. The UMC clearly asserts that “the purgatory is a human invention, and it does not have any foundation in the Word of God” (Discipline 2012).

Likewise, the UMC in its Article 15 prohibits the use of unintelligible tongues in the Cult because it is contrary to the Word of God. The Article 16 of the United Methodist Church indicates that “the sacraments of Baptism and Lord’s Supper are instituted by Jesus Christ. They are not only the signs or symbols of the profession of the Christian faith, but they are the sure marks of the kindness and grace of God to his people” (Discipline 2012). Moreover, the Church affirms that “the rites of confirmation, penitence, ordination, marriage and extreme-anointing are not sacraments because the Lord Jesus did not set any ceremony about them or any visible sign” (Discipline 2012).

The Article 17 articulates that “the Baptism is an act of Christian profession of faith and the sign which is distinguishing believers to others. It is also the regeneration symbol or new birth.

For the United Methodist Church, the children baptism is allowed” (Discipline 2012).

The Church concedes that the Last Super or Communion is a symbol of love which Christians must give each other’s. It is also this sacrament of the redemption by the death of Jesus Christ, so that for those who are with dignity receive the communion with faith, the broken bread is a true participation to body of Christ, as well as the cup of blessing is a participation to his blood (Article 18 and 19). In contrast the Church teaches that:

The transubstantiation, this is to say that the change of substance of bread and wine in the Holy Communion cannot be based on the Holy Scriptures. In contrary, this doctrine is a formal contraction to the Word of God, it is destroying the nature of the sacrament and it has been the occasion of multiple superstitions. The body of Christ is given, received, and eaten in the Holy Communion spiritually only and to make it clear, it is a heavenly manner. The mean by which the body of Christ is received and eaten, is the faith. The elements of the Holy Communion must not be, according to the teaching of Christ, neither conserved in the Tabernacle, nor taken in procession, nor exposed, nor worshiped (Discipline 2012).

The UMC believes that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, done once and for all, accomplishes the perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for the sins, original or actual, of the whole world. There is no other satisfaction for the sin beside the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Article 20).

According to the UMC, the Bible orders to human beings to marry for giving birth for the perpetuation of humanity. The celibacy vow of the

clergy is an obligation that is not coming from the Scriptures. It is open to Christians to marry, if they judge that the marriage is favourable to their piety (Article 21).

Regarding the worship, the Church does not find necessary that the worship rites and ceremonies be the same everywhere. They are indeed different according to the countries, epochs, cultures, and they can be modified on the understanding of not become contrary to the Word of God. Each local Church can set up, modify, or withdraw some rites or ceremonies according to her culture and tradition for the edification of God's people to make possible the communication of the Word of God. Every church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification (Article 22).

In its Article 23, the Church strongly recommends that "Christians ought to respect the State's authorities because these last are chosen and established by God". The Article 24 of the UMC states that "Christian's wealth and possessions are belonging to the Church neither by law nor by fact, as some had wrongly pretended. But everyone, according to his resources, gives liberally to the community and to the poor's one part of his (her) possessions"

The Church certifies that "the Christian can put himself on oath to the magistrate request in a matter compatible to the faith and charity, in conformity with the prophetic teaching, according to the justice, equity and truth" (Article 25).

The better understanding of the UMC theology through its Doctrine Standards is helpful for the deep analysis of its application in the evangelism of the Bemba people. In the following section, the study carried on knowing the official established Confession of faith of the UMC.

2.3.5.2 Confession of Faith of the UMC

For the unity purpose, the UMC adds to the fundamental doctrine (Articles of Religion), the sixteen Articles which constitute the Confession of Faith for those who are claiming decidedly to be Wesleyan's offspring.

In this section, the study presents the belief and practices system of the UMC. As in the preceding section, it also needs to be noted that the study synthetically sums up the content of the sixteen Articles of the UMC's Confession of Faith found (Discipline 2012:70-75). The first four Articles combined errors and omissions excepted, underline the belief in one true and living God the Father: in Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man. In the Holy Spirit who proceeds from and is one in being with the Father and the Son and that Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, reveals the Word of God so far as it is necessary for the salvation of the humanity.

The Article 5 acknowledges that "the United Methodist Church is the community of true believers under the Lordship of Christ. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit, the Church exists for the

maintenance of worship, the edification of believers and the redemption of the world”. The UMC holds in its Article 7 that “the two sacraments ordained by Christ are namely baptism and the Lord’s Supper”. The Church believes that Baptism signifies entrance into the household of faith and is a symbol of repentance and inner cleansing from sin, a representation of the new birth in Christ Jesus and a mark of Christian discipleship. The UMC also notes that “children are under the atonement of Christ and as heirs of the Kingdom of God are acceptable subjects for Christian baptism”.

In contrary Sanders (1993:85) is inclined to affirm that “Wesley omitted to underline the rite of confirmation through which the baptized (infant) might later make the affirmation his own”. Sanders (:85) goes on to show that “the article on the baptism ought to be interpreted in the Wesley’s revision stating that the sacraments are rather they are certain signs of grace”. Lancaster (2010:307) states: “Some branches of the UMC think that the baptism is a privilege for the people with conscious belief”.

The Church asserts that “the Lord’s supper is a representation of the redemption, a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, and a token of love and union which Christians have with Christ and with one another”. The seventh Article deals with the question of sin and free Testament. In this Article the Church states that “man is fallen from righteousness and, apart from the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, is destitute of holiness and inclined to evil”. Following

Wesley's Theology, Collins (1997:34) endorses for his part that "Christ's holiness covers the sin as a clean garment covers a filthy body". In his own strength, without divine grace, human cannot do good works pleasing and acceptable to God. Besides, the Church believes that "human influenced and empowered by the Holy Spirit is responsible in freedom to exercise his Testament for good".

The UMC in its Article 8 of Confession of Faith accepts that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Him. The offering of Christ freely made on the cross is the perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, redeeming man from sin, so that no other satisfaction is required". By justification and regeneration, the UMC in its Article 9, holds that "no one is accounted righteous before God through works or merits". The Church explains: "Regeneration is the renewal of man in righteousness through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit".

Regarding to the good works in the Article 10, the UMC acknowledges that "good works are the necessary fruits of faith and follow regeneration, but they do not have the virtue to remove sins or to avert divine judgment". The Article 11 presents the sanctification and Christian perfection as "the work of God's grace through the Word and the Spirit, by which those who have been born again are cleansed from sin in their thoughts, words, and acts, and are enabled to live in accordance with God's Testament, and to strive for holiness without which no one Testament see the Lord".

It may be indicated that the doctrine of perfection is very ancient, but Greathouse (1979:109) argues that “Wesley’s originality is most importantly when he takes out the perfection from any notion of merit and convincingly believes that; it is the God’s grace”. Clearly in Greathouse (1979:112) terms “faith perfected in love through the fullness of the Spirit is the essence of the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection”. To the contrary, Baker (2011:276) shows that “the perfection ought to be an experience and not merely a question of faith”. Baker (:282) gives for instance different Wesley’s experiences (his journal entries) from Aldersgate Street of May 24, 1738 and comes up with arguments that “the Christian perfection is a complex lifelong event”. On the other hand, Vickers (2010:205) understands the Christian perfection taught by Wesley as “simply the heart fully filled with the love for God and for neighbour and led by love in words and deeds”.

In its Article 12, the Church concedes: “Humans stand under the righteous judgment of Jesus Christ, both now and in the last day”. But Bosch (1995:346) holds in high esteem that “the eschatology, more than other Christian faith domain is a theological field where religious discussions abound”. The UMC holds that the public worship is humility and dedication in the presence of the Lord it is essential to the life of the Church, and that the assembling of the people of God for such worship is necessary to Christian fellowship and spiritual growth. For this reason, the order of public worship

need not be the same everywhere but may be modified by the Church according to circumstances and the needs of men. It should be in a language and form understood by the people, consistent with the Holy Scriptures to the edification, and in accordance with the order and Discipline of the Church (Article 13).

Even if the worship ought to be contextualized; Tucker (1995: 29) holds the view that “freedom in worship is called to the flexibility in theological, liturgical and cultural sense”. For instance, Chilcote (1995:237) experienced the worship in Kenyan Methodist Church states that “the liturgy there is celebrative ritual of life”. Likewise, Kwesi Dickson as quoted (in Chilcote: 245) fundamentally writes:

Singing and dancing is very important feature of life in Africa; these twin activities go on in joy and in sorrow at worship and at play. Hence a service of worship would have much less meaning if it did not Centre round a significant amount of the kind of stirring music that generates religious emotions.

Convincingly Lawson (1987:12) puts that “the worship (hymns) is a theological language and indispensable foundation of Christian faith held as an expression of the love of the God”. For this reason, the Methodism still has an official *Hymn Book* (Turner 2005: 84).

The Church recommends in its Article 14 of Confession of faith that “the Lord’s day is ordained for private and public worship, for rest from unnecessary work, and should be devoted to spiritual improvement, Christian fellowship and service”. About the Christian private property, the UMC states this “it is to be used for the manifestation of Christian love and liberality, and to support the

Church's mission in the world. All forms of property, whether private, corporate or public, are to be held in solemn trust and used responsibly for human good under the sovereignty of God" (Article 15).

The last Article of the Confession of Faith stipulates: "The civil government derives its powers from the sovereign God. Therefore, the UMC believes that the governments under whose protection the people reside and believe such governments should be based on, and be responsible for, the recognition of human rights under God".

The Church definitely asserts that "war and bloodshed are contrary to the gospel and spirit of Christ". However, the UMC urges the members that it is the duty of Christian citizens to give moral strength and purpose to their respective governments through sober, righteous, and godly living.

Finally, being unquestionably a social community, the UMC sets forth number of rules for its adherents to establish good relationship amongst them for the godliness purpose.

2.3.5.3 General Rules of the UMC

The general rules represent a traditional expression of the intrinsic relationship between Christian life and thought as understood within the Wesleyan tradition ascertaining the value of the general Rules and reporting the beginning and the development of the *united society*, that:

In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley, in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that he would spend some time with them in prayer and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily), he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them, and they always concluded their meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities (Discipline 2012:75-78).

This group of believers became more and more big and received appropriated advises and the meetings were ended up by prayers done according to the needs of the group members. It is the origin of united societies. Each group or *Club of Saints* was divided in small groups, according to the closeness of members' homes. These sub-groups were called '*Classes*' or '*Blocs*'. The objective was to make sure that members really working to their salvation.

Each class should contain a dozen of members of whom one was chosen as responsible. The responsible had for task: At first, to pay visit to the members of the class at least once per week to get informed about their spiritual progress, counselling, correcting, comforting, and exhorting them according to the actual circumstances, and receiving from the members their donations for the pastors, the Church, and the poor's. Afterward, meet once a week with the pastor, to firstly communicate to the pastor, the names of the sick persons or those who still living in the irregularity and resist to the rebuke, and secondly give to the managers the voluntary contributions received in the class during the precedent week. To

adhere in the *united society*, one must express the desire of escaping from the coming anger and to be saved from his sins. The manifestation of this desire always produces the fruits, and it is demonstrated firstly, by *not doing bad*. Not doing bad is explained as follows:

Taking of the name of God in vain; profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein or by buying or selling. Drunkenness: buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity. Holding slaves; buying or selling slaves. Fighting, quarrelling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling. Buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty. Giving or taking things on usury, i.e., unlawful interest. Conversation, which is unprofitable, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers. Doing to others as we would not, they should do unto us. Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as: The putting on of gold and costly apparel. The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus. Singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God? Softness and needless self-indulgence. Laying up treasure upon earth. Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them (Discipline 2012:75-78).

By doing well, the UMC means:

By being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men: To their bodies, of the ability which God gives, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison. To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all who have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine that 'we are not to do good unless our hearts is free to it. 'By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another, helping each other in business,

and so much the more because the world Testament love its own and them only. By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed. By running with patience, the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and off scouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely, for the Lord's sake (Discipline 2012:75)

The means of grace are defined as follows: “The public worship of God; the ministry of the Word either read or expounded; the Supper of the Lord; family and private prayer; searching the Scriptures; fasting or abstinence” (Discipline 2012). These are the general rules of ‘*United societies*’ or of the United Methodist Church to establish good relationship among the members.

After looking through the Theological sketch, the articles of religion, the articles of confession of faith and the general rules, the study reviews the earlier evangelism tools used by the UMC while implanting churches in Mulungwishi and broadly in DRC.

2.4 Partial Conclusion

It is logic to acknowledge that the identification of the context is important to the thesis’ development. In this chapter, Bemba people are presented in the first section. The Bemba people as the focus of the contextual evangelism of the United Methodist Church are considered in the set of the agents of development of the community in Mulungwishi. For example, Kayeke, one of Bemba born who was

praying long time ago to see his people evangelized, correctly illustrates the involvement of the native people in the mission of God.

If God comes to converse with humans that means in the context of their culture the church cannot consider itself as faithful to God's mission if it does not take seriously the importance of the culture in its missionary activity. Akunda (2010:224) put it in his terms: "A missionary cannot learn about people's culture unless he or she incarnates into the community". Therefore, one portrayed an overview of the Bemba culture according to the oral tradition and some helpful recorded information. It has observed that the Bemba people are acutely religious as Vumisa (2012:43) affirms that "for in all things Africans are very religious people as seemingly they were born like that. In their worldview they have a strong awareness of the spirit world".

For example, God was given the name of Lesa by Bemba people referring to his attribute of the Creator. The Bemba remains convinced that the soul of the human cannot die, but it is leaving in the world of spirits and must be able to know what happens in this world. Thus, this soul possesses the mysterious power to reveal to the parents the reason of the death. However, one discovered however that in the Bemba traditional society, the gender unfairness appears even at the death; because in case of the death of a woman, before she breathes one's last, she has to mention men with whom she slept during her lifetime. This is not the case for a dying man. As many

Congolese traditions, the marriage in Bemba culture unites not merely the spouses, but also the families of both, this becomes a community and clanic event.

For this reason, the customary celebration of the marriage precedes the Christian ceremony. Secondly, it is outlined the genesis of the Methodism and the birth of the United Methodist Church in the second section of this chapter. Unquestionably, to understand the theological lenses, the doctrinal foundations, and the ethical framework as well of the UMC is a key to unpack their worldview, their methods, and strategies, mostly their spirituality in doing contextual theology among the Bemba people. To conclude, as it is mentioned already, this chapter is included in the first stage of the pastoral cycle of the mission praxis which is focused to the knowledge of the context and agents of the transformation of the Mulungwishi community. The Chapter three is a focus on the contextual understanding of the methods and strategies used by the UMC considering the word of God in evangelism of the Bemba people in Mulungwishi.

CHAPTER 3

MISSIONAL TOOLS OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FACING BEMBA CULTURE

3.1 Introduction

The contextual understanding of the spirituality, social challenges and existential needs of Bemba people is the mainstay of this chapter. The study analysed the contextual theology of the United Methodist Church amongst the Bemba people. This Chapter digs from the launch of the concept of Contextualization in Missiology to its challenges applied to the specific setting of Bemba people. Therefore, the research tracked the different missional tools used by the UMC in evangelism of Bemba to find out if they are still relevant to date. In addition, the thesis paid attention to the culture and the language since the latter still the basic symbol of communication between people in every area of the life as Newbigin (2008:346) points out that “central to culture is language”. Newbigin explains further that “the language of a people provides the means by which they express their way of perceiving things and of coping with them” (:346).

3.2 Epistemological consideration

The study provides more epistemological insights than merely swimming in the contextualization’s theory. There is an earnest mushrooming literature on the concept. However, for this research,

much focus was given on the contextualization of the Gospel toward Bemba culture as the matter in question. For the majority of scholars, the concept *contextualization* constitutes a “neologism in the field of missiology and ecclesiology” (Hesselgrave 1995:155).

The term is also used in different facets of the erudition and the secular world. The word *Contextualization* from Latin means how things are made and ought to be understood. According to Hesselgrave (1995:115) the Theological Education Fund (TEF) are the “originators of the term” in 1972. More accurately Engle (1983:85) asserts that “the term was launched by Shoki Coe, former General Director of the TEF” but he also goes on to show that the watermark of the term dates back to the fall. In addition, Wheeler (2002:77), underlines: “For Shoki, the conceptual endeavour of Contextualization is the relationship between the never changing Word of God and the ever-changing social context”.

From the above statement, Fleming (1980: ix) is right to assume indeed that “the end of the discussion on the term is not yet in sight” as long as the culture is not static. Because the social context is presumed ever-changing, Toren (2011:41) sustains that “there is a supracultural nucleus of the Gospel to avoid a certain cultural relativism”. Toren explains further that “the modernity tends to dissolve the supracultural nucleus of the Gospel which is compared to the starting point of the Christian faith” (:66). This basic

foundation is the auto-revelation of God once for all in Jesus-Christ for the salvation of the entire humanity.

Yung (1997:62) holds the view that the process of contextualization has some issues to be attended namely the trap of “anti-colonialism”. Yung goes ahead on projecting that the agents of transformation have to avoid the “uncritical contextualization’ and the ‘absolutism of contextualization” (Yung 1997:62-63) since the Gospel transcends the culture. In the simple way, one concurs with Kraft (2001:346) when he ascertains that “the contextualization in its process is intended to make the Gospel relevant to the problems that [people] struggle with”. For instance, a glance to the struggle of controversial poverty in the mining resources of Katanga inspires Kiubo (2014) to impartially notice the reality in this statement:

Katanga, a province the size of Spain, holds many of DRC’s reserves of copper, cobalt, and other valuables minerals. Scores of trucks thunder along its few paved roads laden with metals bound for export and shipping through Durban and other distant ports. However, few of the many millions of dollars in taxes paid by mining companies to DRC authorities are invested in Katanga’s economic or social development, leaving swathes of the population mired in poverty. (www.irinnews.org).

The fact of the matter is that the UMC doing theology in the above-mentioned context described by Kiubo; entails the Church to be more fully involved in the spiritual as well as the socio-economic fundamentals of the Bemba people. For his part, Roux (2007:117), advocates that the contextualization “includes the aspects of cultural

identity, popular religiosity, and social change, where these aspects together enable the development of contextual theology”.

Nkomazana (2001) is right to declare that “in the process [of contextualization] participants [UMC and the people] need to stand alongside one another to look at the truth together” as Varghese (2016) elucidates that “the contextualization is a program by which missionaries should communicate the gospel and plant churches untainted by the missionary’s own culture”. This debate on the contextualization leans on the Scriptures evidence.

3.2.1 Evidence of Contextualization in the two Testaments

According to Varghese (2016), the Old Testament is replete with evidence of God frequently using the context in his progressive self-disclosure (www.academia.edu).

In fact, Varghese sustains his argument by further stating that “the prophets were excellent in contextualized communication. They received and communicated it to people orally, in its symbolic actions and in writing. They spoke in powerful similes, metaphors, and pictorial images”. For instance, Hosea, a native of northern kingdom, was divinely commanded to marry a harlot and later to marry a woman living in adultery. By these symbolic actions and messages, the nations learned that their worship of Baal occasioned in God’s wrath.

The contextualization of Hosea is that he must incarnate in his own personal life the word of Yahweh. In other words, God contextualizes his message in the understandable language of the human beings. One agrees that God contextualizes his communication as Hannes (2010:1) starting by the self-revelation of God to Abram shows that:

To Abram, animist, God presents himself as *èl-ohim*, the term for the Supreme God in the Semitic animist universe (Gen 14.22; 16.13). But the God of the Bible is not an animist god: His is *èl-shaddai*, the Powerful God, who demands to Abram a total loyalty: ‘to walk in front of his face’ and to be wholly committed to Him (Gen 17.1). He is not a local god among others, as the animist divinities. Jacob found him in Bethel after thinking to escape from Him (Gen 28.10ss). Later, He expresses this fact [contextualization] by proper name which he revealed to Moses at the occasion of the challenge posed by the slavery of Jewish in Egypt (Ex. 3.14): Yahve (*YHWH*), ‘I am that I am’ meaning I am (alive, present, active).

For his part, Athyal (2016) leaning on the contextualized message of the prophets in the Old Testament demonstrates that “because their messages were delivered in their own cultural form and through their own experience, they had powerful impact in challenging their culture”. It goes in the same way for Jesus and apostles in the New Testament.

The vital contextualization operated by God is the incarnation of Christ, God becomes man according to the book of John 1:14: “The Word has been made flesh” and Christ uncovered himself while becoming like the men (Phil. 2.5-7s). Coming in the world like a child, he should fully have passed by the training of the language and the

Jewish culture that means the enculturation, to become a true Jew of the first century of our era. So, Jesus becomes the mediating type between God and the man (1Ti. 2:5). He teaches like a true rabbi Jewish. He chooses the language, the style of communication, the content of the message and its application according to the different audiences. The incarnation becomes hence the prototype of the divine communication, an embodied “communication”. For Flemming (2010:2) the contextualization in the true sense is here presented:

Jesus uses the earthy images of rural life in first-century Palestine—farming and fishing, weeds and wineskins, salt, and soil. He tailors his theology to specific people and occasions. He speaks differently to the crowds than to the Pharisees, differently to a rich would-be disciple (Mt.19:16-22) than to a paralytic on his bed, differently to Nicodem (Jn.3) than to the woman of Samaria (Jn.4). This is simply an extension of the incarnation principle.

Fleming further asserts interestingly that “although Jesus was at home in Palestinian Jewish culture, prophetically challenged that culture’s religious and social norms; he sought to transform them from within” (Flemming 2010:2) as Athyal (2016) adds importantly that “the gospel can never be domesticated in a culture. Only contextualized gospel can rebuke, reshape, and shepherd any society or culture to be what Christ’s gospel meant it to be; in this sense, contextualization should always have a prophetic role in any society” (www.lausanne.org).

It is sufficiently clear from this discussion that one notices the challenges of the contextualization because it is always necessary to

differentiate what it is the worldview of the given culture and what is the norm in the Scriptures. Then, the following section discloses the strengths and weaknesses of the contextualization endeavour.

3.2.4 The strengths of the contextualization

From the evidence of the contextualization in the Old and the New Testament presented thus far, there is no doubt that the contextual approach of the biblical message it is crucial. However, a good contextual theology approach takes the hermeneutics and the context seriously as Haleblian (1983:102) argues that “missiologists agree that hermeneutics is most central to the task of contextualization the Gospel”. For this cause, Ukpong (2000:25) emphasizes: “The contextual bible interpretation seeks to empower the African readers for critical study of the bible in relation to their life situation and for personal and societal transformation”.

In fact, Stabell (2005:165) anticipates that “contextualization offers exciting possibilities and real challenges for church leaders around the globe who labour to present Jesus Christ as faithfully and effectively as possible in a multitude of very different socio-cultural situations”. It is points out three among many strengths of the contextualization suggested by Stabell (:165) as meaningful to be highlighted for the United Methodist Church in Bemba culture in Mulungwishi:

- a) The contextualization can help the Bemba people as receivers of the gospel to see it as their own, as addressed specifically and powerfully to them in their own concrete circumstances.
- b) The contextualization enables its message to confront what is wrong and sinful in the socio-cultural context of the Bemba people.
- c) The contextualization can potentially help the United Methodist Church as well the whole people of God (Universal Church) to come to a deeper corporate understanding of the nature and power of the gospel.

To the preceding, in regard to the particular context of Bemba people in Mulungwishi, one sustains that the vital strength of the contextual theology involves the United Methodist Church to be a partner in the struggle of this people against the social injustice, hunger, poverty, etc., concisely an effective impact in the social, economic and political realities of the Bemba people as the gospel of Matthew 15:32 stipulates: “Then Jesus called his disciples to him, and said, I have compassion for these people, because they have already been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint along the way”.

This scripture shows many as well in the New Testament that Jesus was not only preaching the word of God, but He was looking after the social, economic conditions of his disciples. In so doing, the

gospel presented by the United Methodist Church would be good news for the Bemba people in Mulungwishi as Stabell (2005:168) argued that “the gospel must address not only culture, but also issues arising out of rapid social change, social injustice, and the global but uneven spread of technology and so forth”. In other hand, when the gospel is contextualized, it faces set of pitfalls. In the following subsection, some challenges to the contextualization endeavour in Bemba culture in Mulungwishi are underlined.

3.3 The challenges of the contextualization in Bemba culture

The study examined how the United Methodist Church dealt with the attitude of the new convert tempted to reject the missionary’s culture which is not endorse his/her previous traditional belief. In referring to the abundant works on the challenges of the contextualization, it can be underscored he syncretism as the crucial one. For Haleblian (1983:99), “a serious problem is how to determine what causes syncretism and how to avoid it”. To the above inquiring of Haleblian, the analysis of Bemba culture demonstrated that the syncretism could occurs in the following ways among others:

- Firstly, if the message is not theological, then the resultant faith left behind might not take root in the truth of the word of God but corrupted and syncretized with the Bemba culture. For instance, it was inappropriate for the United Methodist Church to prohibit uncritically the frequentation of the new convert to a traditional

healer (*Shinganga*) or to sentence the polygamy without a deep biblical teaching. This is a misunderstanding of the prophetic role of the Church. For his part, Whiteman (1997) is persuaded that “when people are offended for the wrong reason, the garment of Christianity gets stamped with the label *Made in America and proud of it*, and so it is easily dismissed as a foreign religion and hence irrelevant to their culture”.

Thus, in Mulungwishi community, people were going to the Church and consulting the witch doctor at the same time. In view of this concern, Flemming (2005:221) for example, in the case of syncretism in Colossae shows that “the Colossians need a redefined cosmology and transformed worldview”. Flemming (2005:227) points out further that the relevant teaching to subjugate the syncretism in Colossian’s context is to “entail a complete reorientation of their existence, a radically different way of imagining the world”.

- Secondly, when the gospel is taught with the United Methodist Church missionaries’ cultural lenses instead of simple biblical Christianity as result the missionary’s culture clashes with the Bemba culture and produces the syncretism. It has been frequently stated that the Western evangelism in the colonial period in the Democratic Republic of Congo was tainted with political motivations as Kang (2011:106) calls it “crusade mentality” which explicitly means to take Kang’s words “civilizing the non-Western world under the modern European model is a formal rationale for the European

colonization of non-Western world, and the Christian mission project coincides with this Western colonialism” (Kang 2011:107).

For illustration, a well-known anecdote in Mulungwishi community reports that an individual confession to the priest would lead to the official prosecution of the repentant. Let lay down as a fact that this case is an illustration, and then the political manipulation could be one of the causes of syncretism. How shall we respond to the above challenges? The question of the cultural inheritance should have an adequate answer to allow the new Bemba to convert to have a just attitude to the consideration of the relationship between the gospel and the culture. In all this, there are in fact, certain cultural elements that are compatible with the gospel. Therefore, the rejection in block of the cultural heritage is a non-critical contextualization.

- Finally, for the United Methodist Church to address the syncretism in Bemba culture, the following ways would be helpful:

1. Use familiar forms of communication and story examples from the Bible to make the message clear and intelligible to the Bemba people.
2. Teach, explain, and apply the Supremacy of Christ.
3. Teach, explain, and apply salvation by grace through faith.
4. Teach, explain, and apply that there is one God and only one way to Him.
5. Contrast the Word of God and the lifestyle of adherents of syncretism.

Without this long-term work the new Bemba converts continue their cultural practices clandestinely. As mentioned already, certainly, it is easy to tell someone: it is forbidden or it is a sin, but before all situations, the monitoring of God's word, wisdom, and the prudence is required.

For this research, the concept Church is linked to the United Methodist Church; however, it can be understood to the large extent of other denomination as well. Compared to the living organism, Raph (1990:14) explains evidently that “it is likewise to the body of Christ. Each local Church, each authentic cell, is up to the breed: Christ is the life and his character to be reflected inevitably”. Raph continues and clarifies that “though the force, which is the Spirit of Christ, while entering the whole body that is the true universal Church, looks to reproduce in each community a variety of expressions, showing thus the endless riches of the person of Christ”. In the *Proclamation of Manilla*, Stott (1997:241) attests that “the Church is thus the community of worship and testimony, gathered, called and sent”.

For his part, Grenz (1996:26) shows that “the New Testament tends to use the word Church to refer to all those who, by the faith in the person and work of Christ as the full revelation of God are in relationship with God and with their fellow creatures”.

One observes that the word Church is first used in the sense of the Local community. For instance, Paul the Apostle by his

comparison to the human body and its parts develops the theme of the Local Church, not that of the whole big that is the Universal Church. Ekakhol (2009:13) simply defines the Church as “the fellowship of the redeemed people, professing Jesus-Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and aiming to proclaim His resurrection until He returns”. Nissiotis (1997:439) emphasizes on the presence of God amongst human beings, notes ultimately that “the church is the real presence of the earthly heaven”.

The abundant literature on the Church cannot be laid out , nevertheless the above synthesis lights up on the missiological range of this concept. The important point to learn here, is that God want that humans be saved, and all culture may know Him, come to Him through the Church, this is what Paul the Apostle writes that “for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour who wants all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1Tim 2:3-4).

This brief account has shown that the United Methodist Church has a debt towards the whole world; the Church has an obligation to give particularly to the Bemba community the occasion to hear the good News for them to receive Jesus-Christ as their Lord and Saviour. By doing this the United Methodist Church has a mission of going everywhere and presents the Gospel to every man and to the entire man.

3.3.1 Contextualization inquiry for the Bemba

The focus here was how the contextual theology is applied by the United Methodist Church in Bemba community in Mulungwishi. There are mushroom models of contextualization put forth by different scholars (Bevans, Hesselgrave; Hiebert; Newbiggin; Whiteman, etc. to name few). In connecting these models to the Bemba culture, the study aimed to make a significant contribution to the contextualization endeavour. To paraphrase Bevans (1985: 185), the contextualization is grounded on the four elements necessary to be taken in consideration: “Gospel; tradition; culture and social change”. For the goal of the contextualization, Stetzer (2014) summarizes usefully the Hiebert’s models of contextualization thus:

There are four levels of contextualization: no contextualization, minimal contextualization, uncritical contextualization, and critical contextualization. The no contextualization approach understands the Christian faith as something that is not a part of human culture; it rejects the notion that culture shapes how one receives and practices Christianity. The minimal contextualization approach acknowledges that differences exist between cultures, but it tries to limit cultural adaptation as much as possible. Under this model, missionaries might translate the Bible into a foreign language but will likely arrange new church plants in a fashion like the churches in their home country. Uncritical contextualization tends to prioritize culture over the Gospel. It minimizes the eternal truths found in Scripture to emphasize cultural convictions and practices. Critical contextualization seeks a balanced approach. However, Toren (2012) urges that “it is important to contextualize the Gospel in regard to the present than doing as per routine in the Theology of Contextualization turned to the past”. One concurs with Toren and develop here a new model of contextualization which is

genuine to the context of Bemba people in Mulungwishi even if Bartle (2001) estimates that “obviously no model can do complete justice to a topic as complex as contextualizing theology”. In addition, Bartle (2001) underscores that “theology is to serve the people of God and help them come to a greater understanding of God’s goodness, love, and salvation, but technical language and abstract thought forms actually prevent theology from doing what it is called to do”.

3.3.2 Evangelism tools and techniques used by the UMC in Mulungwishi

It was pertinent to study the different evangelism tools used by the United Methodist Church in the South of Congo as Parker (1992:121) advocates fully that “the evangelism is grounded on the human answer to God’s call”. The methods constitute for the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi practice of contextualization of the Gospel.

The notion of evangelism ought to be understood in the biblical revelation. In its biblical perspective, the bible gives a clear message of God to the world. In this approach the message of the gospel is not a simple philosophy or a mere intellectual assumption. Clearly, the Gospel is the proclamation of a set of historical events related to Jesus-Christ, sent by God the Father. The concept Gospel allows seizing on what is leaned the sense of life and the reason of the

human being. Thus, the biblical and theological scope of the use of the concept Gospel and afterwards the Evangelism are presented.

3.3.2.1 The Gospel: Old and New Testament background

George (2015:19) shows that “the Greek word for Gospel is *euangelion*, which refers to a public announcement of glad tidings”. The English word *Gospelis* derived from the Anglo-Saxon *Godspel* (from God, ‘good’ and spell, ‘story’). According to the Scripture of 2 Samuel 4:10; George (2015:20) states that “in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, *euangelion* never appears in the singular form. The plural used to render the Hebrew *besorah* means reward for good news”. In addition, George (:20) underlines that “in the Old Testament, Gospel is a powerful saying, a Word, which brings its own fulfilment”.

According to Godfrey (2016), “in the Greek New Testament, the noun *euangelion* (‘gospel’) appears just over seventy times. The word *gospel* most simply means ‘good news’”. On the other hand, Pokorný (2013:1) affirms that “in secular society the term gospel is understood vaguely as an archaic expression of something positive”. For example, in the Hellenistic and early imperial period *euangelion* is especially used for good news in the sense of political propaganda (Pokorný 2013:44). Moreover, Pokorný (2013:59) arguing on the term *euangelion* in Pauline theology, points out that “Paul insisted on the

gospel (*euangelion*) in the sense of the post-Easter proclamation of Jesus' resurrection as the only way to salvation”.

The understanding of this concept allows seizing its biblical and theological content in this study. Theologically, according to George (2015:21-22), the content of the Gospel “is the person and work of Jesus-Christ. The Gospel of Jesus Christ entails that the historical reality of Jesus is relevant to all the humanity” Thus, the Gospel designs therefore the announcement of the salvation proclaimed by Jesus-Christ. It is broadly about the Christian message, the divine power of the universal salvation. In sum, the Gospel designs the person of Jesus-Christ, the reign of God, the fulfilment of the promise, the forgiveness grace.

Thus, the Christian communication is not yet the proclamation of the Gospel if the truth regarding Jesus-Christ is not yet presented. It is not sufficient to present Jesus as somebody who can do good things, as a wise man, as powerful prophet and so on. The best way is to present his work of salvation and explicit the redemption meaning. To communicate the gospel is the evangelism as Barrs (2001:182) puts it “the focus in evangelism is not to be whatever is easy for us, but the particular person to whom we are speaking”. Therefore, the meaning of the evangelism is discussed before the review of the methods of evangelism used by the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi.

3.3.2.2 The Evangelism

In Packer's (1978:15) view, the concept of *Evangelism* is "a work of God". Most importantly Packer notes that "in the Bible, evangelism is not only the work of God, it also a work of man or rather a work of God through man" (Packer 1978:16). At the Lausanne Covenant, held in Grand Rapids (1982), the definition here was given to the concept Evangelism:

To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God (1982:13).

The above statement embodies the theology of the UMC which is expressed by Logan (1994:32) when he recalls that the Wesleyan perspective is "the wholeness of grace would motivate the church toward a mission of wholeness for the wholeness of persons throughout the whole world". In the strict sense of the concept, Singlehurst (1991:12) elaborates that "evangelism is meeting people where they are, and through many different means changing their understanding about God and Christ. The goal is that they make a commitment to Christ".

Slightly to the contrary of the preceding description, Tuttle (2006:420) pictures out that evangelism is not merely about

converting people, but he emphasizes that “the full gospel is not speaking in tongues, it is feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned”. Therefore, Flemming (2013:66) underlines that “evangelism is much more than an offer of personal happiness and assurance of heavenly bliss. The goal of Jesus’ preaching and teaching is to transform those who respond into people who look like the reign of God and who are caught up in the mission of God”. Flemming (2013:67) goes on to state boldly that “Jesus’ teaching was flexible and sensitive to the context. He did not always sing the gospel in the same key”.

However, in these days of pluralism of religions and cultures, Stone (2007:10), strongly argues that “evangelism might be a practice that calls forth the highest in the creative energies, intellect, and imaginations of Christians rather a crass exercise in marketing the church to consumers within a world of abundant and competing options”. In line with Stones’ statement, one senses that the United Methodist Church amid Bemba people will take seriously the task of putting into practice a distinctive type of evangelism which is strategically suitable for this context.

It is already stated that the Bemba people have their own world view, this cannot prevent the United Methodist Church to go on bringing the good news to this people as Green (2003:201) shows that for the early church basically “the principle of incarnation must be carried into Christian preaching [especially evangelism]”. It would be

worth to recall here that the principle of incarnation is the fact that the communicator makes the target people his own to better present the message. Interestingly Greenway (2003:31) challenges the Church to recover the gift of evangelist as “the teller, a bringer of good news, particularly to people who have not heard it before”.

This logically implies the cross-cultural evangelism as Winter (1981:59) figures out that “the cross-cultural evangelism must still be the highest priority”. To show the emergency of this statement, winter (1987:60) explains three cross-cultural evangelism’s levels as follows:

1. E-1= Easiest level: Using your own language to win your own people (For instance a Bemba wins another Bemba).

2. E-2= Level where you win your neighbour tribe (A Bemba win a person belonging to a sister language, i.e., Sanga people. This level requires different techniques.

3. E-3= Level where you go to another region of the world, to a strange language. Missionaries from other part of the world to work within Bemba people with totally different languages are doing the E-3 *evangelism*.

According to Winter (1987:68), the efforts to reach the target people in evangelism “is to disentangle the irrelevant elements and to make the Gospel clear”. This short account has shown that God is in mission through the Church for the reconciliation of people with himself by the Gospel. Like mentioned already, the study investigated the impact of the Gospel in the holistic development of the Bemba

people considering their culture. Now, the study turns on the methods and strategies used by the United Methodist Church in the beginning of the evangelism of Bemba people in Mulungwishi. According to Kaleya (2014) these methods are: The translation of the Bible into the local languages; the fight against the traditional practices; the evangelism of proximity; the camp-meeting and the evangelism by the social actions.

3.3.2.2.1 Bible and hymns translation into local languages

It is universally well known that the Christianity is a life, and the Bible is its book by excellence as Delhez (1990:34) argues deeply that “the bible enlightens not on the ‘how’, but on the ‘why’, this means on the deep significance of the things. It is giving the direction to our life, a goal: the covenant with God”.

The Bible tells the intimate life’s experiences of humans who were in relationship with God. According to Yorke (2012:158): “The Bible translation in Africa started in Alexandria/Egypt from Hebrew to Greek translation”. Yorke (:158) goes on to report that “the missionary era is the next phase in Bible translation driven by the three unavowed Cs; Commerce, Civilization, and Christianization”.

The Bible translation is an element that gave access to the sources of knowledge of Jesus Christ to the people of Africa and elsewhere as Bediako (2000: 49) literally sustains that “the access to the original sources of Christianity was made possible with the Bible translation in the local languages”. Bediako (:50) further credibly

concedes “that the Bible translation brought Christ in the African cultures”. To enable the Bemba people to understand and to self-appropriate these experiences of life, the missionaries of the United Methodist Church likewise other missionaries, proceeded to translate the Bible and their hymns into the local languages (Springer 1916:83).

Mojola (2004:12) is correct in his estimation of the Bible translation when he plainly acknowledges that “the undeniable legacy of Christian mission in Africa is the translation of the Christian Bible in local languages”. This point of view concurs with Zorn (2004:77) that “the mission of Church is always coupled with the anthropology”. Clearly Sanneh (2009:56) approves that “Christianity is a translatable religion compatible with all cultures”. Earlier Sanneh (1993:141) noted that “it is important to promote the language and culture as they are inseparable in the society”. But Malu (2004:341) keenly remarks that “for the sake of evangelism, the missionaries” regardless of their worldview were called to more penetrate the culture of the people in understanding their lifestyle”.

Considering the hermeneutical challenge, Mojola (2007:162) further critically mentions that “the challenge in the task of Bible translation is the hermeneutic of reading and interpreting African languages Scriptures to sense the respect of both the language and cultures of the biblical text and those of the receiving people”.

Plainly Robinson (2005:48) expressing the United Methodist Church thought, maintains that “in the Wesley’s teaching all human being is an image of God whatever his belief”. It is unquestionably for this reason that Springer (1916:86) was translating, helped by his native companions some parts of the Bible’s books in the local languages of the people of the South of the Democratic Republic of Congo, included the Bemba people. It may be discovered that from this valuable work of Bible translation; educated Congolese of the Southern of Katanga could fortunately read the Bible in their local languages specifically Swahili, Ichibemba and Lunda.

The translation of the Bible was also followed by the translation of the Hymns and Catechism (Springer 1916:85). Interestingly the hymns translated in local languages met the Bemba people in the oral dimension of theological as Ela (1995:302) eagerly opts that “this kind of theology cannot be underestimated”.

3.3.2.2.2 Fight against the Bemba tradition

One of the evangelism strategies of the United Methodist Church was to fight against the traditional practices. To save the new Bemba convert from syncretism, the Methodists missionaries forbidden the traditional practices for instance the frequentation to the healers, polygamy, use of alcoholic beverages, ancestral cult, purification’s

ceremonies, and so on because they are incompatible to the Christian faith.

This battle against the old practices has had its positive results in one hand and consequences for the new converts' faith in other hand. New converts left freely or by force these traditional practices. For Fleming (2013:226), the core of the matter in bringing the Gospel to people is unquestionably "to not compromise on the biblical truth".

Consequently, these methods raised up numerous questions concerning the value of the traditional culture facing the gospel. It sounds ironic that Jomo Kenyatta as quoted in (Shelley 2013:498) expresses the relationship in missionary work thus: "When the missionaries came to Africa, they had the Bible, and we had the land. They said, 'let us pray'. We closed our eyes. When we opened them, we had the Bible, and they had the land". By this funny side, Kenyatta crept into the subtlety of the earlier Christian's mission work. In contrast Katwebe (1987:228) presumes that "the destruction of the traditional practices constitutes a kind of liberation from sin".

Regarding the above hypothesis stated, it is a fact that this is not rational because the liberation from sin comes with the knowledge of the word of God as it is written in the book of John 8: 32: And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free (KJV-2011). Moreover, the evangelism in the context of table-raze or imperialistic inclination may cause the superficial conversions and forms the depersonalized Christians as the anthropologist Beidelman

(1982:5) properly retells that “Christian mission represents one of the facets of colonial life”. The fourth Chapter, section 4.2.6 of the thesis analyses the way the UMC wrestles with the tension between the Gospel and the Bemba people’s culture.

As the matter of the fact, Kabwita (2005:227) asserts that “it reasonable that the Gospel purify and fructify each culture, but that requires well qualified missionaries, well trained pastors and believers”. For this reason, the United Methodist Church in Discipline (2012) believes that “the local church provides the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs”. Turning to the subject of evangelism, Padgett (1992:6) urges the Church “to be involved in the evangelism by all means to spread the Gospel”. Follows is another kind of method used by the UMC to bring the Gospel in Bemba community.

3.3.2.2.3 Evangelism of proximity

By proximity, the UMC understands here an approach to spread the Gospel using the hierarchy of a given society by targeting the highest personality. The Methodist missionaries have discovered that the Bemba society was hierarchically organized at all levels; familial, clanic, or ethnic. The hierarchical structure was going from the bottom to the high level, from the simple citizens to the Chief, passing by the intermediaries traditionally instituted.

The missionaries did serve themselves with this hierarchical structure to enter in contact with everybody, the Chief at first, then

the simple citizens (Springer 1927:74). The Chief, by his authority brought together his population before the missionary who just came in the land. Through the Chief, the missionaries were able to directly contact the people by visiting them in their homes. This method of contact had two advantages:

Firstly, contact the non-Christians to evangelize them, and secondly meet those who are Christians to strength their faith. The missionaries appointed the native Catechists, teachers, and local pastors to keep on contacting people and enabling the communication of the Gospel (Springer 1927:78). Another particularity of the UMC in approaching the Bemba people was the Camp meeting.

3.3.2.2.4 United Methodist Church Camp Meeting

Brown (1992: xiii) defines a camp-meeting as “a self-styled outdoor religious gathering in which the people sustain themselves while camping on the grounds for the duration of the services”. Johnson and Brown wrote that “this evangelism method took place for the first time in 1800 in Kentucky/USA” (Johnson 1985:3; Brown 1992:5).

Brown (1992:22) further explains that “the idea was not only the technique of revivalism, but also means for the blossoming of the Church”. This statement follows what Johnson (1984:241) already put that “by the camp meeting the Gospel could be brought to many untouched people”. The Methodist missionaries with the goal of mass

evangelism followed by the testimonies of the new converts, and the intercession in the favour of these new members maintained the tradition of the camp meeting. This camp was a kind of resource and meditation's place for the Christians sharing the experiences of their new life in Christ.

In addition, the social involvement was of the paramount importance to attract the people to the Gospel by the UMC in Mulungwishi being aware of the impact of this dimension of the Gospel.

3.3.2.2.5 Social actions

To bring the Gospel where the people are, the Methodist missionaries' in Mulungwishi found necessary to join the Gospel to its social dimension since Smith (1997:38) asserts that "the Wesley's doctrine is continuously an emphasis on the love of God and the love of the neighbor". For Jones (2003:46) "the salvation in its strict term comes with the synergic encounter of the grace of God with the spiritual and physical needs of the person involved".

Oden (2014:225) aptly asserts that "the guide of Wesley teaching related to the social dimension of the Gospel is based on the Sermon of Jesus on the Mount rendered in the book of Matthew 6:6-13". Oden (:226) further shows that "the good works are the act of mercy to those in need". Put in other words, the Methodist social creed requests the Church to maintain the social service. Therefore,

the Discipline (2012:141) enjoins the UMC to the following statement in terms of social involvement:

We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, and people with disabilities; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the rights and dignity of all persons. We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress.

The *Encyclopaedia of world Methodist* asserts in fact that “the Spirit of Christ in the New Testament is the solution to all social evils”.

The Methodist missionaries in Mulungwishi have early created number of evangelical and social institutions, i.e., the literacy Centre; the technical schools; the clinics and hospitals; the agricultural training adapted to the people’s needs at the time (Springer 1927:94).

3.4 Rethinking the Wesleyan Quadrilateral model of theology

Given the fact that the culture is ever-changing and the essence of the theology of John Wesley (the father of the Methodism) expressed in the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, this study brings forth the *Pentagonal* model of Contextualization. At first, it is important to remind here that the Wesleyan Quadrilateral consists of four fundamental elements of doing theology: Scripture, Ecclesial tradition, Experience and Reason (Chapter two of this Thesis).

However, one concurs with Bartle (2001), when he underscores that “Wesley did not take the cultural context in account because culture is a term that was not in common usage in Wesley’s day, and also because Wesley was working in what was largely mono-cultural situation”. Contrary to the present time, the United Methodist Church proceeding from the Wesleyan Theology is working in cross-cultural setting, specifically in the midst Bemba people in Mulungwishi and moreover around the world.

Thus, it is discovered that it is important to make the Wesleyan Quadrilateral model of theology appropriate to Bemba people by bringing the cultural dimension in which the Christianity should not anymore considered as an alien religion. The essence of the *Pentagonal* model seeks for equilibrium and a balanced approach between the never-changing Word of God and the ever-changing cultural context.

The United Methodist Church has to touch the Bemba culture, their behaviours, their values, their ritual practices, their religious experiences, their social relations and their political perspective; as result the Bemba people ought to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul could adopt some aspects of the Greco-Roman culture and use them like points of contact with the Gospel. Finally, the goal of the confrontation of the gospel with the culture is the transformation from inside.

In fact, the development of all methods and strategies of the communication of the Gospel in Bemba culture in Mulungwishi would take above all in consideration the impact of the culture. It is necessary to discover or to establish the tie between the gospel and the culture to avoid the mistakes of the past. One finds pertinent to discuss beforehand the concept *culture* and afterwards demonstrate the insight of the *Pentagonal* model of contextualization.

3.4.1 The Culture

It is significant to understand the concept *culture* because there are so much various assumptions. Nevertheless, number of scholars (anthropologists, missiologists, philosophers, sociologists, and theologians) has admirably done useful portrayals. Dore (1979:79) emphasizing on the aspect of knowledge says that “the culture is all means used by humankind to affirm and develop multiple capacities of his spirit and his body, doing effort to surrender the universe by knowledge and work”.

It is brought out from the above understanding of the culture that in its different manifestations, it is the unfolded human efforts for his blossoming. Seemingly, this sketch put a limit to the culture because the extra experiences are raised from the civilization. In Rocher (1968:111) point of view, the culture “is a set of kind of thinking, filling and acting”.

To put it another way, Towa (1976:76) in line with Dore argues that “the culture is a set of solutions that a human being brings to his problems of adaptation to the world”. Analyzing the different statements above, as it stated earlier, in fact that the culture is an environment where we live as a human community endowed with a range of habits and knowledge to manage our existence. This range of knowledge touches all life’s areas, the relationship with the invisible world and the nature which is the visible world. Similarly, Käser (2008:35) states that “the culture is the entirety of the rules implemented by a society to shape its existence”. However, Yawidi (2008:102) goes further to add that “the effort done by the human to transform his environment and himself constitute his culture”.

On other hand Ramabanson (2001:76) observes that “the culture includes the practical realizations by the community to make easier the life and lift up the soul above the daily materials needs”. Efficiently, Mbiti (1978: 227) maintains that “by the African culture and traditions, people are deeply religious, and each society has developed her own religious life”.

At this stage, it is interesting to note that the encounter of the Christian faith and the Bemba people beliefs took place in the life of individuals, families, and communities. The continuity procedure means that the Christian faith establishes linkage with the Bemba people and culture based on the large likeness with the Christian teaching. Kottak (2002:23) underscores the fact that “the culture is

transmitted in three ways: direct teaching, observation, and unconscious absorption". Kottak goes further to clarify that "we can learn the culture of a given people by analyzing the ideas, images and themes reflected in its popular songs".

It is simply the inner being and surrounding us which is defining and shaping us from the received teachings. The culture is an integral conception of the cosmos and the life; concisely "the philosophy or vision of the life" to take the words of Simpson and Weiner (1989:560). Interestingly Hiebert (2008:15-25) came to realize that the worldview is "the fundamental cognitive, affective and evaluative presuppositions that a group of men makes on the nature of the things used by this group to put the life in order". The narrow link between the religion and the culture enables to understand that the worldview is situated on the centre of the personality, the culture, and the religion.

In this regard, one could concur with Wiher that "the world view formats the behaviour of people, their personality, their culture and religion, like the BIOS determines the operating system on the hard drive of the computer" (Hannes 2011). On the sociological basis, Kidd (2002:9) shows toward the contemporary ongoing debates on culture and identity that the culture is "the way of life". Unpacking this meaning, Kidd (2002:10) includes further height following components of the "way of life" of a community:

- The dominant values of a society or group.

- The values that guide the direction that social change might take.
- Shared linguistic symbols (language).
- Religious beliefs.
- What is the correct way for people to behave in their day-to-day lives?
- What is the highest intellectual and artistic achievements of a group, including science, art, literature, music and so on?
- Formal behavioural traditions and rituals.
- Dominant patterns of living, including styles of architecture and patterns of land use.

Taking the culture on the psychological grounds, Voestermans (2013:105) for his part points out that the way of life is not merely elaborated on the mental or propositional behaviour of the group or individual, rather he links “the complex human features, forms and capacities to the biological crucial role”.

Through the vision above described by Kidd, which is larger, there are beliefs figurative of the Bemba’s world view as Kearney (1984:41) more fundamentally believes that “the culture of people is their way of looking at the reality”. There is no space here to develop the profuse literature around the culture; however valuable propositions are explored and the rationality that explain the culture concept.

The Wesleyan Quadrilateral model of contextualization is reviewed as own contribution to the magnitude of the field of missiology; hence a new model of contextualization is brought forth.

3.4.2 Developing a Pentagonal model of contextualization

To the geometric shape polygon 'Pentagon', the model termed *Pentagonal model of contextualization* is brought out. In fact, the study sought to find equilibrium between the ever-changing context and the never-changing Word of God in taking acutely in account the culture of Bemba people. To take the Bemba culture in account it should not corroborate with the view of some contextualizers who deliberate that "culture is a medium through which God reveals himself to people" (Stabell 2005:172). But Mugambi (2008:354) responds to avoid what he calls "cultural insensitivity" in this way:

Cultural depreciation and insensitivity in the modern missionary enterprise have arisen from an erroneous theology of mission, which presupposes that the acceptance of Christianity necessarily demands total rejection of the African cultural and religious heritage and adoption of the culture of the missionary without question and criticism.

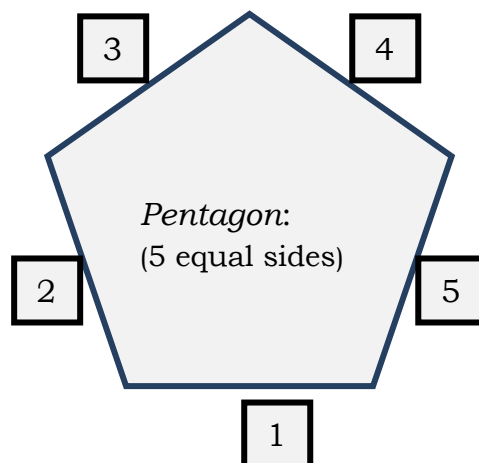
The geometric figure called *Pentagon* has five sides. In fact, the fivefold approach in this model is an effective way of touching in depth the Bemba people. Studying the Bevans' Synthetic model of contextualization, Bartle (2001) underlines that "the synthetic model looks at the social situation and the social change going on and realizes the church must respond to the social issues".

Articulated with Wesleyan Quadrilateral model and Bevans' Synthetic model of contextualization, the genuine strength of the *Pentagonal* model is mostly that it is practical and focused on the

transformation of Bemba people and his community. Set forth as a new model, the Pentagonal model of contextualization is inquiring the United Methodist Church on the current situation of Bemba people in Mulungwishi. This model aims to bring in evidence the involvement of the United Methodist Church in the development of Bemba people. In other words, the Pentagonal model of contextualization revolves on the Scriptures as the paramount authority of the Christian faith.

Secondly, the impact of the culture (acceptation or rejection) on the Gospel is importantly considered and influences the rest of the pentagon on the existential facets of the people Bemba in Mulungwishi. The correlation between the five sides of the pentagon in this model (Scriptures, Culture, Tradition, Reason and Experience) can be visualized in the following diagram (Figure 5).

Figure 5: *Pentagonal model of Contextualization*



Evidently, the United Methodist Church missionary's task should start by the incarnation of the Church in the daily life of the Bemba.

The features of this model as shown on the diagram are:

1. The Scriptures.
2. The impact of the Culture (acceptability or rejection).
3. The tradition of the Church.
4. The theological reflection or reason.
5. The Christian experience.

3.4.2.1. The Scriptures.

Concisely, it goes without saying that the Scriptures, as the base of the pentagon in this model, the never changing Word of God ought to be centred on Jesus Christ but communicated in Bemba expression without any Western superfluity, this is the ideal for most of the African missiologists and the present thesis finds itself in this vein. Bartle (2001) asserts that "numerous writers have emphasized the importance of Scriptures as the basis of contextual theology".

It would be worth to recall that the study is about to earnestly reflect on the strategies to communicate the Gospel so that it could be good news for Bemba people and moreover for the entire world. Now how the sides of the pentagon are related each other to help the United Methodist Church to be aware of the real needs of the Bemba people and take action accordingly and methodically bearing in mind that the Scriptures rest on Jesus-Christ as the foundation.

3.4.2.2 Involving the Bemba Culture

Bartle (2001) rightly urges that “the missionary must look at the rituals, ceremonies, and myths of people to search out those places where God has been at work preparing the people for the good news of Jesus-Christ”. In its mission calling, the United Methodist Church needs to see the difficult situation of hunger, different sicknesses, poverty, and so on in the context of Mulungwishi and be the witness with love of God driven by the Holy Spirit to the Bemba people as Breedt and Niedmandt (2013) point out that “God himself rolled out an emancipating act through Jesus-Christ and continues to act in redemptive missional love”. For his part, Kä Mana (1999:13) insists that “the mission would become an institution that intervenes between the man and his existential questions, between the world and its radical concerns, between societies and their daily matters”.

In fact, the new model calls upon the United Methodist Church’s responsibilities to be the agent of transformation as a salt and the agent of transformation as a light in bringing the reconciliation of Bemba people with God, briefly, this is an integral conception of the mission work. Rogers (2003:9) makes clear that “God primary purpose in all his interaction in human history was rooted in his desire for a relationship with all people. His mission is for all people to be reconciled to him to be brought back into an intimate, mutually satisfying relationship with him”. Marie

(2011:211) estimates that the mission of the Church is a “set of resources and means implemented to communicate the gospel to all the people, meaning the teaching of the mystery of incarnation, the death on the cross and the resurrection of Jesus-Christ for the salvation of the humanity and the discipleship”.

However, one of the major difficulties of the Bemba people is that they received instructions to stop the cultural practices for example ancestral veneration, funeral practices, consultation of a clairvoyant, etc. (Cf. Evangelism method of fighting against the traditional practices) without receiving at the same time the substitute elucidation which would come from the Word of God. As result, the Bemba encountered the cultural identity crisis being a Christian, that means people started feeling a cultural emptiness as Kurewa (2000:19) found out that “often, when a people are deprived of their innocent and meaningful cultural practices that are in accordance with their traditional customs, they feel lost and devoid of help and comfort”.

Being one of the Methodist scholars, Kurewa (2000:22) states further that “one is surprised that even those missionaries who came to Africa out of Wesleyan tradition were blinded, though John Wesley’s teaching on prevenient grace has been very clear”. However, Etuk (2002:22) assumes that “no group of people can survive without a set of values and ideals which holds them together and guarantees their continued existence”. To the recurring claim of loss of African

cultural identity, Etuk (2002:24) responds by a set of rhetorical questions as follows:

- Is a people's identity, and then threatened when they acquire a new language or improved methods and skills in dealing with old chores or new styles of living and social organizations, or new faiths and ideologies?
- Are a people likely to lose its identity when it is introduced to formal system of education or acquire new tools and artefacts?

To the above inquest, Etuk (2002:25) argues that “the individual who acquires further education and attains a high office and so on, is different, he has undergone so many changes. But we cannot say that he has lost his identity; he is still the same person although his outlook of living and his ways of doing things might have changed completely”. As created in the image of God (Gen 1:27), notwithstanding the pressure from outside, the human cannot lose his identity. However, Kalemba (2016) observes that “for the African, the identity crisis raises the questions on the genuineness of his culture, his beliefs, his tradition and his customs and this quest of identity pushes him to rethink his traditional religions”. While for Volf (2001), the Christian identity or personality is “an evangelical personal it's a – a personality transformed by the Spirit of the new creation engaged in the transformation of the World”.

This is exactly what the contextual evangelism is looking for in bringing the Gospel in every context as Arun (2007:204) says that “converts are expected to develop a new discipline and behaviour in relating to the new socio-spiritual structures and faith system”. By

means of the *Pentagonal* model of contextualization, the Gospel would touch the culture of Bemba people; this is to say their values and ideals, their social and environmental perception, indeed their entire life into the image of Christ. This is possible when the Bemba will live plainly the Gospel mostly in the areas where they are sharing the life with the entire community.

3.4.2.3 What is the Christian Tradition?

According to Bartle (2001), “theology is not done in isolation but in interaction with Christian believers in other times and places”. The *Concise Dictionary of Christian Tradition* (1989:382) maintains that “no church can escapes from creating a tradition in terms of a belief system” and defines a tradition as “the teaching and practice of the Church over the centuries”. Flemming (2005:322) names the Christian experience as “Christians through the ages”.

Without doubt the United Methodist Church has a system of belief and practices that ought to be understood deeply by the people Bemba unless this tradition is based on the Scriptures teaching and not on the culture of the missionary as the Apostle Paul says: “For no man can lay another foundation than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1Cor 3:11). The fact is that people are inclined to obey to their tradition than to the unalterable Word of God. For instance, Jesus Christ rebuked the Pharisees thus (KJV 2011): “Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they wash not

their hands when they eat bread”. But He answered and said unto them: Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?’ (Mt 15:1-3). The United Methodist Church observes two sacraments, baptism, and the Lord’s Supper (Attwell 1995:18).

In addition, Attwell lists several Orders of Service: Morning Prayer, Annual Covenant Service, Marriage, Burial, and the Ordination of Candidates for the Ministry which constitutes the tradition of the United Methodist Church.

To be faithful to the word of God and relevant to Bemba culture the United Methodist Church would contextualize for instance the Lord’s Super by using the local bread and wine instead of binding the Lord’s Super to the western culture as Fleming (2005:181) insists that “when Paul interprets Scripture and, even to some extent, Christian tradition, his primary interest is with its present significance for the Church”. This ecclesiastic tradition of the Lord’s super among other issues could be contextualized by the UMC seeking the real incarnation of the Gospel in the context of Mulungwishi.

3.4.2.4. Theological sense of the reason.

It is here an idea which presupposes that the reason is a source of the truth. The reason is linked to what is universal, while the faith is subjective. In the African context, the United Methodist Church is aware of this opposition. What it may learn here is that the reason

cannot exist without faith and vice versa, hence the reason and the faith cannot be separated. There is no doubt that the reason is given by God, thus the Bemba people cannot fear the reason because it can be used in the relationship with God.

Mostly, it may be underscored that the reason was distorted by the sin. Therefore, it ought to be conscious that it is limited, there are things that it cannot understand because the more one uses the logic, one reduces God to our conception or understanding as Sokolowski (1982: xi) assumes that “Christian faith is said to be in accordance with reason and yet to go beyond reason”. The entire nature is full of inexplicable, unaccountable manifestations of the power and the wisdom of God. In the book of Romans 11:33 (KJV 2011), Paul writes: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”

This doxology (word of praise) concludes all together the precedent chapters where the Apostle Paul exposed the salvation plan by which the just God can save the sinners and remaining himself just, and where he treated all the great realities related to the salvation. What could be underlined here is the use of the word *unsearchable*.

The wonders of God are thus something that cannot be researchable, it is very deep, impenetrable to the human reason as Apostle Paul asserts that “for we know in part, and we prophesy in

part” (1 Cor 13:9). For instance, the human body which is a real supernatural sense. one reflected a moment to the functioning of the brain! People are so accustomed that this is not anymore amazing. God sometimes rises uncommon wonders to compel people to declare as the blind-born could say “I was blind, and now I see” (John 9:25).

Every believer who has experienced in his heart the truth of the Gospel and the regenerative action of the Holy Spirit knows personally something of the power of God and the reality of his revelation which is beyond the reason as Gilman (2007:106) notes that “so, although we can account for the miracle, it is commensurable and unpredictable in relation to the standard model established by scientific reason”.

The difficulty to be addressed with this point of view, however, is that the wonders and acts of God which are beyond reason cannot replace the faith in the Word of God as Olson (2009:181) develops that “faith, founded on the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit, comes first. Then the reason seeks to understand or make intelligible what it believed by faith”. Olson further explains that “for Wesley the quadrilateral (revelation/Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience) is not an equilateral. Scriptures stand above tradition, reason and experience”. (Olson 2009:185).

In contrast, Stark (2005:11) argues that “the Christian image of God is that of a rational being”. This is to say vividly that “God is a rational being and the universe is his personal creation, it necessarily

has a rational, lawful, stable structure, awaiting increased human comprehension” (Strak 2005:12). To sum up, the Bemba people need to understand the gospel preached by the United Methodist Church seeing that they have to use their intelligence/reason to manage Mulungwishi; their community as the book of Gen.1:28 stipulates : “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth”.

The order to subdue is not implying that the creation was in the kind of undomesticated condition, out of control, because God himself declared it good, rather it needed a productive organization of the earth and its residents so that it is able to provide its resources and accomplish God’s purposes.

3.4.2.5. Christian Experience

Howard (2011:176) defines the Christian experience as “the interaction of the living Christ with each and all dimensions of human existence”. Based on this understanding, Howard (2011:177) goes on to show the theological sense of experience in this way: “Our experience of God is found in sudden events and developing life habits. Christian experience reveals the power of God; it also reveals the ordinary frailties of people”.

However, bringing up the other side of the coin “potentially misleading character of experience” Howard states that “authentic Christian experience is discerned experience, and Christian history is full of wisdom regarding the virtues that promotes discernment...” According to Coutts (1969:20), the first Christian’s experience of faith is thus stated: “So the new birth may well be that moment when, in an act of penitent self-surrender to Christ, the Lord becomes a living reality and His daily presence our all-sufficiency”. However, Mugambi (2002) understands that “although they may have publicly detached themselves from traditional rituals and practices, the positive values and ideas embodied in those expressions remained part of the African Christian experience”. The Bemba people are not exempted from this African worldview.

Throughout the epistle to Hebrews, one finds out abundant examples of Christian experience. It can be understood that among the different challenges which Hebrews Christians were facing figures the indolence to hear the Word of God. This indolence was preventing them to spiritually growing they were remaining the small children as illustrated by the text. They could not be able to share with others the teaching that they received (Heb.5:12) as Coutts (1969:31) goes on to notice that “if the Christian faith is finally on its way out- which assumption one denies - what could have reduced it to such impotence and robbed it of its life-changing effectiveness?”.

In reply the writer of the epistle to Hebrews said that they were feeding themselves only with the milk (Heb.5:12, 13). Obviously, the milk is the ideal food for the baby, but once a baby got the teeth, one introduces the reliable foods, more nourishing and necessary to his integral development. The milk here symbolizes the elementary notions of the Christian faith. It is true that to chew a strong food necessitate more effort than drinking the milk. For the Bemba people, the Bible needs to be studied carefully helped by the Holy Spirit so that they can discover the incredible treasures of God. The apostle Paul writing to the Corinthians about their spiritual growth, states:

And I could not talk to you at that time, brethren, as spiritual men, but only as carnal, even as babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, and not with meat: for you were not yet ready for it, and you are still not ready. For you are still carnal: for as long as there is jealousy, strife, and division among you, are you not walking after the flesh, and acting like unsaved men? (1 Cor. 3:1-3).

A glance to the above Scripture, one understands that the Corinthians as well as the Hebrews Christians at that time were unable to discern the good and the evil. Likewise, a baby can take to his mouth all he finds, mostly if the thing is brilliant, even if it a poison. Notably a Christian who does not have experience in faith can easily let himself impressed by the eloquence of a discourse and the risk is that he can be carried away by a teaching which is not biblical or centred on Jesus Christ. Another challenge and the utmost in the Christian's experience is the suffering. In the last resort, Coutts (1969:49) argues that "the fact that my all is on the altar does not

exempt me from the disappointments and frustrations to which all flesh is heir”.

Undeniably, the Bemba people are facing the stagnant poverty as primary concern in their Christian experience. Therefore, the United Methodist Church could not do a relevant mission endeavour without addressing this heart breaking paradoxical poverty in Mulungwishi as Ojo (2013:58) urges that “the Church must widen its scope of activities and seek to carry its witness to the economic and socio-political arena”.

In fact, the Pentagonal approach of contextualization is inquiring the United Methodist Church on the current situation of the Bemba people in Mulungwishi. This is to say that this model aims to materialize the role that the gospel ought to play in Mulungwishi. Pragmatically speaking this means the combination of the two wings of the Gospel: the spiritual and the practical diaconal work. To sum up, the elaboration of any strategy of evangelism of Bemba people in Mulungwishi ought to take seriously first of all the impact of the culture since the culture is a delicate force which settles on the acceptance or rejection of the gospel.

Therefore, it is necessary to establish the relation between the culture and the gospel to avoid the errors of the colonial missionary enterprise. A number of authors recognize that “contextual theology is never a finished product” (Thorsen 1990; Fleming 2005; Bartle 2010). More precisely, Fleming (2005:322) gives the reason why the

contextualizing gospel is an unending process, because “cultures and societies change”. The *Pentagonal* approach of contextualization in Bemba culture have to be considered as a adjustment of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral by inserting the component *Culture* following the Scriptures to meet the Bemba people needs where they are.

3.5 Partial Conclusion

All along this thesis, the contextualization of the gospel toward the Bemba people remains the focus of the research.

This Chapter three seeks to review the tools used by the United Methodist Church in evangelizing the Bemba people in Mulungwishi. It is found out that the culture of Bemba people like any other culture needs to be meticulously dissected so that the points of contact would be discovered which enable the smooth landing of the Good news of Jesus Christ.

As a matter of fact, inevitably the introduction of an innovation in any sphere of the society, often encounters some resistance. Notwithstanding the resistance, the goal to achieve, the driven messenger, and the strategies used are an asset for the success of the mission. This is delicate to the United Methodist Church missionary endeavour as the approach of the Apostle Paul is taken in his missionary’s work and his contextual theology for an example.

For the Gospel to be relevant to the Bemba culture, it is pointed out that the United Methodist Church ought to understand

the cultural worldview of the people while remaining faithful to the core of the Gospel. Needless is to recall that the message of salvation purposely embodies the culture for its transformative process as indicated in the new model of contextualization.

In effect, to the Wesleyan Quadrilateral contextual theology so far applied by the United Methodist Church, it is set forth the Pentagonal approach of contextualization which is suitable for the evangelism of the Bemba people as well for any culture everywhere else in the world. I made known that the culture did not reckoned in the Wesleyan Quadrilateral model as the founder of the Methodism operated broadly in the mono-cultural setting for the establishment of his evangelism movement in England and in America at the time.

As stated earlier in this Chapter three, the language of the people provides how they express their way of perceiving things and of coping with them (Newbigin 2008:346). In agreement with this statement, there is no doubt that Wesley's evangelism was at the level E-1= Easiest level: Using your own language to win your own people [in England] and the level E-2 = Level where you win your neighbour tribe [extension of the Methodism in America using the very same English as the communication language].

The expansion of the Methodism over the world actually requires the levelling of the way of doing theology by the United Methodist Church at the level E-3 where you go to another region of the world, to a strange language (i.e., *Ichimbemba language*). Still, this was

undertaken by the United Methodist Church at the time for example by translating the Bible in the local languages in Mulungwishi, it is worthy for the United Methodist Church to reconsider the impact of the language and culture evolution to efficiently accomplishing the task of evangelism in Mulungwishi.

As scholars constantly underscore, the culture, society and environment are subjects to change; the Chapter four of this thesis, missiologically and systematically analyzes the tools used for evangelism by the United Methodist Church so far in Mulungwishi. This leads the thesis in Chapter five to consider the missiological implications of these tools in Bemba culture.

However, the United Methodist Church still facing challenges in Mulungwishi and in the Democratic Republic of Congo at large due to the country's persistent surroundings political, religious, and socio-economic realities.

CHAPTER 4

**EVALUATION OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
EVANGELISM TOOLS AND STRATEGIES TOWARDS BEMBA
CULTURE**

4.1 Introduction

In the preceding Chapter, the research has surveyed the tools used by the UMC in evangelizing of the Bemba people; their biblical and theological ground from the genesis of the Methodism passing through the ages to Mulungwishi city

The aim of this Chapter is to analyze and evaluate missiologically the aforesaid tools to determine their relevance or to bring out their inadequacy as Obrempong (2009:196) points out that “the gospel is God’s answer for human sin which is the cause of all the many problems humanity is facing today-sickness, poverty, exploitation, greed, corruption and so forth”.

Facing the context of Mulungwishi characterized by poverty, disregard of human rights, diseases, and all kind of social and economic injustices, etc. the United Methodist Church cannot doing missionary work without a long-lasting impact on the actual socio-politico-economics challenges faced by Bemba people in Mulungwishi.

The optimistic spiritual and social development of the Bemba people depends on the other hand in the conscious involvement of the Christianity in their way of life. The problem addressed here is

whether the United Methodist Church narrowly touched the Bemba people by the means of certain strategies in evangelism and consequently reached the full expectation of the holistic *Missio Dei* as Nussbaum (2005:109) rightly elaborates that “a theology that remains academic and detached from concerns of the poor is not a theology that follows Jesus”.

From the field investigation, it is be objectively assumed that the United Methodist Church evangelism strategies in Bemba people were oriented to the personal salvation. Such a conception of mission could only consider the culture of Bemba people as merely to be rejected as Mugambi (1998) observes that “in general, missionary policy with regard to traditional and cultural African religion and culture has been that African converts should abandon their cultural and religious heritage in order to become accepted into the Christian faith”. The systematic analysis and evaluation of these tools take the thesis to unpack their missiological implications in Chapter five.

4.2. Analysis of Evangelism tools

To set up strategies for the evangelism in every context needs the imagination and the adaptability. From these strategies, the church is rooted in Jesus-Christ and relevant in the culture of the given context. Evidently, the human being is God’s creature, reason why some aspects of his culture remarked with beauty and goodness. However, he is also a fallen creature; therefore, his culture is stained

by sin and corrupted. For this reason, the Gospel does not presume the superiority of any culture, but it considering all cultures in the light of the unchangeable Word of God.

Knowing that the Bemba culture as any other culture reflects the sin's nature of human being, hence the missionaries could merely describe it as heathen and pagan. On the other hand, some positive aspects such as the virginity of the young woman in Bemba culture (to name one) ought to be taken as a virtue of this people. As already noted in the previous chapters, the first and treasured tool in evangelism of the United Methodist Church amongst Bemba people is the Bible's translation into the local language (*Ichibemba*).

4.2.1 Bible and Hymns translated into local languages

In the United Methodist Church planning for church expansion, the Bible translation was followed by the translation of hymns for the liturgy purpose into the *Ichibemba* language. In the subsection below, the impact of this endeavour in Bemba culture is analysed.

4.2.1.1 Bible translation

The Bible translation remains the overriding tool for the evangelism since the Bible is the norm for the value of all cultures and particularly for the Christian faith as the Lausanne Covenant states that "God is both Creator and Judge of all people" (Padilla 2010). It is noticeable that the translation of some portions or the totality of the

Bible at time in Ichibemba language allowed the conversion of number of Bemba people. However, it could be underlined that the growth of the Church in number it is not necessarily followed by the quality as Schwartz (1996:39) argues evidently that “apparently the quantitative growth can be obtained by different methods like the marketing, the efficient publicity, a particular context without favoring the real criteria of the quality”.

In fact, the spiritual growth of the individuals and the Church brings some challenges like the lack of deep follow-up by the pastor since the number of the members is increasing; discouragement of some believers for social reasons; and the review of the cultural heritage in the light of the Gospel, to name but a few.

The evaluation of the cultural worldview in the light of the Word of God may lead to a crisis when, compared to the Word of God, some cultural worldviews ought to be left aside as I argue in the subsection 4.2.2.b on the polygamy. This seems a crucial time where the new Bemba convert is tempted to backslide or to totally embrace the Bible worldview. I presume that if the Bible translation could be beneficial to the educated Bemba at time, there is not a clear evidence by the United Methodist Church on how the Bible would be heard by the illiterate Bemba people because each language has its own way of saying things even if slightly the ‘literacy’s campaign’ was initiated by the missionaries (Springer 1916:43).

From the above, the Bible translation in the context of Bemba culture in Mulungwishi still have a long way to go since the language and culture are not static in making people convert by the Gospel as Mugambi (2013) confirms that “the time has also come for African biblical scholars to translate the bible into their respective African languages, so that the bible becomes not only a liturgical symbol, but also an integral part of the literacy genius of African people”. In addition, Dulles (1977:91) utterly emphasizes that “the age when Asians and Africans are compelled to practice their Christianity in European dress and language is fast drawing to a close”.

It should be reminded that the New Testament had been written in Greek, but Jesus was teaching in Aramean. This is the evidence that we do not have any more the original words except some words like *Abba* ('Papa' in Mc 14:36) and *Eloï, lama sabaqthani* ('My God, why did you forsake me' in Mc 15:34) to mention few. It is true that one day the bible was translated in English, in Germany, in Swahili, in Ichibemba, etc., but this is a continual task as the language is flexible. From the above analysis, Barnard (1987) draws the following three important points in translating of the Scriptures in other language:

a) To find out what the original language says, not just the meaning of the individual words, but the meaning of those words as they were understood by the person who wrote them and the people who read them for the first time;

b) To say the same thing in words that the target audience will understand.

c) To say it in such a way that the target readers will understand the subject in the same way that the readers of the original document did.

For Chatzitheodorou (2001), the most persistent problem in the Bible translation is that “we do not have the original manuscript of the Bible, but copies of copies of copies and this causes many problems because translators do not know which of all these copies is correct and which is not, since none of them are identical”.

From this perspective, Chatzitheodorou (2001) is inclined to conclude that: “In the future we should expect more translations, for languages continually change and Bible scholars are continually learning from archaeological findings and newly discovered documents that help translators understand the ancient Greek and Hebrew better”.

The purpose of this thesis is not to deal with details regarding the translation theory or the enormous literature and issues in hermeneutics and exegesis; but for Mojola (2004:13) as well as for this study, the Bible translation’s final goal is here portrayed: “The gospel is good News unless it is intelligible to the receiving culture” in their mother tongue and its categories.

The following section looks more closely to the contextual issue of the Hymns translation since it has been observed that in many

churches in Mulungwishi, Bemba people are inclined to express their worship to *Lesá* in their mother tongues.

4.2.1.2 Hymns translation

To analyze and evaluate the hymns translation or the theology of worship in Ichibemba language, it is firstly important to anticipate the finding of the grounds of worship in the Old and New Testament. According to Grudem (2010:1107) “the worship is the activity which consists of glorifying God by lifting up our voice before him with our whole heart”. From this understating, one sees that to worship God is to firstly recognize his superiority; to prostrate oneself before him sometimes with a physical gesture. Since God deserves the worship, everything in the Christian service should be conceived, not to draw attention on ourselves or glorifying ourselves but all the veneration should be directed on God and pushing believers to contemplate and give him an agreeable cult (Rom 12:1).

4.2.1.2.1 Worship in the Old Testament

One finds at first look the term ‘worship’ in Gen 22:5 where Abraham says to the two servants accompanying him that: “Remain by yourselves here with the ass, and I and the youth go yonder and worship, and turn back unto you”. For his part, Edersheim (1994:35) argues that:

Properly speaking, the real service of praise in the Temple was only with the voice. This is often laid down as a principle by the Rabbis. What instrumental music there was, served only to

accompany and sustain the song? Accordingly, none other than Levites might act as Choristers, while other distinguished Israelites could take part in the instrumental music.

Edersheim(36) further explains that “the music of the Temple owed its origin to David, who was not only a poet and a musical composer, but who also invented musical instruments (Amos 6:5; 1Chron 23:5); especially the *ten*-stringed *Nevel* or lute (Ps 33:2; 144:9)”. I realized that:

- Firstly, the worship is grounded on the revelation from God. Abraham is ready to offer to God what he was having the most precious, his son, his unique. Also, I do learn is that the worship requires sometimes a separation with those who are not the in the faith family. The goal of worship is to glorify God with the heartily words inspired by the Holy Spirit.

- Secondly, the worship according to Ps 42:4 is the call of God for the congregation. The Bible mentions different forms of expressing the worship: to bow down (Gen 41:43), bow the head (Ex. 4:31), prostrate (Ex. 44:15).

The above analysis implies that, in the Old Testament, the worship was essentially expressed by the acts and ritual gestures. The danger exists to attach more value to the ceremonial aspect than the spiritual meaning of the worship (Ps 40:6; 50:7-15).

However, the thoughts and feelings ought to necessarily be expressed by the words, attitudes, and gestures. But the problem is not residing in the external manifestations of the faith, rather in

accordance of the intrinsic realities with their symbolical expression as indicated in Isaiah 29:13: “Wherefore the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men”. The worship in the New Testament is the subject of the following section.

4.2.1.2.2 Worship in the New Testament

There is in fact considerable literature of the worship in the New Testament. Moderately a succinct scope as a preliminary to the worship of the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi is here provided. For Campbell (2010:70), “the commonest word for worship in the New Testament is *proskunein* which literally means ‘to prostrate oneself’ before a superior”. Campbell (:73) also underlines that “*proskunein* is not the only word translated as worship in the New Testament. There is also *latreia* and its cognate verb *latreuô* [To serve in the religious way, render homage]. When these words refer to cultic activity it is with reference to the worship by Israelites under the Old covenant”. In his reflection, Weizsäcker (2016) makes a point that “as regards the primitive Church, we have to begin with the fact that it was not prepared to invent a Divine service of its own”(www.archive.org).

In the New Testament, the use of the word worship in John4:23-24, Jack (2010:97) argues that “the correct meaning of

proskuneō affords a much-needed perspective, and, where necessary, a corrective that biblically faithful worship entails responding appropriately to God; offering a humble response to that, irrespective of form, rightly honours him for who he is and submits in obedience to his authority”.

The attention can be drawn to the fact that these biblical terms imply the idea of respectful commitment towards God, recognized as infinitely superior to the human being, and the commitment to the service of God.

It is noteworthy to mention that during his earthly life; too often, people prostrate themselves before Jesus recognizing thus his power and his divinity according to the books of (Mt. 8:2; Mc 5:6; Jn 9:38 to name few). Finally, Jesus told the Samaritan woman that “God is Spirit and those who are worshiping Him ought to worship in spirit and in truth” (Jn. 4:23-24). One understands that in the New Testament as well as in Old Testament, the people did the worship as a task that must be done by all the believers (Ex. 20:5; Eph. 3:21) and that only God deserve it (Ac. 10:25). In contrast, the devil and his ministers also claim the worship in the Gospel of Matthew 4:9, but the disciples of Jesus-Christ cannot do it.

An analytical look to the translation of the Christian songs and hymns in Bemba language is needed. It is a fact that when the Gospel is embodied in a particular context; the liturgy and worship ought to be suitable to the culture considered instead of bringing the

songs from the missionary's culture as LeMarquand (2016) writes: "The multitude of Africans churches whether planted by missionaries or founded by indigenous leaders have experimented with various articulations and experiences of worship, from boringly staid to the most exuberantly charismatic one"(www.tsm.edu). Remarkably, the Article 22 of Religion and the Article 13 of Confession of Faith of the United Methodist Church about the liturgy and worship specify succinctly that,

1. Each particular local Church can set up, modify or withdraw some rites or ceremonies according to her culture and tradition for the edification of God's people in order to make possible the communication of the Word of God (Article 22).
2. For this reason, the order of public worship need not be the same everywhere but may be modified by the Church according to circumstances and the needs of men. It should be in a language and form understood by the people, consistent with the Holy Scriptures to the edification, and in accordance with the order and discipline of the Church (Article 13).

Supporting the abovementioned Church's statement, a Methodist scholar confirms for instance that in Kenyan Methodist Church "the liturgy there is celebrative ritual of life" (Chilcote 1995:237). Although the conviction of leaving the liturgy and worship being theologically expressed in the local cultural context of Bemba people in Mulungwishi, people still using the hymns from the Official Hymns Book (Turner 2005:84).

In so doing, the United Methodist Church is inclined to reduce the Christianity to the nominalism or legalism instead of the spiritual

freedom taught by the Bible in this scripture: “Or the Lord is the Spirit. And where the Lord’s Spirit is, there people are free” (2 Cor. 3:17).

With regard to the above scrutiny, it appears that the continually dependency of the receiving culture (Bemba in this case), according to Mugambi (1989) is named “*paternalism*”. Of course, the paternalism produces to the mind of the missionaries the complex of superiority and the disrespect of local cultural values, even the racial prejudice to the native people; even if Westerfield Tucker (2012:154) contends that “the translation of an old repertoire and the creation of a new repertoire have been important within each generation and across the generations. But what in the end binds these generations and locations together are hymns of the Wesleys”.

From the evaluation of this tool, if it is to be effective, the Gospel brought by the United Methodist Church in Bemba culture needs to be contextualized at this specific point. As result, Bemba people will be worshipping without restraint in their mother tongues, the canticles and hymns inspired by the Holy Spirit as the Apostle Paul urges: “So the best way is this: I should pray both with my spirit and with my mind. Also, I should sing both with my spirit and my mind” (1 Cor. 14:15). Moreover, the scriptures reassert that “in fact all those people who let God’s Spirit lead them are God’s children” (Rom. 8:14).

Pertinently, Kwesi (1995:245) discussing the importance of the music and dance in African worship states that “a service of worship would have much less meaning if it did not centre round a significant amount of the kind of stirring music that generates religious emotions”. On the other hand, Kalemba (2011) points out that “pneumatologically, African people are able to play with reality by means of an imminent realization of the Holy Spirit in worship, in order to remake their social realities”. Kalemba (2011) goes on to emphasize that “the perpetuation of the old paradigm is one reason why the African Independent Churches and other movements have successfully planted so many churches, even without an ecclesiological model”.

In line with the point raised by Kalemba, one can reinforce that the liturgy and worship of the United Methodist Church needs to be reviewed in order to allow Bemba people in Mulungwishi to feel at home when they gathering for a divine service as Haar (2012:116) affirms that “history witnesses that it is impossible for the church to worship outside or apart from its cultural context, and the existing church is no exception to this reality as contemporary culture continues its own metamorphosis”.

Swain (2004) goes far in backing Haar’s observation when he suggests that “instead of teaching outdated European notions of proper liturgical music; encourage the people to use their own folk or art music as liturgical hymns and even as settings for the ordinary

prayers". For her part, Hartje (2009) underlines that "many believers knowledge about theology stems from song lyrics" (www.a.ebscohost.com).

The above point of view is reasonable especially in Bemba illiterate people; the song would play an important role in the communication of people and God as they were doing in the past time by worshiping the ancestors. For this reason, one comes to an understanding with Horn (1970: VI) when he wrote that "everything is to be gained in the renewal of Christian worship." Besides, as the suspicious threat in the Contextualization endeavour, the syncretism could also occur in the liturgy and worship, therefore, Swain (2004) knows,

The simple strategy of musical inculturation fails to recognize how music's power to carry meaning even apart from its lyrics, its semantic rang, could cause serious harm. This power is not related to a musical composition's popularity or the fact that it can have unpredictable, private meanings for individual hearers in the culture.

To broaden the Swain's point of view, one advises that in African culture and mostly in Bemba people context, the dance should also be assessed in worship since the people are naturally inclined to perform even the worldly dance in the Church. This point was raised in by experience as a local Pastor in the Church. Furthermore, Christians in the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi would use the traditional musical instruments to worship God in ascertaining their cultural identity as Theron (2005) remarked that,

Traditional African musical instruments, for example were discarded for the organ, which was considered to be more reverent, dignified and Christian, The African Marimba (xylophone like instrument) drums, shakers and flutes were not used though they would have enriched rather than compromised the reverence or dignify of worship.

In closing this point, the thesis objectively points out the importance of the contextualization of the liturgy and worship in Bemba culture. The following section deals with the second tool used by the United Methodist Church in evangelizing in Mulungwishi: Fight against the traditional belief of Bemba people.

4.2.2 Fight against Bemba tradition

As it is showed in Chapter three of this thesis, the United Methodist Church systematically implemented the rules and obligations for the new convert. This section looks closely at the theological collision of this tool and its sparks in the Christian life of Bemba people.

Bemba people living in Mulungwishi were not only interested by their epoch and their environment, but they also still holding a rich heritage of the past which one calls the traditional belief. The beliefs, customs, reflections as well as traditional institutions, social behaviours, etc. are part of their traditional heritage as Mugambi (1989) acceptably confirms that “just as an African cannot choose the ethnic community into which one is born, so it is almost impossible for one to dissociate one’s religious heritage from one’s total cultural background”. In the same vein Kapolyo (2005:126) strongly reasserts

that “Africans cannot conceive an unsociable existence, isolated or very individualist. One can mostly appreciate the importance of the traditional heritage in the encounter of people having another tradition” as for the Methodist missionary in Mulungwishi.

Basically, there is an oral and written tradition even if this distinction is not as contrasted as it could appear at the first glance. It is evident that, to the people without written tradition; oral tradition has the characters of faithfulness often very closed to those of written tradition. In his opinion, Oden (2010:24) accurately notes that “if one do a quick reading of the African history from the antiquity until the modern times, one notice that the interface between the oral and written traditions it becomes a decisive question. The actual dilemma of the African Christian theological identity strongly articulates itself around the way that people respond to it”. As I indicated earlier in the Chapter two, section 2.2.6.1 of this thesis, in the Bemba culture, the belief permeates the entire life at the point that it becomes difficult to separate the sacred to the irreligious. Consequently, by minimizing the Bemba cultural heritage, the United Methodist Church’s missionaries brought out serious tension between the Christianity and the traditional religion of the people.

Therefore, the gospel was considered as a space invader as Chike (2008) puts it this way “the result was that this important source of identity [culture] for the Africans was devalued and

Christianity itself was seen in many quarters as an alien religion”. Therefore, the new convert was uprooted, and he/she undergoes the tribal group pressure. As result, the culture comes up and the use of non-Christian values is practiced in secret, this combination of the Christianity and the cultural practices is merely called the syncretism.

One appreciates Sanneh’s (2008:221) concern when he rambles if “people became converts or clients of the missionaries’ culture”. In Sanneh’s view, this is what supposed to be done is the evangelism in depth instead of merely rejecting the tradition. Sanneh (:228) further caricatured this mix-up in other words “this is exactly putting the cart before the horse”. In line with Sanneh, Maluleke (2011:74) in his paper to *Edinburgh 2010 Conference* drastically called “dehumanization” the fact of undervaluation driven by the complex of superiority even if there is not culture which is the standard for others.

The New Testament shows that Jesus humbled himself from the form and the visible glory of God with all the attached privileges, to become the servant of the human beings (John 1:1-4). With this picture in the mind, the missionaries of the United Methodist Church should totally get rid of their cultural presumptions so that they re-plunge themselves into the Bemba culture for the purpose of the incarnated gospel as the Apostle Paul wrote that “though free from all

human control, I have made myself the slave of all in the hope of winning as many converts as possible” (1Cor 9:19).

This does not mean that the missionary is called by force to deny his own identity, but it is the fact that the missionary is ready to bypass several personal scruples and gives up some own cultural aspects in order to win the souls for the Lord. In doing this, of course, the testimony that the United Methodist Church elucidates to the Bemba people would be more than efficient.

For illustration, I interestingly tackled two specific areas (to name few) where the fight against Bemba tradition brought the United Methodist Church to uncritical contextualization.

4.2.2.1 Consultation of the Healer

The traditional healer called in Ichibemba *Shinganga* plays the role of mediator between the sick person and the world of spirits. His diagnostic is about to know according to the *Mipashi* (good spirit of dead person) what is causing the illness. The result was followed by giving the appropriate remedy called ‘*medicine*’ to the patient so that he would be healed. In this process, the Bemba people believe in the curse or blessing from the ancestors; reason why they consult the traditional healer as Nyamiti (1979:9) observes that “recourse to the medicine-man, ascribing ill-luck to the will of ancestors and spirits, or even of neighbours, belief that the world is inhabited by malevolent

spirits-all these hardly favourable to scientific progress but result rather in cultural backwardness and resistance to change”.

Corollary, the Jews also thought that there was a relation of the cause to effect between a good health and a life in the obedience to God, that is why the prophet Isaiah wrote ‘the hand of the Lord weight down on the Asdodians, and He put the desolation among them; He afflicts them with haemorrhoid’s (Isaiah 5:6). Moreover, the New Testament disposes that the sick persons must confess their sins when the Church is gathering to pray for their healing (James. 5:13-16).

Likewise, Nyamiti (1979:10) argued that “in West is the belief that rational sciences can account for everything. Here, the scientist appears as the veritable pendant of the African medicine-man: he is the one who give the final answer to all human problems and the key to their solution”. It might be imagined that, holding this western background, the Methodist missionary could without an objective analysis; simply reject the consultation of the traditional healer in Bemba culture, this is what McGavran (1977:103); discussing on the growth of the church, pointed out that “it is more likely to weaken the patient than to promote his abounding health”.

In effect, it is boldly stated that in the nature, God provided plants that have the properties to heal some diseases without the intervention of any spiritual superstition. This is the case of Aloe Vera one of the natural plant which is marvellously used for several

benefits in the human body as Jackie (2016) states that “Aloe Vera has more healing properties than most any other plants or herbs on the planet! It is a disinfectant, antibiotic, antimicrobial, germicidal, antibacterial, antiseptic, anti-fungal, and antiviral!”

Hence, hopefully the missionary in Mulungwishi could examine carefully what was wrong and what could be retained as right in consulting the *Shinganga*. The United Methodist Church could objectively and properly establish the ratio between the traditional medicinal intrinsic worth and the biblical understanding of the healing as Nyamiti (1979:21) advises that “the Christian teaching on God can serve to heal this anguish and anxiety”.

There are in fact considerable texts in the Bible recognizing the properties on some plants to heal for instance in Isaiah 38:21 “For Isaiah had said, let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover”. Another problem raised in fighting the Bemba tradition was the intolerance of the polygamy.

4.2.2.2 Rebuking the Polygamy

The concept polygamy appears firstly in the Old Testament in the book of Genesis 4:19 where it is written: “And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other was Zillah”. Thus, this man became the first in conflict with the divine thought that the man and the woman are destined to be one flesh (Gn. 2:18-24; Mt 10:5). These scriptures insinuate that the monogamy might be the ideal type of marriage according to the Word

of God. However, through the Old Testament one finds numerous cases of polygamy.

Gaskiyane (2001:7) defines polygamy as “a culturally determined, socially acceptable and legally recognized form of permanent marriage where a man has more than one wife at a time”. In contrary Bujo (1987:354) is of the opinion that “polygamy is not and never was a compulsory institution’. Nevertheless, according to Mugambi (1989:100) ‘polygamy was potentially allowed by custom, especially if earlier marriage did not produce children, or if the children born in earlier marriage were only girls. Sometimes polygamy was practiced simply because a man could afford it”. Bujo (1987:355) backs Mugambi in giving three main reasons according to him which had grounded the polygamy in traditional Africa: Childlessness; lack of male children issue; and socio-economic motives.

From the above, three issues are pointedly drawn out which should biblically and methodically attended by the United Methodist Church in Bemba culture: the fecundity in the young couple, the determination of the child’s sex, the financial management in the couple as Mariano (2004) underscores that “the main aim of marriage is to procreate, because children are seen as a guarantee of the continuation of the lineage”.

But the nub of the matter is what Nwoye (2007) underlines that the man “must be materially and economically in a position to

support several wives, to provide for the well-being of possible children, including the ability to raise them up according to traditional African ethics and principles” and also “he must possess a strong personality that will enable him to ensure the reign of peace and harmony among the wives”.

To substantiate the above, Djanie (2009) convincingly points out that “the issue then is not so much with the pros and cons of polygamy, but more with the irresponsible behaviour of some men, the bad apples, who, when they enter into a relationship with new women, forget about the previous wife/wives and children”. It is then reasonable to highlight that these issues ought to be assessed in the light of the Bible as Gaskiyane (2001:37) rightly confirms that “a problem such as polygamy cannot be solved by simply making rules”. Jenkins (2010) points the fact that “as African churches have matured, polygamy has increasingly become, like older animist practice, a disreputable vestige of the past, something no sensible younger person would wish to revive”. To the contrary; one takes the position that the in Africa sub-Saharan people still practicing the polygamy even the Gospel is present on the land as Khady (2016) observes that “the education and the western lifestyle succeeded to partition the practice in certain circles resistant to the change, without yet devote this practice to the outrages. But over and over, the polygamy gains ground in certain intellectual or politic milieu in certain African sub-Saharan countries”.

The above succinct clarifications show that the marriage in Bemba culture should procure to each partner a companion which completes and offers a favourable environment for the rest of their life. This conception implies that each person would have only one partner in the marriage. In regard of this concern, Cook (2007) argued that “regardless of its adaptiveness, it is a cultural practice that women do not like, even though it can be argued that women are the reason for its continuation”. The deadlock is how the United Methodist Church handled the issues related to the new convert polygamist. The attitude of missionaries toward the polygamy was questionable as Helander (1958:7) observed that this attitude “caused broken African homes and untold suffering for the discarded wives”.

In closing note for this point, in line with Mugambi (1989:197) when he notably argues that “the basic missionary argument against African customs was that these customs were against Christian teaching”. If it is referred to the picture used early by Sanneh (2008:228), the difficulty remains of “putting the cart before the horse”. This does mean that the United Methodist Church is called to reconsider the context and present convincingly the Christian pedagogical and dialogical approach without any bias built into their worldview as Tapa (1982:97) insisted that:

The interdicts, the institutions do not bring the salvation; they don't liberate the human being. Only the knowledge of God has the power to set free the human being. And the role of the Church is to lead the man to know God. It is an edification role and not of interdiction; it is a role of construction and not of destruction.

For the sake of the contextualization, which is relevant for the Bemba culture, on this specific issue of polygamy, the approach of Nsowaah (1995:180) is saluted when he articulated that “if the church counsels that polygamists let go all their wives but one, there should be a corresponding policy or program that would cater for the victims and their children emotionally, financially, and spiritually”. The next section evaluates the tool of the evangelization of proximity.

4.2.3 Evangelism of proximity

By evangelism of proximity, the United Methodist Church used this net to reach out the Bemba people through the contact of the chief of the village in Mulungwishi as Castro (1995) more significantly shows that “there is no gospels of Christ without the incarnation in the living encounter between the people”. But Sharkey (2013:1) maintains that “missionary encounters were sometimes wrenching, because they could transform the most intimate details of who people were and how they fit in among families and neighbours”. In the same line, Samuel (2009:231) reinforces that the “total commitment to the social community, to build communities, to build and bring change”. For Van Schalkwyk (1999:20), the integral salvation is “God’s work through people in the here and now and it is God’s ultimately transcendental work”.

Evidently, the attention given to the depository of the tradition like a Bemba chief of village has been a good case in point of the United Methodist Church's missionaries at time. For example, the renowned Bemba hospitality is to be recognized as a good channel to the success of this form of evangelization like the Springer's missionary couple in Kalulua had met the Chief Kazembe in 1910, in Musumba, the big Chief Mwanta Yamvo in 1912, in Kabongo; they met the Chief Mulopwe Kabongo (Springer 1927). This evangelism's tool was a cross-current to the general tendency of the focus to the youth and children on the mission of the church.

It can be reimagined that the evangelistic worked on the old persons; the responsible of the community, to see them becoming new church members could not really lead to the deep conversion of the subaltern people as Sharkey (2013:2) insists that "missionaries, their ostensible converts, and local communities were often uncertain about what 'conversion' meant (or should mean) in practice, and how it affected (or should affect) earlier loyalties and traditions". In this way, the conversion could be a kind of hypocrisy just to please the Chief by the respectful and traditional obedience. However, in reflecting on the mission as evangelism, Roux (2007:113) strongly urges that "we are cautioned not to coax or shove, not to judge, but rather to continue witnessing as best we can".

On the other hand, one can projects some positive influences of the conversion of the Bemba people through the familial relationship.

In effect the extended family in Africa and especially for Bemba people is a strong link to wisely exploit in the evangelism of proximity because in the Bemba culture, people are not living for themselves but there deeply connected to each other in the large family.

4.2.4 Camp-meeting

This is the fourth tool used by the United Methodist Church in evangelizing the Bemba people in Mulungwishi at the time. However the camp-meetings have a long history in United States of American the ecclesiastical and theological stream as the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (2016) shows that “historians have generally credited James McGready (c. 1760–1817), a Presbyterian, with inaugurating the first typical camp-meetings in 1799–1801 in Logan county, Kentucky”. For the sake of clarity, in his study, Bruce (1974:52) asserts that “the Methodists enthusiastically adopted the practice of camp-meetings. By 1802, Francis Asbury, the first American bishop, was mentioning them frequently in his journal and the practice seemed to be moving toward full institutional status within the church, a status which it was never to receive”.

The camp-meeting it is biblically perceptible in the text of Exodus 33:7 where Moses wrote: “And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, that everyone who sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp”. The purpose of making a

camp-meeting outside in the light of this text was to bring people to the repentance.

The Bemba people were attracted by this event by going to the camp-meetings to see what was happening there and some are touched by the message of the gospel preached by the United Methodist Church as reckoned in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (2016) that “people came partly out of curiosity, partly out of a desire for social contact and festivity, but primarily out of their yearning for religious worship”. Still, this practice has tackled my mind for questioning its relevance today.

Firstly, the conversion of the Bemba people from the camp-meeting is assessed in this section. One can realize to this point that, the conversion ought not to be emotionally influenced by a temporary event like a camp-meeting. Rather the radical conversion should come from a depth sense of understanding of the need to be set free from the power of sin in the process initiated by God as McKnight (2007:73) argues that “genuine conversion, because it is the work of God that is designed to transform cracked icons into praising and fellowshiping icons, must make itself manifest changes – affective, intellectual, ethical, and socio-political”.

The camp-meeting as a hunter or a net to get more people adhering to the Gospel is an evangelism tool which is not showing clearly the inclusion of the Bemba culture in the event to know exactly how to communicate with the people. Otherwise it could

merely be a kind of proselytism as Padilla (2016) observes that “Jesus’ commandment to make disciples is replaced by a strategy to enrol as many converts as possible”. In line with Padilla, Bruce (1974:61) wrote: “Central to the gathering, then, was the bringing on of conversions among those in attendance, and all the activities of the camp-meeting were set to that end”.

The fact is the Bemba people ought to appropriate and rest on Christ alone as mediator in all his offices. The tight spot is that the Bemba people still believing in the ancestors and *Mipashi* as the mediators between them and Lesa as Galgalo (2012:24) maintains that “the average African Christian, generally speaking, lives at the spiritual margins of both Christianity and African traditional religion, partaking of both but claiming only one identity – that of being Christian”.

More significantly, in the light of the preceding, I point to the fact that, the reaction to an invitation to accept the gospel presented by the United Methodist Church in the mass euphoria to Bemba people is subject of analysis of the multi-facets’ environment in which this call was made by the preacher.

Secondly, in the heyday of the camp-meeting in USA, according to Bruce (1974:73), one can see the racial discrimination as he underlines that “white worshipers were kept apart from black, the whites sitting in front of the stand with blacks gathering at the back”. The very same complex was unconsciously brought by the Methodist

missionaries in the camp-meeting in Mulungwishi. The attendance at the camp-meeting and the welcome of the missionaries by the Bemba people did not always imply the conversion; it was a group experience of inquisitiveness though perhaps a number of Bemba people testify having embraced Christian life through the camp-meeting (Interviews).

The next strategy of evangelism of the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi was the input of some social involvement which I assessed in this study.

4.2.5 Social actions

Suffice it to remember that the social realizations have operated in the colonial time as a powerful tool of evangelism as N'kwimi (2002:215) remarkably notes in the description of the Protestant evangelism in DRC that:

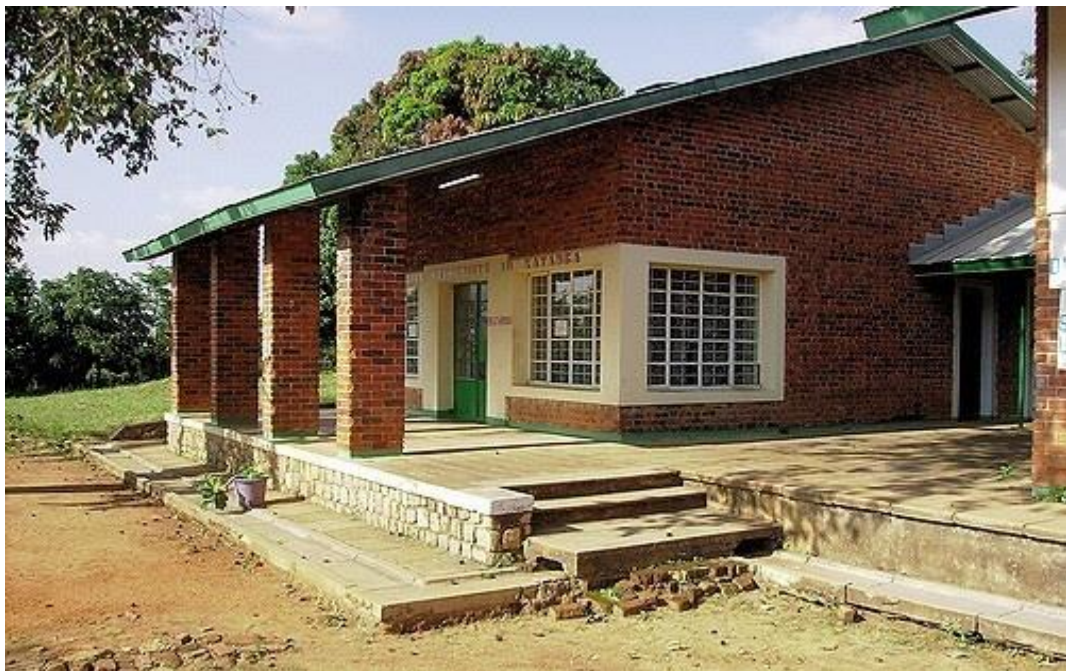
The hospital was a true field of evangelism. Often on the operating table, the surgeon operated a hernia while his wife evangelizing the patient. The Congolese people were astonished to be healed without referring to the traditional healers. They were taking the missionaries as the true saviours of their bodies. They began to turn back to the traditional medicine.

Ageren (1989:62) believes that “the mission work does not consist on preaching far from the people but going to find each person in his home, taking part of his sufferings and his worries”. Apart from the social dimension, Temple (1994:90) is of the opinion that “the Church’s involvement also in the politic and economic matters is a

right universally accepted as salt and light of the world”. Even if its mission is apolitical according to the teaching of Jesus Christ, Banza (2013:338) suggests that the Church should be “practically involved in the socio-political transformation of their community by influencing them favourably by the Gospel”.

In addition, Temple (1994:91) argues that “the purpose of God toward the humanity and evidently the Christian’s imagination cannot forget this mandate”. In the same way, Rauschenbusch (1987:167) concurs with Temple and maintains that “any Christian doctrine which is not concerned by the redemption of the human social aspect is incomplete, unreal and misleading”. Thus, faithful to Wesley’s teaching, the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi is engaged in different social activities to fight against poverty by partnering with, and empowering, those in needs (www.umc.org). The good example is the Katanga Methodist University at Mulungwishi (KMUM), which the background indicated below:

The seminary was founded in 1951 and rose to university level. In 2002 schools of Education; Psychology and Information Technology were added to from Katanga Methodist University. In 2010, the School of Agriculture was added. Most of the high-level leadership of the Church is product of the Seminary. The addition of the other schools is trying to meet the need to train leadership in the secular sector. Agriculture is a tremendous need since most of the province's food is imported (www.umcmmission.org).



According to Persons (2010), “Mulungwishi has been called the heart and lungs of the Church [United Methodist Church] in this area [Katanga]”. The photo below gives the image of the Katanga Methodist University at Mulungwishi. However, the DSCR (2006) of Katanga province asserts that:

The Katanga province shows a serious delay on the education plan. The net education rate is situated at 47, 2% in Katanga compared to 64% for the province of Eastern Kasai and 52% for the province of Occidental Kasai. Replaced in the perspective of

United Nations Millennium Objectives (UNMO), the education is far from to reach the required standard (www.capac.ulb.ac.be)

Furthermore, the study of the Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid, CORDAID (2015) on Katanga Province reports that:

Despite the mining investment and enormous subsequent development opportunities, numerous analysts are taking about the poverty behind the mines on account of the paradox between the development of the mining industry and the poverty which characterizes the standard of life of the local communities. The poverty level is practically the same as in the whole DRC and the standards of life are far to be acceptable (www.cordaid.org).

The diaconal dimension of the United Methodist Church so far in Mulungwishi is not ignored by the population; rather the church is in front of diverse development challenges since the socio-political and economic analysis still ranking the DRC among the poorest countries in the world as reported by a study of the Amity University (February 2016) that “With the lowest GDP per capita than any other country, Democratic Republic of Congo comes in first in the list of poorest countries in the world”. The civil war it went through has also made it the poorest (www.indiatoday.intoday.in).

From the above evaluation, Mulungwishi city is not exempted; therefore the gap to fill in terms of social services and the expectations of the Bemba people in Mulungwishi is profound; this intolerable poverty and its vicissitudes have an effect on the members of the United Methodist Church. Katunga (2016) proposes that “without the development of stable institutions, legitimate governance

structures, and enforcement of regulations aimed at controlling natural resources, the country's forests and minerals will once again be prey for deadly predators and the people of the DRC will be doomed to repeat their tragic cycle". In this regard, Kalemba (2013:76) is right to states that "the mentality conversion has big importance for everybody to be able to combat political responsibility and positively contribute to social justice and long-lasting transformation of the community".

More concretely, the United Methodist Church has the task to be partaker in spiritual, socio-political, and economical context of the Bemba people in Mulungwishi while accomplishing its prophetic role and being a voice of without voice towards the local leaders.

Besides these above-mentioned methods, there are other tools constantly in action for instance the use of the mass media, the personal evangelism, and the sermons at several opportunities as the funeral, marriage and so on. The following section discusses the tension between the gospel proclaimed by the United Methodist Church and the Bemba culture.

4.3 Tension between Bemba culture and the Gospel

From the dawn of history of the interaction of God with the humanity, there is always a watermark of the dialectical approach of the divine and the cultural background of the people in question. The idea here

is to show the line of demarcation between the Bemba belief and the Gospel teaching of the UMC in terms of their respective worldviews.

Firstly, the Bemba people have their traditional and cultural beliefs as the ultimate answer to their problems of day to day reality (birth, marriage, society, death, spiritual world). They believe in ancestors as their mediators between Lesa (Supreme Being) and the human. Whereas the UMC biblical teaching present Jesus-Christ as the only bridge to the Creator.

In this regard, Chalk (2006:231) argues that “with the concept of the sin being different, the view of salvation is different, thus differentiating the reason and the manner God deals with humanity”. Though the general revelation of God is given naturally in any culture, to turn this deadlock around, Inch (1986:97) carefully observes that “the general revelation is an independent bearer of the redemptive message”.

The general revelation (common grace) of God is expressed by Paul, the Apostle in these terms: “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Rm 1:20). Further, Inch moves on to maintain that “the scriptures as the Word of God, no less for being the words of men. Thus, while the traditions of men may be true, the Scripture is true – as the inspired Word of God. We are thereupon

obligated to interpret to be faithful both to the source and audience” (Inch 2006:100).

Secondly, the social life appears as another area of tension between the Bemba culture and the Gospel. In principle, there should not be a tension between Bemba society and the Gospel since both are called to the service of the human community. Nevertheless, Chalk (2006:227) observes that,

Converts to Christianity encounter more problems in the social dimension than any other areas of their lives. Christianity redefines family. Love for Christ should be so strong that love for earthly family would seem like hate. The spiritual bond with other Christians is stronger than the blood bond of earthly families. The Christian is to give preference to those of the family of god over one’s blood family or tribe. Accepting Christianity puts one in a new family whose members all have the same Heavenly Father, God.

This tension comes by the fact that in Bemba culture as well as in African society; naturally, the member must be bounded to his blood family, clan, or tribe. Like it is noticed in the previous paragraph, referring to the object of this study, the dichotomy is the result of a superficial evangelism.

To dilute this friction; studying the African understanding of salvation; Michael (2013:169) acknowledges that “the concept of salvation comes from the fundamental dominance of the ‘now’ and the ‘present’ in traditional African society which primarily defines human relationships and religious activities around this temporal plane”. Michael further adds that “in particular, African Christianity

must also underscore the centrality of the spiritual dimension of salvation whereby forgiveness of sins is found in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and their faith is equally directed to receive the gift of eternal life found in Christ” (Michael 2013:172).

Moreover, according to Bosch (1991:531), “Luke, for example, uses the ‘language salvation’ in very big number of human circumstances – as the deliverance from poverty, the discrimination, the illness, the demoniac possession, the sin, etc.”. In other words, Keller (2012:47) more explicitly stresses that “the already but not yet of the kingdom keeps us from utopian, triumphalistic visions of cultural takeover on the one hand, and from pessimism or withdrawal from society on the other”.

By departing from the utopia, Keller (:47) insists that “the Church will place great emphasis on seeking the welfare of the city, neighbourhood and civic involvement, cultural engagement, and training people to work in ‘secular’ vocations out of the Christian worldview”. This above discussion shows that by becoming Christian, the Bemba converts are not taken out their familial roots as stated by Chalk, rather the Good News brought by the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi seeks to explain the soteriological and eschatological reality of the biblical teaching as Bosch (1991:536) concludes that “the salvation in Christ is the salvation in the context of the human society in route towards the world of plenitude and reconciliation”.

The third point of tension between the Gospel and the Bemba people is the oral tradition. It is already indicated in introducing of this thesis and in the Chapter two, section 2.2 that the oral tradition in Bemba culture as well as in most of African people has the characters of confidentiality the same as the written tradition. By contrast, the United Methodist Church holds her teaching on the biblical written text or tradition. The difficulty for the Bemba people to conciliate their belief with the Gospel comes from the fact that they are asking themselves if the book (Bible) containing the Christian doctrine is true and from God (Appendix B).

This point of conflict hangs on the Bemba people imagination, the United Methodist Church has the duty to convince not by force that the Bible is really the Word of God conveyed in the human words as Chalk (2006:225) underlines that “the recording of myths in written form has given rise to interpretation and commentary on what is recorded in the Bible”. One remarks that the new Bemba convert brings the essential of his culture and it becomes difficult for him to accommodate all the elements that are in tension with his Christian faith. As result, some Bemba people do believe neither in ancestral cult nor in the Christianity. This can lead to the incredulity or the total religious lack of interest.

The task of the United Methodist church is therefore of seeking the new approaches to efficiently communicating the Gospel in every context. This needs an appropriate missionary training not only in

the biblical and theological course but also in the cultural anthropology and ethnology as well. For the above reason, what Dickson (1984:203) recommends about the theological training for Africa is also necessary for the outsider missionaries that “the goal of the theological training is to promote in the Church and in the society, the mission of Christ through the persons whom by their qualification, are able to use their potentialities thinking and acting as responsible in the community”. The missionary of the United Methodist Church should avoid what could prevent the Church growth or weaken his testimony and becoming thus efficient in his work.

4.4 Partial Conclusion

Without a shadow of doubt, one sees that the tools used by the United Church to evangelize the Bemba people in Mulungwishi were not totally a failure if one considers the visible realizations on the ecclesiastical and social grounds. Several United Methodist Churches are planted throughout the Katanga province.

Besides, the involvement of the Church in diaconal wing of evangelism is quite meaningful. For example, as it is observed in Chapter one, section 1.1.9.2 that the United Methodist Church has founded the schools, hospitals and health care centres, agriculture projects, orphanages. The special note is to mention the creation of the Katanga Methodist University of Mulungwishi in 1951 (section 4.2.5) and the Doris Bartlett women’s school. More accurately, the

missionary David Person presents below the social actions in Mulungwishi:

- Katanga Methodist University (KMU);
- A Methodist Theological Seminary;
- The Doris Bartlett Women's School (also affectionately called the 'Mama Doris Women's School', which provides training for the wives of seminary students;
- A health centre (Clinic and Maternity care);
- Three secondary schools;
- A primary school;
- An agriculture project with the local community, etc.

(www.umc.org).

Nevertheless, through this chapter, it is evaluated missiologically the tools or strategies used by the United Methodist Church to win souls of the Bemba people to Jesus Christ in Mulungwishi city.

In any case, most of these tools appear in the analysis as the paradigm shift due to the evolution of the culture and language since the culture is repeatedly known to not be static as Käser (2008:282) states that "a cultural change in the religious domain has been the result of the conscious awake that bacteria provoke the contagious sicknesses: in some communities, the participants to the communion are no more drinking all with the same cup but, for the hygienic reasons, each one drinks with his own glass". In addition, Käser (:282) explains that "such evolutions come from even inside or outside of a culture due the external causes, this means the evolution comes from another culture".

Secondly, these strategies should to be reviewed due to the actual state of the region and the Democratic Republic of Congo

broadly since the country had experienced many political, economic and social changes in its structures since the independence to date as Bosch (1991:541) recognizes that “the relation between the evangelical and social dimensions of the Christian mission constitute one of domains the most thorny of the theology and missionaries practice”.

Thirdly, these evangelism strategies of the United Methodist Church must be upgraded. Facing today the technological revolution in the context of globalization, the United Methodist Church has interest and role to play in the optimal use of the new technology so that the evangelization would become more efficient and fruitful. One of the innovations of our time is the progress realized in the domain of the information and communication technology notably in mobile telephony, television, internet, etc. The information and ideas are exchanged with an incomparable speed.

Besides, it is constantly noted that the Bible translation is the unquestionable legacy of the missionary’s evangelism in Africa (Sanneh 1995:234; Bediako 2000:50; Mojola 2004:12) and particularly in Bemba people (Springer 1916:86). However, Mojola (2007:162) points out that “the challenge in the task of Bible translation is the hermeneutic of reading and interpreting African languages Scriptures to sense the respect of both the language and cultures of the biblical text and those of the receiving people”.

In the strict sense, one approves that the salvation is counted as the grace of the Lord through the conviction of the Holy Spirit in the evangelism endeavour as Bosch (1991:530) underlines that “it would be just to say that the salvation field- no matter the definition of the salvation- determines the field of the missionary endeavour”.

To the human side, the tools used are important for example the learning of the categories of the Ichibemba language would be vital to the missionary to well know the history, customs of the Bemba people towards whom they have been sent. For this reason, the missionary ought to give up the racial presumptions because the Gospel is the love-based teaching. It is noticeable that even if the Church deploys this arsenal of tools in evangelism, there are people among Bemba population who still hostile to strangers and reject merely the message. For this category of people, evidently that they are souls for which Jesus came to save. Finally, one agrees with Bosch (1991:565) when he aptly puts about the evangelism that:

The evangelism in the mission of the Church, is the dimension and activity which, in words and acts and in the light of a particular context, offers to everybody and to each community, everywhere in the world the occasion to be provoked to a radical reorientation of his life; this reorientation means to be set free of enslaving of the world and its powers; recognize the Christ as Saviour and Lord; becoming an alive member of his community, the Church; participate to his ministry of reconciliation, of peace and justice on the hearth; at last, to engage oneself in God plan that want to place everything under the reign of Christ.

The evangelism tools used by the United Methodist Church so far toward Bemba people in Mulungwishi revolve around the strategy planning component of the cycle praxis and have the missiological implications, which is the core of matter in the Chapter five.

CHAPTER 5

MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Introduction

It is indicated in Chapter one, section 1.1.4, that the landing of this research is to set up missiological solution tracks to assist the United Methodist Church in efficiently doing the evangelization task among Bemba people in Mulungwishi to build a new Christian community as Kă Mana (2002:103) argues “the plan of God is the salvation of the people of God and Christian communities and new strategies for social change, and for building a new society”.

Then, the focus of this Chapter is to bring out missiological implications of the missional tools used by the UMC at diverse spheres of the life of Bemba people. The thesis sets forth various future prospects able to bring a valuable change in the Congolese society by means of the agency of the United Methodist Church evolving around the synergy of theory and practice to establish the reign of God in Mulungwishi as Kavunkal (2012: 30) rightly asserts: “Christian mission is a manifestation of the transformational development with its relational emphasis accruing from the Kingdom ministry of Jesus Christ, as the manifestation of the transforming power of God”. Phrased in other words, Kavunkal (2012:44) emphasizes that “mission today is a participation in the brokenness of people, in their hopes, disappointments and anxieties”.

It is of importance to note, that throughout this research, it is increasingly clear that the Bemba people as well as the Congolese population at the large extent are facing the frightful poverty, unemployment, lack of health care, HIV Aids, vicissitudes of recurring wars. Although the country held its first democratic elections in 2006; Whitman (2012:128) observes as well as the position of this thesis, that “despite such movements towards democracy and peace, the DRC is still struggling with conflict in the Eastern section of the country, the Kivus”. Further, Whitman (2012:131) argues about the country’s situation that “this was an extremely difficult operation to launch given the lack of infrastructure, civic education needs, high levels of illiteracy and possibilities of insecurity and corruption”.

Most importantly, this paradox undermines the people’s development notably in the rural environment such as Mulungwishi. The corollary is that Bemba people are victim of anguish as Ekakhol (2009:193) notes that “it is evident that throughout the DRC, insecurity affects the welfare of most communities and people on all levels: social, economic, and even psychological’. In the same vein, Dagne (2012:128) asserts that “the DRC faces serious challenges, despite progress in some areas and relative stability in most regions of the country”.

Taking the analysis deeper, one senses that in this context, the Gospel preached by the United Methodist Church has a missional

role to play as an agent of social change of the Bemba people in their day-to-day pilgrimage as Enright and Ware (2012:170) convincingly argue that “a theological understanding of mission clearly incorporates upholding rights especially of people most excluded and vulnerable, the core task of development”. Enright and Ware (:175) rationally suggest that,

Reflection is needed to determine the shape of those rights in particular contexts. They at least include what is needed for people to live adequately. Such an approach implies that development arises from more than charity and compassion. It has to do with more than attending people’s needs and providing welfare. It seeks to address systems and structures, principalities and powers and the societal mechanisms that determine people’s social location.

Evidently, this chapter also takes in account the relationship of the UMC with other society’s transformation agents as the government, civil society, different organizations, and the entire population in Mulungwishi’s development. The input of the study to the discussion out there is that the *missio Dei* is a full liberation history of people from the spiritual realm to the socio-economic and political sphere as Meester (1980:178) backs up interestingly that “the first concern of contemporary Africa is the acceleration of its development on the industrial, social and economic plan”. At this point, Ela (1980:67) holds the view that “the Church should find the new modes of its presence”. This study tackles the new modes of the presence of the United Methodist Church through the missiological implications to empower the Bemba people in Mulungwishi in different areas.

5.2 Social sector implications

The social implications of the evangelism of the United Methodist Church on the welfare of the Bemba people in Mulungwishi are the core of this section.

According to the World Bank's (2016, April) report, the poverty remains an enduring challenge for the entire Democratic Republic of Congo "despite an impressive economic growth rate and a reduction in poverty rate from 71% in 2005 to 63% in 2012, the poverty rate remains high in the DRC".

The DSCR (2006:23) lists the following deciding points for poverty in Katanga: "Bad governance (*Utawala mbaya* in Kiswahili), resources looting, unemployment (weak investment in creating jobs), the war, the bankruptcy of GECAMINES and other local enterprises, impracticability of the communication roads (enclosing of territories), lack of generators of income activities". From the above given elements, the survey of the UNDP (2009) indicated that "15% of poor people of the DRC reside in Katanga".

Even though the role of improving the standard of the life is at first the responsibility of the government (policymaker) through the local-level in Katanga province, the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi has implemented some community development projects such as the Methodist Theological Seminary, the Mama Doris Women's School, etc.

From the above analysis, surely the UMC should work with other partners in the social change to address the poverty in Mulungwishi as Kakwata (2014:45) earnestly reckons that “poverty is a difficult problem in the sense that it does not only consist of the lack of money but encompasses all the aspects of human life”. The education is among the key sectors for the development of Bemba people in Mulungwishi.

5.2.1 Education

It is worth to recall that the education of the population is the starting point to the development as Sterling (2016) convincingly articulates that “change cannot happen without learning”. In view of this concern, the UNICEF (2012, October) Report on the education sector stipulates:

Economic decay, political instability and armed conflicts have equally created difficult conditions for the education in DRC. As indicated in the strategy of the Primary, Secondary and Professional Department (EPSP), today the quality is low at all levels of the education system, the content and norms of secondary and tertiary education never been object of reform since twenty years.



To back the above, the Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid (CORDAID 2015) shows in this photo an example of difficult conditions for the education in Katanga Province (www.cordaid.org). Cordaid (2015) further adds “as the above photo demonstrates, the need of the communities in terms of the availability of the infrastructures remains enormous in the sense that there is insignificant public investment in education sector before expecting the support from the mining companies”.

It is noteworthy to tie the actual situation in education sector to the statistics results realized by the UNDP in 2009 showing comparatively to other social agents how the government is not investing more in the education of the population in Katanga and in the Democratic Republic of Congo at the large. For example, Kakwata (2014:182) underlines that “it is shocking and scandalous, for many years that the national University of Lubumbashi has no toilets and

students have been urinating and defecating everywhere in the bush, such a situation can lead to the outbreak of cholera”.

The table below leads to an all-encompassing understanding of the public investment in Education sector in Katanga.

| Repartition of Schools by management system | | | | |
|---|----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| | KATANGA | | DRC | |
| | Number | % | Number | % |
| Primary School | | | | |
| Public school | 570 | 17% | 5,014 | 17% |
| Conventional School (Under Religious organization) | 2,248 | 68% | 2,0864 | 71% |
| Private School | 478 | 15% | 3,542 | 12% |
| Total | 3,296 | 100% | 29,420 | 100% |
| Secondary School | | | | |
| Public school | 322 | 21% | 2,982 | 21% |
| Conventional School (Under Religious organization) | 909 | 60% | 9,033 | 64% |
| Private School | 294 | 19% | 2,148 | 15% |
| Total | 1,525 | 100% | 14,163 | 100% |

Annual Statistics of the Department of Education (2006-2007).

With regard to this context, as an agent of social change, the United Methodist Church can work in the sense of improving the education sector by creating more oriented skills centres or schools to cover the need of the population in Mulungwishi as Ekakhoh (2009:211)

underlines that “as caring community, the Church provides hope for its people”. Instead of limiting the role of the Church to evangelism and prayer, Ekakhol (2009:212) argues persistently that “church ministers can emerge as dynamic forces for social change at the community level, especially with their privileged positions, and could address issues such as poverty, corruption, governance, gender etc”.

For this thesis, the United Methodist Church can go further in implementing the new educational infrastructures and prevailing over the Christian moral values to stand against corruption which is compromising the education system in the Democratic Republic of Congo. For Stückelberger (2003), “truth, justice, and protection of the poor are biblical reasons to prohibit corruption”. From the text of Exodus 23:8, the Bible teaches that “do not accept a bribe, for a bribe makes people blind to what it is right and ruins the cause of who are innocent”. Thus, Stückelberger (2003) further argues that “there is no doubt that a drastic change in the ethical and moral climate in Africa is necessary for the continent to be in a position to utilize and allocate its resources justly and efficiently”.

To this point, the implication of the Church in fighting against corruption could be the continuing teaching able to transform the people on the value of honesty and integrity and to denounce systematically any side of corruption in the Congolese society.

The second challenge faced by the evangelism of the United Methodist Church in the social sphere of Bemba people in Mulungwishi is the basic need for shelter.

5.2.2 Housing

Drawing from the investigation fieldwork in Mulungwishi, one discovered that almost the totality of the habitations in the Bemba community is made in non-cooked bricks, the roof is in straw, and the floor is in clay. These conditions are far from the standard of living of the Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights which states:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control (Hohmann 2013:16).

Based on the abovementioned article, it is clear that the Bemba people in Mulungwishi still living in difficult conditions which undermine their development as Tshitereke (2009:4) maintains that “overall, lack of adequate housing produces a socially and economically insecure generation”. Tshitereke (2009:6) goes on to argue that “adequate housing and secure accommodation are central to the government’s commitment to reducing poverty and improving people’s lives”. However, the USAID (2013) Report states: “Poor

resource governance has been both the cause and result of conflicts, instability and poverty in the Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC) for more than a century”. The aforesaid USAID’s report further contends: “Better resource governance is an enormous challenge, demanding vision and leadership from government leaders at all levels, even as conflicts continue in country’s eastern region”.

According to the (CAHF, 2015), Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo currently have planned and not yet executed couple of projects in providing the population with decent housing on the national and provincial scale; compared to the South African Constitution which contains the right to housing as Hohmann (2013:96) observes that “the Constitution brings fully justiciable socio-economic rights to its people, including a right to access to housing. The relevant provision is section 26 (1)”.

The UN-Habitat (2001) reported that “the housing sector in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been neglected during the past thirty years. Infrastructure has collapsed and trained human resources in this sector are very limited”. This corroborates the survey of the DSCR (2006:19) which states that in Katanga: “In rural area, the habitations build in using the traditional technology, are brittle and are in small size. They represent the bad hygienic conditions”. Thus, Kakwata (2014:156) rightly points out that “the housing constitutes an important area in which poverty is revealed”. The recent report of CAHF (2015, October), Centre for Affordable

Housing Finance in Africa underlines that “the Democratic Republic of Congo, with 2 344 858 km², and more than 70 million inhabitants, is a fragile economy that is re-emerging from years of conflicts and instability. Strong economic and social challenges remain, with over 63 percent of the population living in poverty”. The same report goes on to add that “formal, affordable housing supply is extremely limited as there are very few developers, and when it is supplied it is limited to the minority elite”.

The above analysis demonstrates that the housing problem in the Democratic Republic of Congo is far from meeting the strict minimum requirements of comfort and safety, in Mulungwishi city. It would be more accurate to point out that the implication of the evangelism of the United Methodist Church facing this particular context, is to raise up its prophetic voice towards the policy-maker in order to establish an impartial distribution of the resources of the Province which can provide the salubrious housing for the population in Mulungwishi as Mutombo-Mukendi (2011:159) argues that “this preoccupation is not any politic alignment of the Church, but a required answer by the ethic mandate of the Gospel”. Mutombo-Mukendi (2011:163) further contends that “to reduce to silence the prophetic voice within the Church and towards the society it is refusing to do the truth, it is to conform oneself to the present century works, which are the antichrist ethics”.

Mulungwishi is in fact a rural area. In the pragmatic logical sense, the Bemba people need sincerely to receive the blessing of God. It is important that the United Methodist Church brings the reign of God in the crucial areas of their lives as McDowell and Beliles (2008:121) convincingly write: “Christianity cannot prevail in society without strong vibrant churches”. In reflecting on this issue, to join the word to acts, the United Methodist Church can be involved more concretely in the Bemba people lives and their challenges in the extreme poverty context of Mulungwishi.

Suffice is to bear in mind that the United Methodist Church evangelism tools dealt with the health of Bemba people as John the Apostle wishes to his friend Gaius: “My dear friend, I ask God to give good health, your spirit as well. I hope that you may do as well in everything” (3 John 1:2). The following section is a closer look to the missiological implications on the health area is provided as written in Juvenal’s reflection of “*mens sana in corpore sano*” (Mastin 2009). meaning ‘healthy mind is a healthy body’

5.2.3 Health care

It is previously noted (section 4.2.2.1) that, in Bemba culture, there is a relationship between the sick person and the world of spirits. The United Methodist Church introducing the Gospel in this region brought another worldview (biblical) to the understanding of the

illness. Moreover, the Church went ahead to build some health care facilities such as the community clinic and maternity (section 4.2.7).

However, on the national scale, it may be argued that the health care sector still an earnest challenge for the population of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the city of Mulungwishi particularly as the recent Report of the WHO, World Health Organization (2014) shows that “97% of the population (75 millions) are under high transmission of malaria and the government contribution in financing is insignificant”. The current and alarming report of the WHO on the humanitarian action underlines:

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a country perpetually in crisis due to a mix of conflict, disease outbreaks, natural disasters and nutritional crises. Some 7.5 million people need humanitarian assistance and protection in one of the world’s most challenging places to operate. Currently 1.6 million people are displaced, about 4.5 million people are food insecure, and nearly half of all children under five years old suffer from chronic malnutrition. An estimated 80% of internally displaced persons and refugees have limited access to health care (WHO 2016).

On the other hand, the Doctors without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF 2015) indicate that “the Katanga Province was hit by a huge measles epidemic in 2015, and tens of thousands of people were affected”. Additionally, the MSF (2015) underlines that “such health emergencies occur with alarming regularity in DRC, a result of poor infrastructure and adequate health services, which are unable to prevent or respond to outbreaks of disease”.

Another aspect of the healthcare in DRC is the sanitation and drinking water as Willemot (2015) observes that “the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of three countries in the world in which more than 50 percent of the population do not have access to safe drinking water”. The photo is showing people drilling manually to get the water (Source: UNICEF, Democratic Republic of the



Congo/2015). As result, the Africa & World (2016) maintains that “the lack of good drinking water and water for domestic purpose remains a problem facing the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Many depend on untreated water sources such as slow flowing rivers and streams for drinking water which explains many water-related diseases in DRC today”.

Drawing from the above data and analysis; having visited the United Methodist Church’s health care facilities, one picks up an example that the city of Mulungwishi lacks modern equipments. This

leads some patients to the death because there is an insufficiency of health care modern equipment such as an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) as Valentino III (2015) explains that “the intensity of the care provided in ICU requires many monitoring devices. Patients in the ICU generally have many wires attached to them for various types of monitoring. It is important to remember that this highly sophisticated equipment is designed to provide the best possible care”.

It could be in fact noticed that this situation includes unsurprisingly the members of the Churches in Mulungwishi and the United Methodist Church particularly. At the end of the day, the weakened Bemba people by different kinds of sicknesses need a specific attention for their health. As I referred earlier in this Chapter to the epistle of 3 John 1:2, the purpose of God is to maintain the Bemba people in good health. Asamoah-Gyadu (2007:143) is right to write that “the provision of scientific medical facilities as an integral dimension of mission has always been one of the most effective means of Christian missionary service’. However, Asamoah-Gyadu argues that “the provision of health centres and clinics with sophisticated equipment for treating all kinds of diseases has been welcomed and essential, but these have not been considered sufficient in dealing with sicknesses which have a supernatural dimension” (:145).

In this respect, to subjugate illnesses in Bemba cultural worldview, the implications of the United Methodist Church would be

a systematic teaching of God's principles for example on the hygiene and sanitation as Pirotte (2003:320) writes that "it is necessary to inducing the biblical foundations of the healing concept in relation with the theology of salvation and notably the healing ministry exercised by Jesus". The reason for teaching this apologetics on healing, in Pirotte's (:320) words is "the salvation brought by Jesus interprets itself in terms of the whole man's redemption living in harmony with his community".

Evidently, the health problems such as access to safe drinking water, breakout of cholera, measles, malaria, typhoid and the pandemic HIV/AIDS as shown in this section sufficiently prove that the healthcare sector in Democratic Republic of Congo and in Mulungwishi pointedly is a real challenge to the United Methodist Church. Even though the Church in its missional role cannot overtake Government's constitutional responsibility to provide safety and healthcare to the Congolese population, but the Church would be instrumental to positively encouraging the Bemba people to good hygienic habits and sanitation such as construction of the toilettes, removal of the refuse, etc.

Such a situation provides to turn to the next section that explores the missiological impact of the United Methodist Church in the economy and development of the Bemba community in Mulungwishi.

5.3 Economic implications

5.3.1 Community development

It is not surprising that the above browsing on the education sector, housing issue and health care challenges, etc. demonstrates that the country at whole and Mulungwishi city as the fieldwork still facing many sides of poverty. As it is highlighted previously, the United Methodist Church is far from taking on its shoulders this entire population struggle as Lovell (1972:4) observed that “the primary emphasis in a community development project, therefore, is not what people do for others or for themselves, but on what the doing does for all the people involved”.

As the matter of fact, there is a necessity of partnership with others agents of change and more specifically the government through its different policies on the well-being of the Congolese population as Lovell (:5) emphasizes: “Church-based community development projects involve Christians as equals and in that relationship Christians can make their own special contribution”.

Being an agent of change by its calling, the presence of the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi according to its social mandate allows the Church to bring out some tracks of relief to the current multi-facets situation as Lidório (2007:60) wrote: “The aim of cultural understanding and theological contextualization is to plant indigenous churches whose members engage with the human and cultural questions of their own context and how these might be

answered by a biblical theology". The reason in so doing it is to accomplish effectively the *missio Dei* as Shenk (1996:93) eloquently advocates that "the *missio Dei* will be consummated in the eschaton, but in the interim the eschaton infuses the messianic community with hope and power as it continues its witness amid opposition and suffering". Much is written on the community development and scholars have published tremendous literature on this concept. For the sake of the concision, the aim of this study is to explore the impact of the United Methodist Church in Bemba people improvement of their social development to alleviate poverty that is figured out by the following data:

71% of the population of the Democratic Republic of Congo live under the absolute standard of poverty, only 45% have access to the safe drinking water, there is one medical doctor for 17,000 inhabitants, the hope for life is relatively short (46.2 years). The infantile and maternal mortality rate are very high (126/1000 and 1289/100,000 births). The HIV/AIDS prevalence is estimated to 5% (CORDAID 2015; DSCR 2009; UNDP 2009 and Monograph of Katanga 2005).

Firstly, the Church teaches the Bemba people to get rid of the attitude and mentality of poverty that undermines the people to move forward as Myers (1999:84) argues that "some of the causes of poverty have to do with the mental condition of the poor. At the simplest level, it is obvious that poverty is caused in part by lack of knowledge and technical information". Besides, Myers (1999) adds other causes of poverty such as physical causes, social causes, and spiritual causes. Thus, Kalemba (2011) completes that "social

progress and socio-economic development are so desperately needed, and it is through the discovery of their true identity that people will find their spirits and their creativity renewed and will find original solutions to their problems and no doubt, those of others too”.

According to Ife (2013:215) “much traditional community development activity is essentially social service development, involving the identification of social needs and the provision of structures and services to them”. In a similar fashion, Maphosa (2014:21) has well observed that “such efforts may focus on business or job creation and physical or infrastructure development”.

In this social expectation of Bemba people, Ife (2013:223) goes on to argue: “This involves taking an inventory of local resources, talents, interests and expertise, together with an assessment of natural advantages of the particular locality”.

Secondly, as it is demonstrated by the data on poverty on the overall situation of the Democratic Republic of Congo and ipso facto of Mulungwishi, the United Methodist Church plays the role of vehicle of a model of community development from within the community before stretching the hand to the foreign aid as Grudem and Asmus (2013:65) confirm that “no poor nation in history has grown wealthy by depending on donations from other nations”. This means that the Church is playing the role of transformation from within the Bemba people as Maphosa (2014:23) emphasizes that “development has to be based on the needs of people who participate

in defining their vision and create the path to its realisation”. For instance, the United Methodist Church initiated the agricultural project in Mulungwishi.

Indeed, in the light of the above, the United Methodist Church has a holistic responsibility to support the Mulungwishi’s community development by stimulating Bemba people to discover what to do in order to subdue the earth according to Genesis 1:28.

Backing this argument; Maphosa (2014:29) points out that “community development therefore aims at reducing vulnerability by building capacity. Capacity building is linked with empowerment and can be characterised as an approach to community development that raises people’s knowledge, awareness and skills to use their own capacity”. The empowerment approach in Mulungwishi exemplified here is the running of schools, seminary and mostly the Methodist University of Katanga by the United Methodist Church.

The fact is that the community development should be first of all the concern of national welfare and educational programmes initiated by the government. However, in this study’s view the United Methodist Church evangelizing Bemba people in Mulungwishi is aware of the mission of God to the suffering human being. Therefore, regarding the community development the Book of Discipline (2012) of the UMC states initially:

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible

consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress.

The above commitment enables the UMC to realistically work with the Bemba people to join the word to act, or to implement the sustainable development projects in Mulungwishi. Apart from the mining sector, the soil of Katanga Province is vocationally gainful to the agriculture as Roger (2014) rightly points out that:

If there are areas which have been left in second or last, agriculture retained the attention of M'zee [Kabila] who made his hobbyhorse to fight against the famine. This is where will be born the National Service, whose mission was to ensure food self-sufficiency. The fruits were visible because we can remember the maize of Kaniama Kasese; name that became famous in the Congolese population memories at the time.

The United Methodist Church would be more interested in this crucial field since it can create jobs and provide the security food for the population as Maphosa (2014:30) admittedly: "Empowerment enables the community to find answers to their own poverty problems through sector interventions in education, health, food security, water and sanitation". I reinforce Abary's (2016) observation when he writes that "everybody looks, logically to the agriculture sector which is employing 60% of Congolese and which should constitute one of the essential component parts of the economy through the national market supply, continual improvement of the food security..." That noted, in contrary Radio-Okapi in its issue of 09/December/2015, underlines that "the budget allocated to the agriculture sector in the

Democratic Republic of Congo never reaches 3% since 2007 or between 2003 and 2013” (available www.radio-okapi.net).

However, optimistically the current situation of poverty in the Democratic Republic of Congo is not a discourse of desperation, but our country can transform itself as Grudem and Asmus (2013:55) rightly suggest that “nations can move from poverty to prosperity only by continually creating more goods and services”. To second their assertion, Grudem and Asmus (2013:73) underline that “there is no thought in the Bible that poor people would become permanent recipients of gifts of money, year after year, or become dependent on such gifts”. Thus, one can understand that there is a perspective for transformational development as Alawode (2013:67) writes that “development is by nature a process, it cannot be rushed”.

It is strongly advocated that in the development process of Mulungwishi community, the gender ought to be taken in account for a balanced development of Bemba people as Herbert (2010:211) importantly points out: “Every individual, males and females of all ages, should be encouraged and enabled to reach their potential and so be able to contribute positively to the home, church and society as a whole”.

5.3.2 Gender and the community development

The attention should be paid to the gender because at the beginning God said that “it is not good for the man to be alone, I will

do for him alike helper” (Gen. 2:17). Thus, one appreciates what Myers (1999:65) rightfully concedes that “transformational development that does not include gender analysis and seek the empowerment of women will fail”. This includes the participation of the woman in all the spheres of the human’s life as the UNFPA (2016); United Nations Population Fund states that “gender equality is also a precondition for advancing development and reduction poverty. Empowered women contribute to the health and productivity of whole families and communities”.

However, it is reported in Chapter two (section 2.4) that in Bemba Culture, there is a gender discrimination about the attitude of Bemba people on the time of the death. The patient ‘woman’ must count men with whom she has had sex during her life; that is not the case if the patient is a man. The United Methodist Church facing such as cultural worldview can take this point of contact to touch profoundly the problem of gender in evangelizing Bemba people in Mulungwishi.

Firstly, the biblical teaching shows that the Gospel came for both man and woman as the Apostle Paul puts it in Galatians 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus”. The commentary and exegesis of this text means that in regard to salvation both sexes have been saved by the grace. It goes without saying that this salvation is spiritual and includes the well-being. The

Christian teaching uplifts the gender to equality and in this way made most important changes in the community development wherever it could prevail.

It could be reminded that the woman has been treated as an inferior in all respects among Bemba people as well as in ancient Africa, Greeks and Romans, so is the woman in most Muslim countries as Connell and Pearse (2015:7) assert that “in many countries, including some with very large populations, women are less likely than men to have been taught to read”. But the Gospel has re-considered the woman and this fact influences over all the spheres of life.

Secondly, Swart (2006:103) is right to argue that “in the absence of a theory, the aspiring development agency [i.e. The United Methodist Church] almost inevitably becomes instead merely an assistance agency engaged in relieving the more visible symptoms of underdevelopment through relief and welfare measures”. This leads the study and to examine the history and theory of gender through the works of some scholars. It is important to start by the understanding of the concept gender.

5.3.2.1 The concept Gender

When one looks at the concept, one can merely take the term *gender* as the difference between the sex masculine and feminine. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (2006:720) explains:

The word gender has been used since the 14th century primarily as a grammatical term, referring to the classes of noun in Latin, Greek, German and other languages designated as masculine, feminine, or neuter'. It has also been used since the 14th century in the sense 'the state of being male or female', but this did not become a common standard used until the mid-20th century. Although the words gender and sex both have the sense 'the state of being male or female', they are typically used in slightly different ways: sex tends to refer to biological differences, while gender tends to refer to cultural or social ones.

In addition to the above, the study of Connell and Pearse (2015:11) puts that "the gender is the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena and the set of practices that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes". Phrased otherwise, Connell & Pearse explain that "gender concerns the way the human societies deal with human bodies and their continuity, and the many consequences of that dealing in our personal lives and our collective fate" (:11).

Furthermore, Connell & Pearse (2015:69) remind that "there has been a sharp debate about whether the concept of gender itself can be applied in Africa". The reason for this query is the cultural background of Bemba people which comes from the night of history knowing that the woman was neglected. This means that the gender equality was not in question in the past of Africa because the woman

did not have the rights to the public affairs of the traditional society and other religion.

Backing the above, Mianda, as quoted by Nyengele (2004:33) highlights that “both female and male discourses are conservative vis-à-vis the image of woman and avoid the question of order established by men in the Congolese society”. Whitehead et al. (2013:132) arguably put that “psychologists have tended to view sex and gender especially as part of an unchanging dichotomy”. Additionally, Whitehead et al. assert that “this dichotomy fundamentally informs our gender identity” (:136). From the social and psychological perspectives, it is obvious that the gender is basically taken by the body and the sex.

The exegesis of the biblical text from the book of 1Peter 3:7 shows that the word ‘vessel’ is rendered by ‘weak sex’. It is believed that a woman is not necessarily of weak capacity, but that she is more tender and delicate. As such, the Apostle Peter recommends that she should be regarded and treated with special kindness. However, it is true that a woman may have moral, intellectual, and physical qualities in every way superior to a man. But the God creator made her with delicate frame. This is what the Apostle Paul means when he states that greater honour is given to the weaker members (1 Cor.12:23). This truth would raise the female sex everywhere from degradation and the social evils of the gender in Bemba community development.

5.3.2.2 Empowering the Bemba women

It goes without saying that the Bemba women as well as other African women were not allowed to decide for their lives in the male oriented traditional society as Soungalo (2005:12) articulating on the African family points out that “since the wife is not regarded as a member of her husband’s family, she does not inherit anything, and when her husband dies, she may be left destitute”.

As this thesis builds up, one understands that the United Methodist Church ought to concentrate on the empowerment of the Bemba women in the community as Kabber (2002:15) argues that the concept empowerment is basically “the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such ability”. Therefore, this research intends to evaluate the implications of such empowerment firstly through the education of Bemba women.

5.3.2.2.1 Empower Bemba women through Education.

It is repeatedly stated by numerous researchers that the education in the Democratic Republic of Congo still a challenge for the women as well the Program of Cooperation UNICEF (2012) reports that “these two decades of economic decline, political instability and armed conflicts have also created difficult conditions for education in DRC”.

Not only the destruction of the school infrastructures and the school drop off were considerable, but the quality also suffered from that. Purposefully, the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi initiated the Women School called *Mama Doris Women's School*. However, this school is only about training the wives of the Seminar students (see Chapter four, section 4.2.7).

There is still fissure in women's education where the United Methodist Church can intervene in the development of Bemba community in organizing for example the adult female literacy to empower those who never go to school as Maphosa (2014:62) skilfully demonstrated that "people-centred development is central to sustainable community development".

In this regard, Kalemba (2013:103) argues that "without a good education, the development level will be almost hopeless because of incompetence and intellectual aptitude lack that encourage an adequate reflection for a balanced development". In other words, Alawode (2013:37) underlines that "education would help the people to have the right worldview concerning their situation and it would help them as well to take the right step in that direction".

From the preceding analysis, the study aligns itself in the vein with Muriithi (2005:37) when he states that "the church should develop approaches that promote gender complementarity rather than gender competitiveness". To get to the heart of matter, the United Methodist Church should revisit its involvement in the

education of the women through a new system; looking ahead to the information and technology; otherwise, the Bemba women will remain isolated from the main keys of development which are the education, the health and the work.

On the global assessment, the UNDP Report 2015 shows the Human Development Index on the Gender in DRC in the table below:

| Country | Life Expectancy at birth | | Expectancy years of schooling | | Mean years of schooling | | GNI per capita | | HDI values | | F-M ratio |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------|-------------------------------|------|-------------------------|-----|----------------|-------|------------|-------|-----------|
| | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | GDI |
| DRC | 60.1 | 57.2 | 8.6 | 10.8 | 4.5 | 7.7 | 0,597 | 0,765 | 0.393 | 0.472 | 0.833 |
| Nigeria | 53.1 | 52.4 | 8.2 | 9.8 | 4.9 | 7.1 | 4,052 | 6,585 | 0.468 | 0.556 | 0.841 |
| Ethiopia | 66.0 | 62.2 | 8.0 | 9.0 | 1.4 | 3.6 | 1,090 | 1,765 | 0.403 | 0.479 | 0.840 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 59.7 | 57.1 | 9.1 | 10.3 | 4.2 | 6.0 | 2,626 | 4,148 | 0.480 | 0.550 | 0.872 |
| Low HDI | 61.8 | 59.3 | 8.3 | 9.3 | 3.4 | 5.5 | 1,983 | 4,201 | 0.456 | 0.549 | 0.830 |

Source: www.hdr.undp.org [Accessed: 2016-09-28]. F: Female; M: Male.

Legend: In the 2014 HDR (Human Development Report), the HDRO (Human Development Report Office) introduced a new measure, the GDI (Gender Development Index), based on the sex-disaggregated Human Development Index, and defined as a ratio of the female to the male HDI.

The GDI measures gender inequalities in achievement in three basic dimensions of human development: Health (measured by female and male life expectancy at birth), education (measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children and mean years for adults aged 25 years and older); and command over economic resources (measured by female and male estimated GNI [Gross National Income] per capita). This means that the grouping takes into consideration inequality in favour of men over women equally.

The GDI is calculated for 161 countries. The 2014 female HDI values for the Democratic Republic of Congo is 0.393 in contrast with 0.472 for males: resulting in a GDI value of 0.833. In comparison, GDI values for Nigeria and Ethiopia are 0.841 and 0.840 respectively (www.hdr.undp.org). The above data analysis shows evidently that there is a crucial need on the education of women in the entire Democratic Republic of Congo. The United Methodist Church can consider these research data to emphasize on the implementation of

new schools and new programs targeting the empowerment of the women in Mulungwishi in partnership with other community development agencies. Because the ignorance ruins people as the biblical book of Hosea 4:6 wrote: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...”

Poverty in Mulungwishi is due to the ignorance of what to do even if the province of Katanga is well known being rich. But the situation of poverty cannot be widening as it depends on the economic situation of the group of people in question. Therefore, the United Methodist Church can focus firstly on the women within the Church to empower them by teaching them how to alleviate poverty.

This empowerment through education ought to start early by sending girls to school and discourage the precocious marriage practiced in Bemba people tradition. This strategy targets the community development for Bemba women and the common good for Mulungwishi city. Finally, without discrimination based on the sex, the education is compulsory for the development of the Congolese nation. The next section deals with the gender and the health as the second index of the development of the people.

5.3.2.2.2 Heightening awareness of Bemba women for a good health

Broadly, women are usually the vulnerable group, mostly in the rural areas like Mulungwishi as the country is undergoing a multifaceted

health care situation. According to the DSCR/ Katanga (2009), “61.2 % of women live below the poverty level against 59.3% of men”.

Since the country still facing many challenges on the sphere of healthcare, the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi is as well facing the awkward health difficulties on the field of evangelism among Bemba women. For example, the UNICEF-DRC annual Report (2014) states that “HIV prevalence among women (1.6 per cent) is higher than among men (0.6 per cent)”.

At this point, one remembers that the Bemba people still practicing the syncretism by consulting the *Shinganga* when it is comes to get healed. Because their worldview (see Chapter two, section 2.2.6.3) believes that some sicknesses are from the curse of the *Ciwa* (bad spirits). Thus, the Bemba women imagine that the healing cannot be obtained only by the modern medicine. These beliefs lead the Bemba women to neglecting the basic sanitary rules and are infected and die of curable and avoidable diseases as the Human Development Report, HDR (2015) for the Democratic Republic of Congo, states that “for every 100,000 live births, 730 women die from pregnancy related causes; and the adolescent birth rate is 135.3 births per 1,000 women of ages 15-19”.

On other hand, there is a crisis due to the health infrastructure in Mulungwishi, therefore a poor health care access and quality. For instance, the Democratic Republic of Congo Country Operational Plan (COP 2015) Report reveals: “Young women ages 15-24 years are

2.5 times more at risk of contracting HIV than their male peers. This vulnerability has been partially attributed to early onset of sex, number of unprotected sex, and high occurrence of gender-based violence against females in this age bracket”.

To empower the Bemba women in their health; as Maphosa (2014:31) argues that “empowered people not only make informed decisions on matters that affect them, but also release their potential and energy, and through this create their own version of community development”; the United Methodist Church implemented some health care facilities (one Dispensary and a Maternity Centre; see section 4.2.7). However, from the analysis of the above data, it is clear that the population of Mulungwishi in general and the Bemba women particularly need the adequate health care and the tangible actions from the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Katanga provincial authorities even though the current Minister of Health recognizes that “the access to the quality health care remains difficult in the Democratic Republic of Cong” (Radio Okapi, issue of 08/08/2015). One agrees with Kakwata (2014:157) when writing on poverty in DRC emphasizes that “no one can contribute to economic growth if he is not in good health. Thus, by investing in health care, a nation expresses its willingness to alleviate poverty”.

The starting point of the involvement of the United Methodist Church in collaboration with the experts of the health care ought to

educate the Bemba women within and outside of the Church on the sanitary rules and the prevention's campaign for certain diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Typhoid, malaria, etc., so that they can shift from their traditional view to the "healthy worldview" (Vogt 2014).

By 'healthy worldview', Vogt (2014) suggests three levels of involvement below:

- a) The individual level (A vision for persons doing what is right and good, working together, living by the golden rule, developing their minds and abilities, and using these to better their lives and community.
- b) The physical level (A vision to overcome the physical challenges of life, to improve, fix, organize, solve, and produce.
- c) The Institutional level (A vision for fair and just laws and their enforcement, for well-functioning families, schools, businesses, and government.

The following section focuses on the involvement of the United Methodist Church in the public affairs of the Congolese society and in Mulungwishi particularly as the prophetic representative of God for the welfare of the population.

5.4. Implications in the Politics sector

In the African context at large, and that of the Democratic Republic of Congo particularly, there are numerous challenges in the governance of the public institutions. For example, the intentional lack of the alternation at the head of institutions, the partial and unfair

appointment of leaders, the unjust distribution of the country's resources and misuse of the public assets, the impunity of the dishonest leaders, etc. to name few.

Fowler (1996:9) foresees the danger of such government when he argues that "any leader, who claims seriously that the State is mine, has reached the ultimate arrogance and he is ahead of the disaster line". This kind of leading the society is not taking in account the interest of the population as its first concern.

Therefore; Thomas d'Aquin (1997:46) considers that "if a government is predisposed, not to the common good of the multitude, but to the private profit of who is ruling, this government will be unjust and perverse".

The good governance it is a heavy task that requires the leaders towards a real engagement of oneself to serve the people and invest their competence and expertise in the management of the Congolese society. In such context where the aspirations of the people reveal a need of change of life conditions, the United Methodist Church cannot remain indifferent. For his part, Baudin (2006:251) notices that "the management of the city, in the premier sense as the exercise of executive power, legislative judiciary or syndicalist engagement, falls likewise to the responsibility of Christians".

Many African leaders do not accept the good governance by a voluntary consent, because they are trapped by the gangrene of glory and of the covetousness. Moreover, the outsider forces influence

sometimes the management of our cities. For that reason, the Congolese people at large, and the United Methodist Church are called to invest themselves and encourage the policy makers to take the destiny of the Democratic Republic of Congo in hands and manage freely the society without minimizing the equal to equal cooperation with other nations around the world.

Looking at the example of the developed countries, one presumes that the change did not come suddenly, but it is an achievement of the long-term hard work and sacrifice. Convincingly, no one in the world will care of the integral development of the Democratic Republic of Congo more than itself, to repeat the statement of the late Congolese President exhorting the people; he said that “Let us take care of ourselves” (Late President Laurent Kabila).

These words “Let us take care of ourselves” are of the late president Laurent Kabila, who was often repeating this sentence in his state of nation’s speeches calling the Congolese people to freeing themselves from the economic and political dependence of other countries. It worthy to notice that this ideology has had positive results, for instance, the agricultural production of the maize in Kaniama Kasese in Katanga Province which benefited to a large portion of the Congolese population at time (Roger 2014).

It is also assumed that the bad governance in Africa is at some extent linked to the level of education of the people in power, because

sometimes one appoints not people by meritocracy. This means that the choice of incompetent leaders even illiterate for the partisan interest. It might be argued that a good government should take responsibility in the repartition of tasks in granting the responsibility according to the competency and not to the sentiment and friendship or inbred relation.

Without compromising its identity the United Methodist Church has a prophetic mission to be a voice of without voice as the prophets of Israel, to stand on the side of the oppressed and victims of all kinds of violence (war crimes, rape, sex slaves, human traffic, children soldiers, displaced people, etc.).

With an analytical objectivity, it is delicate to recognize that the Church is apolitical as Jesus said in the book of John 18:36: "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom was of this world; my servants could fight for me so that I could not be delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not of this world". Nevertheless, from this statement one opines that the United Methodist Church must not leave itself manipulated as a certain secular association. The church ought to teach Bemba Christians to be honest citizens. In fact, the liberty of expression which came with the events of 1990 which ended up the Mobutu's dictatorial system in the Democratic Republic of Congo, favoured some Christians to integrate the politics arena. Thus, one can find Christians in administrative and political services of the Republic.

The United Methodist Church being an integrating party of the human society is called to actively be present in the management of the city of Mulungwishi looking for the wellbeing of all. To this title, The United Methodist Church should be attentive to the management of the city more than any other human institution, because she is maintaining the privileged relationships with the Creator of this people and the society. From this view, one considers the politics as a manner of management of the city, the Christian ethics, and moral values of the members of the United Methodist Church are an asset for this task. In contrary, refusing to participate in the political management of the society is setting aside the Church to input their potential and competences for the good of the Mulungwishi city. That is why, it is logical to encourage the United Methodist Church members to positively impact the public management of Mulungwishi.

The Bible gives principles for ideal governance and the United Methodist Church can be inspired by these assets to accompany the Congolese leaders in good governance. The United Methodist Church can be unproductive in this domain if it just points the finger to the imperfections of the political governance as Olowola (2008:84) maintains that “in contemporary Africa, the situation has changed dramatically, it is the duty of Christians and the Church to be actively engaged in the politics and in the government”. Because the United Methodist Church is an institution in the Congolese society

and in that way, the good behaviour of its members can be a model for the policy makers in their field of action.

To contextualize the mission of the United Methodist Church in the benefit of an efficient leadership in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is necessary to plant and valorise the biblical virtues such the integrity, the justice, the peace, the love, the compassion and the honesty. This is to eradicate the corruption, the partiality as Welch (2005:39) underlines that “the determined choice and the continual practice of integrity constitute the sole solutions to the plague of corruption”. In addition, it also indispensable to plant and valorise the excellence in the workplace and the service, encouraging the respect of the law and the unity.

The United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi cannot view the political power as a non-Christian business as Fowler (1996:37) argues again that “each societal structure includes the Church and the State function in the human society and not in a limited sphere and subtracted from the human society”. Effectively, Kerber (1976:113) underlines that “one will give credit to the responsibility of the Church if one can count on the seriousness of its approach, this means that if she comes to forge herself an authentic and objective judgment on the situation”.

The government, whatever nature it could be, ought to work out for the development of the people. To the view of the actual economic and political stake in the Democratic Republic of Congo,

there is a crucial need of a good political government which shall take the interest of the population as its premier mandate. For this reason, the study tends to highlight the fact that there still a problem to solve in the Democratic Republic of Congo, either it is the application of the good governance rules or it is those applying these rules to their manner such as the constitution tailored on the benefit on the ruling power.

The example of the actual conflict about the present President Joseph Kabila mandate regarding the constitution in the Congolese society is a proof that the problem of the mediocrity of the governance of the country finds its roots inside of the political class rather than everywhere else. If really it is the leader who cause problem that means any form of political regime in Democratic Republic of Congo would undergo the same fate as long the leader is not changing his/her mentality. This is a place where the United Methodist Church, which is serving God, the Leader by excellence, should involve herself seriously in the participation of the country by advocating the ethical values based on the Word of God.

In this way, the United Methodist Church cannot play the role of defender of any political group. But the church can positively or negatively appreciate the form of political regime that the leaders adopt and that should be done in the light of the Word of God. To this purpose, Kunhiyop and Wahe (2008:106) are right to write that “the Church in Africa has recognized the need to participate in the

political life of the State and looking for an impact on the education, economy, politics and culture”.

In fact, the ideologies are dynamic and function in the history, in all events; any form of government which is taking in account the concerns of the people will get the esteem of its people. In the light of the bible, it is God himself who is giving to the political structures a place under the sun (Romans 13:1-7). The presence of the political structures it is then legitimate and necessary to ensure the good functioning of the society. The authority is a good thing, but Douliere (1975:194) is of opinion that “if the principle of authority belongs to God, all authority is not from Him”. Douliere (:194) backs his argument from the Scripture in understanding that the beast which comes out from the sea detained its authority from Dragon and not from God according to the biblical book of Revelation 13:1-2: “And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, its feet were like a bear’s, and its mouth was like a lion’s mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority”.

What is clear is that one must not confuse the authority notion and the exercise of authority. The authority can be sane or abusive according to the persons which are in power. This implies that the lack of authority is to deplore as well as the misuse of the authority. The United Methodist Church ought to be free and separated from the civil power. Vis-versa the State should give the religious freedom and not to interfere in Church affairs. It can be argued that the good

functioning of Mulungwishi city needs a social order. This does not mean that the United Methodist Church should approve all the policies and measures of the government.

The principle of separation of does not implicate the silence of the Church in the social and political debate. The prophetic and eschatological conscious of the Church push it to desire a best world and to involve itself socially, economically and politically (Kalemba 2009:229) to let her voice heard in the society mostly in its quality to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14).

It can happen that some Bemba Christians adopt the awkward behaviours, or even inappropriate toward the civil authority. These skids are regrettable and harm considerably the Church's testimony. Moreover, the Church is called to wisdom in its social interventions. What I presume here is that the Church cannot impose or force the Christian point of view to the society, but simply participate to the social debate in order to present another worldview valid and worthy to be considered because based on the elevated and high wisdom of the Word of God.

The responsibility of the Church is to promote the evangelical values. Thus, the United Methodist Church can present and defend the Christian values if this constitutes a benefit for the entire population of Mulungwishi, even if these values would not be retained by the civil authorities, for instance in the matter of justice, marriage, peace, governance, etc.

For this reason, one suggests that the Church ought to define itself according to the social stake (society project) rather than to be identified as supporter of certain political party or candidate. In fact, the United Methodist Church in question here is supposed to let its members free of their political allegiance. First, the Church is seeking to be composed by the honest citizens and responsible. That implies to recognize the authority of the Government, to respect the law, to pay taxes, go to vote, contribute to the common good, to participate effectively to the civil life of Mulungwishi.

However, the United Methodist Church should recognize that many members have praiseworthy motivations to participate in the community service as Barth (1963:14) underlines that “the relationship between civil community and Christian Community has its positive side, which results by the fact that the constitutive elements of the first belong equally to the second and they are necessary”.

Effectively, to manage the city of Mulungwishi, the Province of Katanga or the country like the Democratic Republic of Congo is a heavy task. That is why the United Methodist Church is called to pray for political leaders during the time of devotion so that they could exercise their duties with honesty and integrity as the Bible recommends: “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable

life, godly and respectful in every way. This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour” (1Timothy 2.1-3).

The missiological point of view as the study build up is that to cooperate with the authorities in place does not mean always approving their policies. The United Methodist Church sometimes can express its concerns and disagreements, but all the time, the Church must privilege the dialogue.

The Church can comes to the time where Christians are called to the disobedience when the government acts against the Word of God as Fowler (1996:50) sustains that “it is clear that where the government forgets the justice and engages itself in the oppression acts and injustice, the Christian can resist this government because this government engages itself against the Word of God. This government now is operating illegally”.

This resistance is not however an occasion to plunge in the violence or in the disrespectful words. The case of Daniel at Babylon is eloquent to serve as an example: “But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king’s rich food, or with the wine which he drank; therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself”. The liberty of choice is a fundamental value and inalienable for the human being. Some African nations and the Democratic Republic of Congo have in their respective constitutions the articles related to liberty of citizens, but in practice this liberty is not respected.

Finally, one maintains that it is salutary for the Congolese political authorities to implement the structures of the fight against the misuse of the public assets, the corruption under all its forms, the discrimination toward the law, the xenophobia, the tribalism, the politic of the stomach, the injustice, the insecurity, the racism, the arbitrary arrests and the political murders, and other evils which are ruining the development of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The United Methodist Church can be helpful in the sense that the leadership of the church is working to end up the corruption and injustice by promoting the biblical values through its members who are the active agents in all spheres of the Mulungwishi community social structure and the DRC at large.

Therefore, it is relevant that the United Methodist Church in Bemba community be able to incarnate the change of mentality of the political leadership in accomplishing the task of the holistic mission.

5.5 Partial conclusion

The focus of this chapter was to establish the synergy of the theory and practice aimed to restore the Shalom of God through the Bemba people in Mulungwishi as the last part of the praxis cycle of this study theoretical framework.

In fact, the pastoral strategies are designed to fulfil efficiently the mission of God through the mission of Church. This is done through the strategic planning of the United Methodist Church to be

realistic and relevant toward the needs of the Bemba people in their worldview and social, economic, and political day to day life.

When the United Methodist Church spreads the Gospel to make all Bemba people disciples of Jesus-Christ, I consider two main social spheres of the missiological implications of the evangelism of the Church. To be more explicit, the thesis emphasized on the involvement of the Church in education and the health care of the target people as its mission embodies the whole man. The different missional tools used by the United Methodist Church for the above purpose show evidently the eagerness of the Church to bring the change in Bemba culture following the unchangeable Word of God.

However, in the country like the Democratic Republic of Congo weakened by multifaceted challenges (recurring political unrest, paradoxical poverty, flagrant lack of health care etc.) and mostly in the rural milieu of Mulungwishi, the role of the Church could not be reduced only to the spiritual mandate. Thus, the research on the field showed some non-negligible efforts of the Church in the uneasy context of the country to develop Mulungwishi's city.

The starting point of the United Methodist Church to be implicated in the Bemba people culture for their entire development is the incarnated gospel which is identifying the missionary to the target people without denying his/her own cultural identity. Moreover, to make the gospel good news for the Bemba, the United Methodist Church encounters the people practically in implementing

schools, maternity centre, agriculture projects and mostly the creation of the Methodist University of Katanga which is a huge ambition.

However, the point is that a deep assessment of the missional tools and strategies of the United Methodist Church toward the alarming situation of the DRC is important to boost up the Church involvement in Mulungwishi. For instance, the Mama Doris Women's School, which provides training for the wives of seminary students only, can enlarge its vision to empower the Bemba women by implementing the literacy campaign for all women through the Church and outside. The Methodist University of Katanga can extend its curriculum to the real needs of the population, for example by adding the agricultural and technical departments to its academic structure.

On this educational plan, it is of importance to mention that the Church cannot work alone. The collaboration with the State is to encourage the public schools to teach the honesty, integrity, justice, and love which are in fact the divine values for both women and men as Dolamo (2001:295) argues that "Christians have to offer a critical and prophetic support for Government's agenda; we must support the government in those projects whose main objectives are to improve the quality of life for all". In doing so, the Church is positively participating to the transformation of the Congolese society by fighting against corruption and all kind of immorality.

The United Methodist Church is a Christian community leaving with the poor people in Mulungwishi. As the survey conducted by CORDAID (2015) demonstrates that “71% of the population of the Democratic Republic of Congo lives under the absolute standard of poverty, only 45% has an access to the safe drinking water, there is one medical doctor for 17,000 inhabitants”; there is no evidence of the United Methodist Church’s strategies to alleviate poverty in Mulungwishi.

Therefore, the Church must move to the structures of fighting against poverty by initiating firstly the awareness teaching on the issue of poverty. Secondly, to establish the Shalom among the God’s people in Mulungwishi, in the same way the Church can also train the Bemba people to the small businesses to enable them to put the bread on the table instead of waiting help from outside. Thus, the message of salvation preached by the United Methodist Church would be relevant and influential as Kalemba (2011:23) posits that the Church should respond to the “worldly needs like sickness, poverty, oppression, unemployment, loneliness, evils spirits, sorcery, etc.”

Finally, the United Methodist Church manages the Congolese citizens and other people who have the rights to the security, peace, and wellbeing. For this reason, the Church as a community change agent has in the same time the right to the public and political disquiet of the country and Mulungwishi exceptionally.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL CONCLUSION

6.1. Research findings

At the end of this study, the input to the Missiological debate is the fact of re-conceptualizing the Wesleyan Quadrilateral Model of Contextualisation (section 2.3.4) which did not take seriously in account the culture in its philosophy at the time as Bartle (2001) strictly insists that “the missionary must look at the rituals, ceremonies, and myths of people to search out those places where God has been at work preparing the people for the good news of Jesus-Christ”. That is why Thomson (2006:32) argues that “models can also serve other purposes; for example, some are constructed for indicative or predictive purposes providing direction for future research endeavours”. The weak spot of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral model of contextualization as it is demonstrated (section 3.4.2) in this thesis is due to John Wesley’s target people in England and in America who were speaking the same language (English) with the founder of the Methodism and they were sharing the very same cultural western worldview even though Wesley presumed that the world is his parish.

By developing the *Pentagonal* model of contextualization, it is purposefully added a new dimension to the Wesleyan Quadrilateral model of contextualization. An alternative phrasing of the core of this finding is an eager request to the Methodist imaginary to reconsider

the quintessence of the Gospel in this contemporary century and particularly in evangelizing the Bemba people in Mulungwishi as Banda (2010:197) argues that “the church and missions agents need to critically reconsider their praxis to improve their standing as role players in the open market of ideas and action”.

Backing the above, for instance, it cannot be overemphasized that throughout Methodist church Sunday service, people devotedly use the book of hymns of the United Methodist mostly inspired by Charles Wesley as you might say that the Holy Spirit cannot at the present moment inspire Bemba Christians to initiate songs and celebrate the Lord in their language of heart, to say the *Ichibemba*.

On the universal plan, there is no doubt that the Methodist missionary has developed the understanding of the challenge posed by the essence of the contextual theology as the paradigm shift in mission developed by Bosch (1995:251) states that “the fact is simply that today the Christian church in general and the Christian mission in particular face the challenges that they never imagine formerly. They must find the solutions that are at the same time pertinent for our time and faithful to the Christian faith”.

6.2. Final summary

The study is built through a breakdown into six chapters.

The first chapter explains the general considerations of the thesis. In chapter two, it is firstly introduced the Bemba people because they

are the focus of the contextual evangelism of the United Methodist Church. The Church and the people are intertwined in partnership as the agents of development of the community in Mulungwishi. The Chapter two answers the first and the second subsidiaries research questions which define the Bemba people and the nature of the United Methodist Church. It is demonstrated that God the Creator's relationship with the humans in the context of their culture is the foundation of the mission missionary undertaking. Then, it was important to provide accurately the Bemba culture according to the oral tradition and some helpful recorded information as the study should quote the primary source as much as possible.

The Bemba as many Congolese people believe that the soul of the human cannot die, but it is alive in the world of spirits and in the last resort, it plays the role of mediator between the physical and metaphysical world. Secondly, the genesis of the Methodism and the birth of the United Methodist Church are provided to understand the theological lenses, the doctrinal foundations, and the ethical framework as well to unpack their worldview, their missional tools, and strategies, mostly their spirituality in doing contextual theology among the Bemba people.

The Chapter three focuses on the contextualization of the gospel specifically facing the Bemba culture as the core of this thesis. The missional tools used by the United Methodist Church in the evangelism since the colonial time toward the Bemba culture are

reviewed. One finds out that the culture of Bemba people like any other culture needs to be meticulously dissected so that the points of contact would be discovered which enable the smooth landing of the Good news of Jesus Christ. For the Gospel to be relevant to the Bemba culture, it is pointed out that the United Methodist Church must appreciate the cultural worldview of the people while remaining faithful to the core of the Gospel. The *Pentagonal* model of contextualisation is implemented to uphold the culture for its transformative process.

To the above, the United Methodist Church should be proactive to respond to the change of culture and society environment in doing theology.

The missiological evaluation of the missional tools of the United Methodist Church was the main sketch of the Chapter four. Without minimizing the considerable efforts of the Church, it is demonstrated that currently, the United Methodist Churches are planted successfully throughout the Katanga province and the Democratic Republic of Congo at the big scale. In contrary, Kamuha (2008:136) viewed that “when churches expand their denominations instead of the Gospel, this is no different to what early foreign missionaries did. These early Western missionaries are often blamed and criticized for having brought into mission’s field, their denominations and divisions”.

Facing the technological evolution in the context of globalization, the United Methodist Church has interest to optimize the use of the new technology so that the evangelization would become more efficient and fruitful. One of the innovations of our time is the progress realized in the domain of the information and communication technology notably in mobile telephony, television, internet, etc. Finally, one finds that despite all the missional tools used by the Church, there still a tension between the Gospel and the culture which led to the resistance of some Bemba people as they are by nature hostile to strangers and reject the message. For this category of people, the Church must pray until the Holy Spirit will touch them for their salvation as the biblical book of John writes about the conviction from the Holy Spirit that “when he comes, he will convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment. Concerning sin because they do not believe in me” (John 16: 8-9).

On the Church social involvement, the study attentively retained the investment in the creation of the Katanga Methodist University of Mulungwishi in 1951 as the highest vision of the community development. But the Katanga Methodist University must reinforce its curriculum and look forward to adding the departments which are a real response to needs of education of the population and the development of the city of Mulungwishi indeed. It is also advocated that the School for the Students’ wives can go further in

implanting the Literacy Centre for those women who did not go to school and the empowerment of women in Mulungwishi as Banza (2013:7) argues that “the gospel must be applied to liberate women from oppression, a practice that is often culturally grounded”.

On the political involvement, it is demonstrated that the United Methodist Church ought to stand up and fight against the evils of the Congolese society such poor governance, misuse of the public assets, impunity for the leaders unjust, corruption and resist to the government which is breaking the law for their own benefit to the detriment of the entire population as Kalemba (2012:6) argues that “the fight against all diseases can be overcome by returning to God’s heart and sowing community seeds of true love, harmony, justice, happiness, security, collaboration and reconciliation”. Doing this, the church can show that it is really the light and salt of the world. Kalemba (2012:8) further adds that “man can always be central to the commitment of the Church in its evangelization and social promotion”.

The Chapter five of the thesis sought to link the theory to the practice and checked out the restoration of the reign of God in the Bemba community in Mulungwishi. This strategic planning of the Church should be realistic to the needs of the target people in the daily life. At this point, the thesis focused on the missiological implications of the evangelism by the United Methodist Church. However, the persistent political instability, and the economic

uncertainty of the country lead to the continual poverty and delay the development of the city of Mulungwishi.

Therefore, rightly Alawode (2013:158) wrote that “poverty is also considered as a violation of human rights. The responsibility of Theologians and Christians (the Church) in general is to promote fair and just society in which the underprivileged are empowered in such a manner that they can contribute to the development of their community”.

Despite this context, it is demonstrated that the United Methodist Church should first incarnate itself in the suffering people as Weyers (2012:197) argues that “the great danger of failing to incarnate the Gospel is spiritual imperialism whereby we impose an operational mode of believe, behave and belong on people”. This is to mean that everything must start by the teaching for the transformation of the mind into the divine values.

The United Methodist Church should also go further to establish the reign of God in training people to entrepreneurship instead of waiting the manna from heaven. Finally, the United Methodist Church as the community agency for change in partnership with people has the right to public management of the city of Mulungwishi. One agrees with Ekakhol (2009:321) when he insists that “the people of the DRC do not deserve the poverty that has been imposed on them. The resources available in the country,

good quality leadership and little political drive should be sufficient for the country to flourish”.

The Chapter six concludes the thesis

6.3 A concluding word to the United Methodist Church

It is discovered that the crucial need for Bemba people in Mulungwishi it is a tangible social development, an integral transformation and reconstruction of the city. This expectation sounds a huge endeavour spiritually and physically not only for Mulungwishi, but for the interest of the entire population of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Thus, the focus for the United Methodist Church, aligned on the core of the Gospel, would be to draw from the former evangelism tools, the impact on the practical life of Bemba people and implement the appropriate and modern ways of making the Gospel good news in their culture as Bosch (1991:414) underlines that “if the Church is to impart to the world a message of hope and love, of faith, justice and peace, something should become visible, audible and tangible in the church itself. Where this is absent the credibility of our evangelism is dangerously impaired”.

Besides, there is critically a controversial stream of the theology of prosperity in Africa and elsewhere which can hinder the systematic progress of the community as Phiri (2012:197) states: “I cannot deny the fact that God does bless those who give to Him, but sometimes this manipulative tendency is not necessarily in the interest of

working towards the growth and extension of the Kingdom of God, but only works to their advantages (Pastors)". In the same vein, Hendricks (2014: 136) considers that "the danger of the *prosperity gospel* is that the gospel as a whole, in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament, is redesigned to function as a legitimating of vital interests of enrichment for some believers".

Despite this one-sided theology everywhere preached in the country, of course in Mulungwishi as well, the Democratic Republic of Congo still living under the extreme poverty as demonstrated by different data in this thesis.

For that reason, the United Methodist Church facing the current complex situation of the country needs trained, competent, and qualified people committed for the missionary work without neglecting the twin wing of the gospel as Hendricks (2014:152) further remarks that "usually, unfortunately, most churches, if not basically all churches, are only emphasizing person salvation and try to do small deal of social work, poverty alleviation, etc."

At this point, the United Methodist Church should more promote and stimulate the local clergy and lay members for the proficient communication of the message of salvation. It is possible that the outsider missionary can do what it is important, but the native pastor or a lay member goes deeper in using the idioms of the mother tongue to his people as it repeatedly written in the Methodism mission and ministry of the church that: "Local churches provide the

most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs” (Discipline 2012:91).

6.4 For possible further research.

The unfinished spheres for the further study in this thesis would include the missional planning of the ‘four-selves’, self-theologizing, self-financing, self-administration and self-missionaries sending for the United Methodist local Church until showing the promptness for this ecclesiastical development line. Such research will help other local Churches in Mulungwishi in their contextual theology as Maluleke (1995:231) advocates that “the future of Christianity in Africa depends to a large extent on the reaction of string, autonomous and innovative local churches”.

During this study, it is found that there is a lack of written record on the precise history of the Bemba people. Thus, another area of research would be focused on the history of the Bemba of the Republic Democratic of Congo since the pre-colonial period up to date. Such research would light up on the Bemba people and significant for the generations to come.

To conclude, the Church especially in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo can do more if the Gospel touches the in-depth level of the culture of the people by teaching the gospel in a given context.

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5. Education Background:

- a) No formal education b) Primary school c) Secondary school
 d) Tertiary e) Postgraduate.

6. Employment status:

- a) Civil servant b) Private company employee c) Self-
 employee d) Unemployed

B. Questionnaire

1. How the United Methodist Church is addressing the Bemba culture of consulting the traditional healer?

- a) The Church chases away those who consult the traditional healer
 b) The Church does not believe in the traditional healing
 c) The Church teaches the biblical point of view on the healing.

2. Is the Church helped the Bemba people to change their worldview concerning the ancestors worship?

- a) The Church teaches that the ancestors don't communicate with the living.
 b) The Church explains that worshipping the ancestors is a sin.
 c) The Church acknowledges that the ancestors exist but they cannot be worshipped.

3. How do the Bemba people understand the camp-meeting according to their culture?

- a) Bemba people compare the camp-meeting to the traditional African initiation

- b) Some people take this opportunity to tie new relationship
- c) The Bemba people look at the camp-meeting as a fish-hook to attract them to the Gospel.

4. Do you think that the Gospel can be totally accepted by the Bemba people

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Not sure.

5. What are the reason for some Bemba people remain attached to their culture even if they are members of the United Methodist Church?

- a) People are hesitating between both beliefs; Christianity and culture.
- b) They think that Gospel is the religion of white people.
- c) They did not find the deep answers to their cultural aspirations.

6. What are the positive side of the Bemba people culture which can be embraced by the Gospel?

- a) The virginity of the youg woman until they get married.
- b) The polygamy so that the Bemba can multiply easily.
- c) The Gospel and the Bemba culture are opposed.

7. What is in your opinion, the role of the Church in evangelism toward the Bemba people?

- a) To proclaim the salvation of the Lord Jesus-Christ.
- b) To get more members for their donomination
- c) To maintain the African people in dependence of the white worldview.

8. The Province of Katanga is rich, what do you believe is the cause of poverty?

- a) The Government b) The Church c) The indolence of the people d) The outsider Western power.

9. How the poverty is affecting the United Methodist Church?

- a) The people cannot offer enough to sustain the Church's activities
b) The pastor of the Church remains very poor.
c) The Church is unable to send native missionaries

10. Is the United Methodist Church involved in the Community development?

- a) Yes b) No c) Not enough

11. Do you believe that is part of the United Methodist Church mission to address poverty in Mulungwishi?

- a) Yes b) No

12. Why does the United Methodist Church should collaborate with the civil authorities?

- a) Because the Church is dwelling amongst the people
b) Because the Church must be the light and salt of the world
c) Because the word of God is above all the human law.

13. If there is a provision of vocational training to empower Bemba woman, will you attend?

- a) Yes b) No

14. Do you belong to any social group in your community like cultural group, sportive group, etc.?

- a) Yes b) No

15. What do you think is the best way of empowering Bemba people in Mulungwishi?

a) Give them food

b) Provide shelter for them entrepreneurial training which can enable them to become auto-sufficient.

c) Provide shelter for them.

16. How do you see poverty in the entire Democratic republic of Congo? a) worse in some areas b) Linked to social position

c) widespread.

APPENDIX B

**SAMPLE TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWS WITH UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH LEADERS.**

Interview with Pastor 1

26 February 2015

Interviewer: What are the reasons for some Bemba people to remain attached to their culture even if they are members of the United Methodist Church?

Respondent: Thank you for your question. I think that it is determined by on how they are receiving the message of the gospel. When I am preaching the gospel, I expect people to be set free from their cultural background that is not in the same line with the teaching of the Bible. Secondly, some Bemba people here in Mulungwishi think that they cannot live without being linked to their culture because of their belief in the ancestors. However, there are some aspects of the culture which must be left away and some other can serve positively the gospel message.

Interviewer: How do you manage the tension between the gospel preached by the United Methodist Church and the Bemba culture?

Respondent: This question is very interesting. As long as the gospel is the word of God expressed in each and particular language, we, pastors of the United Methodist Church are aware of the fact that the

culture and civilisation may change. That is why the United Methodist Church facing Bemba culture in Mulungwishi is working on the translation of the bible and hymns in *Ichibemba* to understand the categories of the deep Bemba culture.

Interviewer: What is the involvement of the United Methodist Church in the social life of Bemba people here in Mulungwishi?

Respondent: The social role of the United Methodist Church is to focus on the development of the people. That is why the church builds schools, and even the University (e.g. the University Methodist of Katanga). Besides, the church instigates the agriculture projects which will create jobs in Mulungwishi.

Interviewer: What are the challenges the United Methodist Church is facing toward Bemba people while tackling the multifaceted problems in Mulungwishi community?

Respondent: Pastor, thank you for this pertinent question. There are many challenges in addressing the social and economic situation of Bemba people in Mulungwishi: lack of clear development projects from the government, lack of education, unemployment, to name few. Despite this situation, the United Methodist Church partnering with some NGOs assist some women to go to school because they are the most vulnerable group of people in our community.

Interviewer: How the poverty is affecting the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi in your local church?

Respondent: The poverty in Mulungwishi as elsewhere prevents the church to realize its apostolic and social projects. It also creates a feeling of inferiority and jealousy between the members of our church. We are fighting against this evil by teaching the word of God and praying.

Interviewer: Katanga is a rich province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In your opinion, what are the roots of the poverty which are ranking the country among the poorest of the world?

Respondent: For me, first it is the bad governance of the leaders of the country. I also think that the country is victim of exploitation of its natural resources by the Western powers who are creating wars to get profit of the wealth of the country. And finally, the people must not wait for aid from outside. We have a productive soil in Mulungwishi to prompt the agricultural projects even artisanal to put the bread on the table and start eradicating poverty in our community.

Interview with Pastor 2

26 February 2015

Interviewer: What are the reasons for some Bemba people to remain attached to their culture even if they are members of the United Methodist Church?

Respondent: Number of Bemba people thinks that the gospel is the religion of the white people and the main hidden task of the last still to dominate other cultures with their complex of superiority. Their imperialism can be seen by their actual technology aimed to control the world. That is why some people remain sceptical.

Interviewer: How do you manage the tension between the gospel preached by the United Methodist Church and the Bemba culture?

Respondent: To my understanding, the church should not have any tension between the gospel and the Bemba culture. Reason of saying that it is because the methods used in the past were not appropriate. For example, considering that, everything coming from the Bemba culture is heathen and must be forbidden. However, the Church we are leading in Mulungwishi can accommodate some Bemba cultural values in peaceful way.

Interviewer: What is the involvement of the United Methodist Church in the social life of Bemba people?

Respondent: Off course, the United Methodist Church is part of the Mulungwishi's community. People attending the church are from the grassroots of the population. Even if we teaching that we are waiting the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but the people still living on the earth facing poverty with its consequences: lack of food, unable to send their children to school, etc. That is why, we as leaders of the United Methodist Church in Mulungwishi we are

involved in the socio economic and political situation of our country. In regard of this difficult environment, the Church is trying its best to be closer to the people, considering their expectations and suggest some reliefs in terms of social development projects: building schools, maternity, sport centres, etc. Particularly here where I am a senior Pastor, I initiated a source of income for our local Church. This was the fabrication of the local shoes that we are selling and bring money in the church. With this money we are supporting the widows and orphans in the church.

Interviewer: What are the challenges the United Methodist Church is facing toward Bemba people while tackling the multifaceted problems in Mulungwishi community?

Respondent: The most challenge we are facing here is the poverty. This is from the selfish management of the province and at large extent, the whole country.

Interviewer: How the poverty is affecting the United Methodist Church in your local church?

Respondent: Dear Pastor, we must put in the mind that the Church is not under the human law; it is firstly abided to the heavenly law, the commandments of God. The Lord Jesus died on the cross for his Church. I think everything should start by a good teaching on the different aspects of the concept of poverty. If people are sufficiently informed on this problem, they will surely take their responsibility

and get out of this squeezing reality. Here in our parish, we are suffering with the consequences of the poverty and our members are unable to live decently. Our dominical offerings are less than \$ USD 5.00 per Sunday.

With such as money coming in, what can we do in terms of social development and support those in need, etc.? How can we send our own missionaries to bring the gospel in other areas?

Interviewer: Katanga is a rich province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In your opinion, what are the roots of the poverty which are ranking the country among the poorest of the world?

Respondent: It is true that many Congolese Christians and non-Christians have always point the finger to the outsiders who are not willing to allow the economic freedom of our country. On my sight, I think that other fingers are directed to our own people who become enemies of their own brothers and sisters, killing each other with tribal hatred. I came to understand that the outsiders get chance to destroy us because they found out that we do not love each other as the bible recommends it to us. I tend to conclude that the roots of the poverty in our country still an unsolved equation. And I believe that God will end up helping us as he helped the people of Israel from Egypt.

Interview with Pastor 3

02 March 2015

Interviewer: What are the reasons for some Bemba people to remain attached to their culture even if they are members of the United Methodist Church?

Respondent: I consider that the church got a noble mission to explain the interaction between the gospel and the culture. It never been a message from God which is not sent through a human language related to a certain culture. So, number of Bemba people still believing that God can talk to them in Ichibemba and take in consideration their culture to make the gospel good news for them.

Interviewer: How do you manage the tension between the gospel preached by the United Methodist Church and the Bemba culture?

Respondent: Pastor, why are you talking about tension between the gospel and the Bemba culture? For me as a pastor in duty, I am committed to avoid any tension between the word of God and the Bemba culture. The reason is that Jesus Christ was born in Jew's culture. Even if there was sometimes discussion between him and the Jew tradition, but he knew that he was the Messiah sent for their salvation from the sin. In my opinion, the tension exists because of lack of training of some of our ministers.

Interviewer: What is the involvement of the United Methodist Church in the social life of Bemba people?

Respondent: Our contribution in fighting against poverty is not to be pointed here because I consider that what we are doing is simply

accomplishing our mandate to be the light and salt of the word. We are doing everything with our members of the local church. The first is to get a decent place where we will be gathering, I mean to get a church building. The social life of our members is our first concern, but we do not have resources to give the answer to this anxiety.

Interviewer: What are the challenges the United Methodist Church is facing toward Bemba people while tackling the multifaceted problems in Mulungwishi community?

Respondent: As you said, the problems are too many that we hoping that God will help us to get the right solution to the complex situation of unemployment, lack of decent health care centres, lack of viable schools, etc. These challenges cannot be all listed here, but we believe in the grace and mercy of our Lord.

Interviewer: How the poverty is affecting the United Methodist Church in your local church?

Respondent: As you can see, you are a witness of the difficult situation where we are working as pastors of the Church. To join the service, I am walking 5Km because I do not have a bicycle. Most of members are poor; this influences their contribution in offerings and tithes. If a member is sick, we are unable to take him/her to the health care centre because of the lack of the money. This is painful, but in everything our only hope is in the Lord. In this condition how can we build a modern church building?

Interviewer: Katanga is a rich province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In your opinion, what are the roots of the poverty which are ranking the country among the poorest of the world?

Respondent: At this point, in general, I would like to say that our Congolese people are lazy and do not want to work hard. Few of them have their brothers and sisters overseas and they always asking for help. This time is to take our destiny seriously by working hard and prepare the future of our nation. The time of manna from heaven is over. I think that the roots of the poverty in Katanga specifically are the laziness of the people, the lack of education of some of them, the wrong understanding of the word of God for others who are taking the church as a refuge, etc.

Interview with Pastor 4

02 March 2015

Interviewer: What are the reasons for some Bemba people to remain attached to their culture even if they are members of the United Methodist Church?

Respondent: I am of opinion that the gospel is above all cultures. However, when I am in face of Bemba culture, I do understand that this people are naturally religious. Question here is to redirect their belief systematically toward the Word of God without minimising them as it was the case in colonial time. In my counseling, some

Bemba people assume that, there is no difference between Lesa and the God of the bible. That is why they can go to the *Shinganga* when they are sick instead of going to the pastor for prayer. For them to be a member of the Church and invoking the ancestors it is not different than to pray the God of Abraham and Isaac who are dead. One of them told me one day that he never sees Jesus, so for him Jesus is like the invisible ancestor. This belief is not difficult to be corrected if we pastor, we are more trained theologically.

Interviewer: How do you manage the tension between the gospel preached by the United Methodist Church and the Bemba culture?

Respondent: According to what I said in the previous question, I am trying my best to not be contradictory when I am dealing with people who still between the traditional practices and attending the church. To cool down this tension I am giving time to more teaching and I hope that those who still spiritually weak, will grow up and understand the deep sense of the things.

Interviewer: What is the involvement of the United Methodist Church in the social life of Bemba people in Mulungwishi?

Respondent: I confirm that, there is clear evidence that the Church has been with and within the people since the decades. But this is not to say that the needs of the people are satisfied. I want to here to discuss the political side of the question. As long as our country remains in political trouble since our independence, the province and

our rural community will suffer from the instability, unemployment, lack of human rights, etc. these factors are undermining the efficient involvement of the church in the social life of the people in Mulungwishi. For example, every time that occurs the political unrest, there is often looting of the infrastructures. This leads to idle economic, educational, and ecclesiastical activities and relegate the whole country to the continual suffering conditions.

Interviewer: What are the challenges the United Methodist Church is facing toward Bemba people while tackling the multifaceted problems in Mulungwishi community?

Respondent: The challenges are multiple, and we cannot here talk about all of them. What is perceptible out there is the lack of means to survive for the church members and for the leaders consequently.

Interviewer: How the poverty is affecting the United Methodist Church in your local church?

Respondent: Dear Pastor, by all its facets, let me say that the poverty is an evil which is preventing the church to blossom. I always urge people to take their responsibility and fight against this evil. The poverty is a state of mind, I always urging my parish to get out of poverty by firstly believing that they are created in the image of God not to suffer but to prosper. The prosperity will come not by praying only but firstly by working hard.

Interviewer: Katanga is a rich province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In your opinion, what are the roots of the poverty which are ranking the country among the poorest of the world?

Respondent: Indeed, Katanga still attracting the investors. But the problem resides on the management of the country as whole and the province. Since I am in the ministry, things never change on the social undertaking of the political leaders for the people. They are calling us to vote for them. Once in power, they send their relatives to overseas and do not care about the poor. To point the roots of the poverty, in my sight, I would say three groups are the origin of poverty: the western powers, the leaders of the country and the people themselves.

Interview with Pastor 5

05 March 2015

Interviewer: What are the reasons for some Bemba people to remain attached to their culture even if they are members of the United Methodist Church?

Respondent: I am happy to answer this question. Firstly, the culture of the people cannot be taken from them because it is their way of living. For that reason, the gospel we are bringing to Bemba people will face this challenge. Secondly, people remain glued to their tradition because in the past the missionary did not understand the way of life of the receiver of the gospel. Today, we understand that the

gospel should be an encounter of both the culture and the message of the bible to let people express their point of view and compare that point of view to the message of salvation. Thirdly, some people still think that the gospel is the religion of the white people.

Interviewer: How do you manage the tension between the gospel preached by the United Methodist Church and the Bemba culture?

Respondent: Dear Pastor, allow me to go back to the time when Rev Springer arrived in Katanga in 1910, he found people invoking the highest God in the name of Lesa. This mean that God the Creator was already known by the Bemba people. To my knowledge, the tension came when the missionary did not systematically bring the God of the bible in the mind of the people. Now, the gospel is not fighting the culture, but we are approaching the people in evangelism with respect believing in the power of Holy Spirit, the one who can touch the deep bottom of the culture in order to transform the heart and the behaviour.

Interviewer: What is the involvement of the United Methodist Church in the social life of Bemba people?

Respondent: This is an important question. The life of the members of our local church comes in the first place to see them blessed and changing their environment. In our case, the environment is so difficult that the people are not getting profit of what God gave them in their own land. The church is involved in the life of the people as

the belt and the waist. This means that you cannot separate the Church and the people. Without people, there is no church. So, our involvement comes naturally in this way: When a member is suffering, it becomes a problem of the whole community. The church is present in the funeral, marriage, birthday etc.

Interviewer: What are the challenges the United Methodist Church is facing toward Bemba people while tackling the multifaceted problems in Mulungwishi community?

Respondent: The big challenge of the church is the poverty which causes sicknesses; lack of food, lack of schools, lack of health care, and the list is too long. On the other hand, the country is not stable because of the recurring political trouble.

Interviewer: How the poverty is affecting the United Methodist Church?

Respondent: Our local church is facing all these evils I mentioned to your previous question. But we hope that God is listening to us and he will answer in his time.

Interviewer: Katanga is a rich province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In your opinion, what are the roots of the poverty which are ranking the country among the poorest of the world?

Respondent: Dear Reverend Pastor, this song of richness of the country and our province becomes obsolete as generations are

passing through suffering and disasters. Our children don't know something about electricity, going to school in the car, enjoying television, traveling out of the country for holiday, etc. The roots of poverty are so complicated that I cannot name them all here. Someone was even saying that the country is cursed. I don't believe that God has cursed our country. Let us see the future. These conditions of living may turn to the better if people understand their responsibility. The church is showing the way to heaven, we also showing people how to work hard to fight against poverty.

Interview with Pastor 6

05 March 2015

Interviewer: What are the reason for some Bemba people to remain attached to their culture even if they are members of the United Methodist Church?

Respondent: Sometimes it is difficult to understand this question. But by the fact of visiting people in their home and discussing with them about this matter, I end up understanding that some people still believing in their tradition because they did find their interest in the church. By their interest I mean, there is a category of people who believe in the physical protection, chance for love, being out of the control of *Cifwa* (bad spirit), etc., getting all these things by consulting the ancestors than going to the minister of gospel. The culture is not binding the people only in our country or our

community, there is also people going to church and still practicing magic and other occult sciences in Western countries. So, the gospel should deal with this situation everywhere in the world.

Interviewer: How do you manage the tension between the gospel preached by the United Methodist Church and the Bemba culture?

Respondent: To be accurate, I would say that the tension can be solved only if the person becomes really born again in spirit as Jesus told Nicodemus. When the culture still fighting against the word of God at some points, according to me, this means that the person still struggling between his old man (old worldview) and the presence of the Holy Spirit as Paul said in the book of Romans: “For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want, it is it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me” (Romans 7:18-19). Do you the state of this believer?

Interviewer: What is the involvement of the United Methodist Church in the social life of Bemba people?

Respondent: This question is too large for me because the social life means the life of people in its totality. Here in Mulungwishi, the gospel is taught normally, but people are also attracted by the gospel of prosperity and prophesy. Our country is crossing a time of turbulence in all the sides of the life. What the church can do if it is not simply encouraging the people to stand firm in the word of God

and believe in his mercy. We do not have the sponsors. We are surviving with the offerings which cannot be seriously invested in a relevant development project.

Interviewer: What are the challenges the United Methodist Church is facing toward Bemba people while tackling the multifaceted problems in Mulungwishi community?

Respondent: Dear Pastor, like I said, our local church is connected to the Circuit of Katanga. This hierarchy is helping sometimes with money, but it is not enough to start to eradicate the elephant of poverty. However, when I am preaching the gospel, I must touch all the sides of the life in order to push people to work. The seed of the word of God will produce fruit in our community. In the meantime, I have initiated a saving corporation where the members are depositing money and they can also borrow for the small business. This strategy is working up so far and we are strict in the time of the return of the money borrowed to maintain the system alive.

Interviewer: How the poverty is affecting the United Methodist Church?

Respondent: From our savings corporation, luckily God is assisting us to shift from the worse to something good. However, some members are poor at the point that they are unable to participate in the corporation. Broadly speaking, I am proud to say that our parish is improving in empowering the members, mostly the women.

Interviewer: Katanga is a rich province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In your opinion, what are the roots of the poverty which are ranking the country among the poorest of the world?

Respondent: In our parish, we came up to understand that the first root of poverty is the laziness of the people because through the saving corporation, we saw people becoming happy and their lives are continuing to be improved. On the national governance, the country still under the general egocentric management. The roots are among others: the bad governance, the lack of political willingness to correctly use the assets of the country for the benefit of the population in distress, and the influence of the western powers.

APPENDIX C

CURRICULUM VITAE

| 1. PERSONAL DETAILS | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Surname | NGANDU |
| First names | KAHAKATSHI BASUA |
| Nickname | JEAN-PIERRE |
| Postal Address | 71, Willow Road, Muckleneuk Pretoria 0002. |
| Email Address | jpbasua@gmail.com |
| Marital Status | Married |
| Criminal Record | None |
| Driver's License | International Driver's License |
| Human Relations | Independent thinker and like the teamwork. Friendly person. Pertaining to an extra mile learning. |

2. LANGUAGES

| | English | French | Lingala | Tshiluba |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Speaking | Good | Excellent | Excellent | Mother tongue |
| Writing | Good | Excellent | Excellent | Mother tongue |

3. EDUCATION BACKGROUND

| PERIOD | INSTITUTION | LEVEL | QUALIFICATION |
|---------------|--|--------------|---|
| 2013-2017 | UNISA- University of South Africa. | Completed | Doctor of Theology in Missiology (PhD) |
| 2011-2012 | FATEB- Bangui Evangelical School of Theology. | Completed | Master of Theology in Missiology (MTh) |
| 2001-2005 | IFTSA - Faculty of Theology and | Completed | Honours Bachelor of Theology in |

| | | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|---|
| | Applied Sciences | | Missiology (Hons BTh) |
| 1989-1992 | ISIPA- Higher Institute of Computer, Programming and Analysis | Completed | Bachelor of Computer Sciences & IT (B.Sc.) – 3 Years |
| 1975-1981 | Onu'katshi High School | Completed | National Senior Certificate |

4. COMPUTER SKILLS:

- Microsoft WORD,
- Microsoft EXCEL,
- POWER POINT,
- INTERNET EXPLORER.

5. PRINCIPAL QUALIFICATION

- Doctor of Theology (PhD)
- Research Field: Contextualization; Church mission; Community Development; Cross Cultural Studies.

6. SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTIONS

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 Research and Innovation Centre Corporation (MKRIC)
 270 Concord Street, Suite 205
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7. ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

1. **NGANDU, K. B. 2017.** *Contextual Evangelism of the United Methodist Church in Bemba Culture: A Missiological Perspective.* Doctoral Thesis. University of South Africa (UNISA), Pretoria, 332 pages.
2. **NGANDU, K. B. 2012.** *The Contribution of Independent churches to the Christian mission in Kinshasa (1990-2010). A Missiological Approach.* Masters Dissertation. Bangui Evangelical School of Theology. Central African Republic, Bangui, 125 pages.

8. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

- 2004 to Date: Missionary at BETHEL CITY CHURCH.
- Date: 2005-2006: Position: Technical Consultant
Institution: National Commission of Disarmament and Reinsertion (Financed by UNDP and World Bank) in Kisangani/DRC.
- Date: 2001-2005: Position: Administrator.
Company: Matata Fille Pty (Ltd), Kinshasa/DRC.
- Date: 1997-2001: Position: Manager
Company: Transglobal Pty (Ltd), Kinshasa/DRC.
- Date: 1992- 1996: Position: Secretary of Direction
Institution: Resurrection High School (Kinshasa/DRC).

I hereby certify that the information provided is correct to the best of my knowledge.



(Kahakatshi Basua Ngandu)