

## CHAPTER 4

**THE CHURCH AS AN INSTITUTION: A HISTORICAL SURVEY  
OF ITS RESPONSE TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ZAMBIA**

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an attempt to critically present a historical survey of the *Zambian Church*<sup>1</sup> as an institution with regards to its response to economic development in Zambia. Through this historical survey, this chapter will illustrate how the *Zambian church* has executed its pastoral and social tasks on the one hand, and how it has responded to the problem of scarcity in the context of an evolving economy on the other hand.

It appears that the institutional church in Zambia from the time of its foundation did not question “scarcity” as a “point of departure”. *Inter alia*, there is no evidence to suggest that the church started from a different “point of departure” in its social commitments. Scarcity was taken for granted. This was true for the pre-independence missionary church (1882 to 1963) as well as for the post-independent *Zambian church* (1964 onwards)

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek word which gives us the English word “church” is *ecclesia*. It simply means an assembly of people. In the Christian context, it means an assembly of God’s people or better still, a called out community of believers, following the New Testament line, especially Pauline thought. It is not the task of this thesis to give a technical definition of the word “Church”, but suffice to say that the term “*Zambian Church*” refers, in general terms, to the historical Church in Zambia which has connections with the wider universal church. It includes churches, that is, denominations which fall under three main legal church bodies, namely: The Episcopal Conference of Zambia (Roman Catholic), The Christian Council of Zambia (mainly Protestant), and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (mainly Evangelical, Charismatic and Pentecostal); and to a certain degree, the term includes other independent legal denominations, who include African Independent Churches on *proviso* that they follow certain universally acceptable Christian and biblical practices and beliefs. In essence, the *Zambian Church* is the Church that is situated concretely in Zambia and which seeks to profess faith in the living God and to bear testimony in word and practice to the reality of salvation through Jesus Christ according to the scriptures. See Richard A Muller’s *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House 1985), and Nicholas Lossky, *et al.*, eds, *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* (Geneva: WCC 1991). It should be pointed out that in the text of this research, words such as “Protestant”, “Catholic” and “Pentecostal”, will be used to emphasize a particular doctrinal or liturgical or ministerial or church governmental position. Nonetheless, it should be observed that it is mainly the “Protestant view” which will dominate this section and the rest of the thesis. That is to say that a number of examples and analyses will be drawn from what are recognised as Protestant churches. Examples from other Christian bodies like the Roman Catholic church, will be used for illustrative, analytical, evaluative and comparative purposes.

In building the case of Zambia in as far as ecclesial response to economic development is concerned, the point which needs to be emphasized is that the missionaries who brought the gospel to Zambia were generally influenced by European industrial capitalism mainly of the West. The basis of this system as already noted was scarcity. Influenced by capitalist thought forms, the pre-independence missionary church was willing to support the industrial exploitation of Zambia's mineral wealth. They saw it as something which was good for the nation and which would bring prosperity and civilization fashioned after Europe (c.f. Livingstone in Bolink 1967:1 ff). The ecclesial task, at this stage, was to work within this capitalist individualist philosophy. It is in this context that the pre-independence missionary church responded to economic development. Within this context, the missionary church saw itself as having both the pastoral and the social tasks. Even though it was a social church as evidenced through the establishment of schools and health centres, and its prophetic interventions, it was its pastoral role which became pre-eminent. The missionary church saw the social task as an appendage to the main pastoral task of preparing men, women, and children, for heaven. All it did, institutionally, spiritually, and evangelically, was geared towards the salvation of human souls. And because the social task was seen in a narrower view and as an appendage to the major task, the missionary church could well be described as "an institutional, spiritual, evangelical and 'narrowly' social church". Influenced by the concept of scarcity and by the capitalist individualist philosophy, it made its specific contribution to economic development through its community and social services. It is probably in the area of education, though indirect, that its greatest response and contribution to economic development was recorded.

As for the post-independence Zambian church which came into being soon after Zambia's independence in 1964, it had to adjust to the new philosophy – popularly known as the Zambian philosophy of humanism – which was being developed by Zambian political leaders (see for example, Woodhall 1972 which records a church conference at which they discussed how churches could participate in socialist programmes).

Zambian humanism was essentially a socialist collectivist philosophy. It is in such a milieu that the Zambian church sought to respond and contribute to economic development (*Ibid*).

Specifically, it continued with the social tasks which were left by missionaries – including education development and health care. Like the pre-independence missionary church, the early post-independence Zambian church was more interested in its pastoral role than its social role. It continued to entertain a narrower view of its social role whereby this was only seen as an appendage to the main ecclesial pastoral task of snatching men, women, and children from the fires of hell. Thus it maintained a disequilibrium between the pastoral and the social tasks. Because of its narrower conception of its social responsibility, the early post-independence Zambian church could as well be described as “an institutional, spiritual, evangelical, and ‘narrowly’ social church”.

Nonetheless, the economic crisis of the 1980s helped it to seek that necessary balance between the pastoral task and the social task. The Zambian church started to feel that both spiritual and material aspects of life should be viewed holistically, simultaneously, and equally. It is the economic crisis of the 1980s which helped the Zambian church to begin to “expand” its social task – that is, to begin to enlarge its understanding of its social task viz-a-viz its pastoral responsibility. Meanwhile, up until 1991, the Zambian church executed its community programmes and social services within the milieu of a socialist collectivist philosophy. In other words, its social task was usually carried out under the influence of the reigning philosophy – in this case, the socialist collectivist philosophy of humanism as an overarching socio-politico-economic system. In Zambia, from 1964 to 1991, the philosophy of Zambian humanism as a political doctrine with economic ramifications permeated every facet of life from basic communities to the highest policy-making body (the party and its government – parliament being used as a rubber stamp for the party and its government). There was no way the Zambian church would escape this philosophy (*Ibid*).

With the change of government in 1991, the Zambian church started to re-adjust to the new capitalist individualist philosophy espoused and preached by the new political leaders (see, for example, the Zambian Catholic Bishops pastoral letter “The future is ours” 1992) in which capitalist language is used in order to show the role of Zambian churches in a new economic dispensation. Because of the harsh realities of austere conditions mooted under the capitalist individualist model and a sharp fall in the living standards of the people in the 1990s, the Zambian church enhanced its redefinition of its role in development (*Ibid*). *Inter*

*alia*, it started to be extremely critical of economic programmes which caused human suffering. Its goal was to expand its social task and thus, seek a balance between its pastoral and social tasks. Because of this, up until 1999, the Zambian church could be described as “an institutional, spiritual, evangelical and ‘expandingly’ social church”. Meanwhile, the Zambian church executed its social programmes within the context of a market economy, but with a great sense of “uneasiness”. This is because, broadly speaking, it supported good programmes under the capitalist model which improved the economy and was unequivocally opposed to those that tended to make people suffer (*Ibid*). In other words, up to 1999, the Zambian church opted for an capitalist individualist model which did not make living conditions deteriorate. As long as this model was going to deliver social gains, the church was happy, but should this model make people suffer, the church were prepared to oppose some of its parts. In addition to the prophetic and critical stance, the Zambian church started to gain a broader understanding of economic policy issues. Both the pastoral role and social responsibility were and are an integral part of the mission of the church.

Inevitably, the mission of the church should be concretised in *this world* as we anticipate the arrival of the “new heavens and new earth”. The eminent protestant theologian, Jürgen Moltmann (1978), argues that the church does not exist for itself, but for the world. Its task is to work for the salvation and liberation of the world *in totality*. Speaking for Africa, the former president of Tanzania, the late Julius Kambarage Mwalimu Nyerere once said:

*The Christian faith was brought to Africa in response to the words of Jesus – “Go ye into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature”. The continuing responsibility of the Church to contribute to the development of Africa arises out of the same mission. For the message of Jesus is one of service – service to God through the service of humanity. “In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these brethren, ye have done it unto me”<sup>2</sup>.*

This study agrees with late “Mwalimu” Nyerere that Christian evangelisation goes beyond the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of souls. It extends to the physical reality of

humankind in which the church is obliged, following the christological commission to serve God by serving people through, *inter alia*, contributing to the development of good living conditions and fuller lives in Africa and elsewhere. This calls for a comprehensive and integrated understanding of what is meant by “the evangel” and “salvation” so that all human needs can be met. It is only in this way that the church can claim to serve God. Therefore, the issue of service to humanity, especially in the modern world, which is riddled by so much human pain, suffering, and chaos, is of cardinal importance. The challenge to the church in Zambia and elsewhere, is to embrace the needs of humanity in their entirety in order to humbly contribute to their realisation. One such need is the need for development, especially when humans are threatened by perennial under-development. About the same, former president of Zambia and elder statesman, Kenneth David Kaunda observes:

*In the past, the Church confined itself mainly to the traditional role of spreading Christianity ... But we have reached a turning-point in the history of human development. Service to God extends beyond charity and priestly activities. It extends to man's complete development, that is, development embracing the totality of humanness<sup>3</sup>.*

Using Kaunda's words, this chapter would like to address the following question: How far did the Zambian Church go beyond charity and priestly activities in its mission to Zambia from the time of its inception?

The birth of the church in Zambia preceded that of the industrial economy in the 1920s when copper ores, which have contributed to the modern economy of Zambia, were discovered (Bolink 1967). In this way, it has been a part and parcel of Zambia's ascendancy to Western civilisation sustained by the market economy of the industrial West. In addition, it has seen, felt, and experienced the socio-economic effects of industrial capitalism. Its thinking and action during this period up till this point in time when Zambia's economy is “struggling and limping” is of vital importance.

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<sup>2</sup> Julius Nyerere (1981) – presidential address given at the opening of the 8<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of International Cooperation for Socio-Economic development (CIDSE) held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, from 10 to 15 February 1981.

To critically survey “the church’s economic thinking and action”, in the pre and post independence periods in Zambia, this section is divided into three main parts, namely: missions, the missionary church and economic development in Northern Rhodesia: a brief historical view; the post-independence church in Zambia and economic development: “an institutional, spiritual, evangelical and ‘narrowly’ social church” – the case of the United Church of Zambia; and the contemporary Zambian church and social responsibility: the renewed role of the church in economic development in the context of structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilisation in Zambia. This is done deliberately in order to show the missionary contribution to the economy in the pre-independence era, the general characteristics of the post-independence church in relation to the economy, and the impact of the effects of structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilisation on the thinking and action of the Zambian church.

This chapter is related to the previous one in that it would like to relate how the church fared when the economy of Zambia was evolving. It is hoped that through this historical survey, the response of the Zambian church to economic development will be presented clearly.

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<sup>3</sup> Kenneth D Kaunda (1968) – presidential speech to the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Uppsala, Sweden, from 4 to 20 July 1968.

#### 4.2 **MISSIONS, THE MISSIONARY CHURCH, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NORTHERN RHODESIA: A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

The missionary church was the “product” of various missions popularly known as missionary societies which came mainly from Europe in order to announce the good news about salvation through Christ to the religiously inclined peoples of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) formally in about 1882 (Isichel 1995; Bolink 1967; Weller and Linden 1984; Ipenburg 1992; Ragsdale 1986; Verstraelen-Gilhuis 1982; and Snelson 1977). These included mainly Protestant and Roman Catholic societies such as the London Missionary Society, The Primitive Methodists, the White Fathers and Plymouth Brethren.

Their prime purpose was to convert the African people first and foremost into becoming faith-professing Christians according to the testimony of scriptures. In short, they wanted to introduce the Christian religion into Northern Rhodesia.

One of the cardinal questions is: In which ways did the missions and the resultant missionary church contribute to the economic development of the area in question? In order to follow up this question systematically, this section is divided into three major parts namely: Foundational role of Dr David Livingstone: christianity, commerce and civilisation; the missionary enterprise: “evangelisation through education” – a preparation for nation-building and economic development; and the missionary church and the emerging industrial economy: the general missionary conference and the United Missions to the Copperbelt.

##### 4.2.1 **Foundational role of Dr David Livingstone: christianity, commerce and civilisation**

Dr David Livingstone, the Scottish missionary-explorer, whom Kenneth S Latourette (1945) describes as the “path-breaker”, was the man who opened up what is known today as Central Africa, including Northern Rhodesia, not only to missionaries, but to industrialists and colonisers as well.

He was born in 1813 at Blantyre and studied medicine and theology at Anderson's College, Glasgow in Scotland (Douglas 1978). He joined the London Missionary Society (LMS) and was sent to Africa in 1841. In his capacity as LMS employee and later as British Crown agent, between 1849 until the time of his death on Bangweulu plains in Northern Rhodesia in 1873, he explored Central Africa for the possibilities of Christianity, commerce and civilisation. The real impact of his work came to be felt especially after his death. It is "this posthumous impact" which changed the course of history for the nations of Central Africa forever.

Bolink argues that Malawi, Zambia and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) were *terra incognita* (unknown lands) to the Western world (1967:1). Because of his travels, published under the title *Missionary travels and researches in South Africa* (1957), a number of British people, including missionaries and industrialists, started to learn something of the immense possibilities of Central Africa. About this, Bolink observes: "Livingstone's stirring appeal to British Christianity and to the leaders of commerce and industry received an enthusiastic response" (1967:1). He wanted to combine the three c's not only for the benefit of Central Africa, but for all of Africa. His personal agenda and challenge was well presented:

*I have a twofold object in view, and believe that, by guiding our missionary labours to the benefit of our own country, we shall thereby more effectively and permanently benefit the heathen. We ought to encourage the Africans to cultivate for our markets as the most effectual means, next to the Gospel, of their elevation* (Livingstone, quoted in Bolink:1967:1).

According to Livingstone's view, the elevation of the African heathen was twofold, namely: commerce (through agriculture) and gospel (through Christianity). In essence, what he meant was that for Africans to be elevated, that is, to be civilised, they needed to do this through commerce and the acceptance of God's gospel mediated through the Western world. Positively, Livingstone wanted to see Africa become like Europe in terms of modernity. He firmly believed that Europe had modernised due to Christianity and commerce. So the gospel or Christianity and commerce or industry were good for the advancement of the African continent. In short, he wanted Africa to be an extension and replica of modern



Europe. There was indeed nothing wrong in advocating “the catching up” of Africa with the rest of Europe. This was good. Africans at that time needed this transformation from traditional levels to modernity (in a Western sense). Nevertheless, negatively, especially when one considers the philosophical and sociological assumptions on which they were based, Livingstone’s comments smacked of race superiority, lack of appreciation of African traditional and mundane development, Western religious triumphalism and the “sucking” of Africa into the powerful industrial capitalist West. Africans’ culture, the stage of development they were in, and their religiosity should have been respected more. The introduction of Africa to the powerful industrial capitalist West should have been done more carefully and cautiously.

The point is that Livingstone had good intentions for Africa, but that these intentions were couched in a language and attitude which glorified the Western Christian heritage at the expense of African traditional ethos<sup>4</sup>.

David Livingstone truly believed in the efficacy of Christian civilization for the progress and advancement of the continent of Africa, as Bolink observes: “The salvation of Africa, he became convinced, called for the mobilisation of all the forces of Christian civilization” (1967:4). The extent and nature of Christian civilization was made clear by Livingstone himself:

*Men of science, searching after the hidden truths ... soldiers battling for the right against tyranny – sailors rescuing victims of oppression from the grasp of heartless men-stealers – merchants teaching the nations lessons of mutual dependence – and many others, as well as missionaries all work in the same direction, and all efforts are overruled for one glorious end* (quoted in Bolink 1967:4).

Livingstone believed that the whole gamut of change<sup>5</sup>, involving all material, moral and spiritual resources, should be geared towards institutional, social, and communal transfor-

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<sup>4</sup> There is evidence to suggest that Africans were intelligent, religious, and well-organised people. Use of words like “heathen” and “primitive” to refer to Africans were harsh and pejorative. Africans needed to be treated fairly. For example, see Andrew D Roberts’ historical and anthropological work:

mation through the power of Christian civilisation<sup>6</sup>. He wanted to see Africa become like the industrial, capitalist, Christian West. What he did not realise was that this was later going to create a dependent Africa<sup>7</sup>.

In spite of all his missiological weaknesses, David Livingstone inspired a good number of British missions including the London Missionary Society and the Presbyterian Mission of the Scottish Free Church to come and work in Central Africa. This happened after his death on May 1, 1873 in the swamps of Lake Bangweulu in Northern Rhodesia, especially after his Westminster Abbey funeral<sup>8</sup> (Bolink 1967:10-12). However, it was the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, under Francis Coillard, who first came into Northern Rhodesia to do mission work among the Lozi<sup>9</sup> (*Ibid*:11). After 1885, a number of missions poured into Northern Rhodesia to do missionary work. It was left up to them to live up to the legacy of that fearless, energetic, compassionate, and determined man, the honourable and distinguished David Livingstone or simply to dismiss it.

It ought to be emphasized that it is David Livingstone, who laid a firm foundation for Christian ministry in Northern Rhodesia. His legacy is that he tried to combine religious thought with economic ideas. He might not have been completely successful in the process of

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*A History of the Bemba: Political Growth and Change in North-Eastern Zambia before 1900*, (UK: Longman 1973).

<sup>5</sup> cf Todaro (1997)

<sup>6</sup> His view is highly acceptable to the modern audience, especially as a result of the fact that it emphasizes a movement towards something materially and spiritually better. One should however, realise that Christian civilisation is not the only vehicle through which this could be achieved. Other world civilisations such as that of the Japanese can contribute and is contributing to institutional, social, communal transformation in the market place. See Peter Berger, "The Global economy" in Stackhouse, M L *et al.*, editors: *On moral business* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WB Eerdmans 1995: 741-860)

<sup>7</sup> Africa has not yet fully recovered from what may be called as "a culture of Western dependence". This has partly contributed to the emergence of Western-type politics, economic *dependencia*, Western-type social styles and preferences, and Western-influenced religious manifestations and thought-forms. Africa is still struggling to find its "feet" and regain her selfhood and personhood in terms of its politics, economics, social life and religiosity. This, however, does not mean that Africa cannot learn from other civilisations such as the Western which is largely built on the Judeo-Christian heritage. What is important is that Africa should recover its "true face and being", and begin to be African in every facet of life. This is the only way it can emerge as a major contributor to the world's politics, economics, social life and religion.

<sup>8</sup> Earlier attempts to do mission work by British missions in Central Africa failed (*Ibid*:9).

<sup>9</sup> Peter Snelson (1977) argues that Frederick Arnot of the Plymouth Brethren was the first to do mission work in Northern Rhodesia and worked amongst the Lozi. His only problem is that he did not make any converts and therefore, his work was initially unsuccessful. His mission relocated to North-Western province and Luapula province of modern Zambia.

“weaving” religious or theological ideas with economic ones. He should, at least, be praised for pointing out that Christianity and economics are related to each other, that there existed enormous possibilities for Christian ministry in Africa for adhering to the ideals of the gospel of Christ and the goals of commerce simultaneously. In short, David Livingstone tried to put matters of economic development on the theological, ecclesiological, ministerial, and missiological agenda. Only time would tell whether Livingstone’s approach would be taken on board by generations of missionaries who came to sound the “evangelical trumpet” in Northern Rhodesia at the end of the 1800s.

Livingstone’s work in what is known today as Central Africa, including Zambia, opened the way for modern Christianity and modern civilisation to thrive side by side. In spite of his personal inadequacies, his role was indeed foundational in setting the stage for, not only the course of Christian history in Zambia, but for the politics of colonisation and economic captivity<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> The figure of Livingstone was sometimes held with suspicion among certain Zambian nationalists and freedom fighters who saw him as “the archetype of European duplicity, arriving with the Gospel to disarm the African before the advance of the colonists, settlers and industrialists” (Taylor 1961:157). This is exactly what happened: after Livingstone’s time, colonisation first by the British South African Company in 1897 and later by the British Crown in 1924, came to Northern Rhodesia (Ragsdale 1986 and Verstraelen-Gilhuis 1982), followed by immigration of the settler community in the wake of foreign-inspired industrialisation, especially that of the Copperbelt region, due to the discovery of copper ores in the area in the 1920s. Nonetheless, it is unfair to say that David Livingstone directly called for the advance of colonists, settlers and industrialists into Zambia. He endeavoured to teach “a theology of Church and development”, whereby Africa would benefit or be elevated by means of a “marriage” between gospel and commerce. That Zambia was colonised, settled, and industrialised by a foreign power cannot be attributed wholly to David Livingstone, but, broadly speaking, to the machinations of British imperial power around the world. He might have taught a straight-forward and innocent message of African advancement which might have had certain colonial undertones

#### 4.2.2 The missionary enterprise: “evangelisation through education” – a preparation for nation-building and economic development

The missionary enterprise, that is, the whole business of mission work geared towards the spreading of the gospel and Christianity, had a specific purpose: *to evangelise the people of Northern Rhodesia and make them into followers of Christ*. To achieve this, missionaries had to rely on education of the people as a vehicle for evangelisation. “Evangelisation through education”, laid a firm foundation for nation-building and economic development in modern Zambia. To put it in other words, the education provided by missions, especially Roman Catholic and Protestant missions was their single-most important contribution to the politics and economy of Zambia<sup>11</sup>. In fact, almost all members of the first cabinet of Zambia, including the first president of Zambia, Kenneth David Kaunda<sup>12</sup>, who directed the post-independence politics and political economy of the nation, were “products” of missionary education.

On using education as a method of evangelisation, Ragsdale observes: “Common to all the missionary societies was the prevailing concept that education was the primary method for evangelising the people” (1986:28). Education formed a natural basis for reaching out to the indigenous people. The value of education became more pronounced when it came to communicate the gospel through the local dialect and language. About this Ragsdale observes again:

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whether by design or not. The truth of the matter is that, in the final analysis, others made use of both his message and discoveries and tried to put to reality their colonial ambitions for Central Africa.

<sup>11</sup> As already noted, the proclamation of the good news about the Kingdom of God goes beyond salvation of souls to include matters of human materiality of which economic development forms a part. Even though missions tried to be social, to a certain degree, through the provision of social and community services and charity, it appears their social responsibility was “not extended to the full” to include in-depth analysis and evaluation of material aspects of human life such as economic development of the indigenous people within the Northern Rhodesian context. In this way, the missiological agenda was imbalanced: there was more emphasis on the evangelical role of the Church than its social role – for example, education (a part of the missiological social and community services) was simply “used” as a means to an end: *the evangelisation of the people*. That there arose this imbalance, especially in the early history of missions, is a scandal of the proclamation of the gospel which needs to be corrected.

<sup>12</sup> Kaunda was a product of Lubwa mission of the Free Church of Scotland (Ipenburg 1992).

*They soon realized there was no substitute for the indigenous language. The success of this work depended on the mastery of the local dialects and on their translations of the Bible and other books into the vernacular (1986:28).*

Simplifying the basic message of the Bible became their focus: “The use of the Bible as the primary basis of education was the foundation of this philosophy” (*Ibid:29*). It was education for evangelism or evangelisation. Teleologically, “by introducing Christianity through a comprehensive educational system, the missions were attempting to bring about a drastic change in both the faith and behaviour of the people” (*Ibid:29*).

Apart from teaching the Bible to the indigenous people, “the missionaries generally recognised a need for training people in industry, agriculture, and hygiene” (*Ibid:29*). However, it should be noted that the evangelisation of the indigenous people through education was the primary aim of the missions; the secondary one was to help in the solution of health problems, in establishing local industries, and in the provision of local literature<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Mag Davis (1975) in his doctoral thesis, *A history of the Catholic Church in Rhodesia up to 1960*, argues that “Missionaries in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) tried to win converts through education and medicine”. This was partly true: both education and medicine were “used” by missionaries, especially Roman Catholic and Protestant, whether in Rhodesia, Malawi and Zambia, or elsewhere as a means by which people could be helped to come to the saving knowledge of Christ (in addition to the normal enlightenment of the mind and healing of the body). Education was, however, the foremost means “used” in the evangelisation process. This is the view taken by almost all the scholars consulted, for example: Bolink (1967), Snelson (1977), and Ragsdale (1986). So, in terms of missionary priorities, “evangelisation through education” was the number one priority. Provision of social and community services was done under the banner of priority number one. These services of relative importance included, as already noted, medicine, special skills training, basic hygiene and charity. That the church was involved in meeting the social needs of the indigenous people, to a certain level, justify calling it “a social church” as well. As already noted, the social responsibility of the church was limited: it provided direct social and community services to the indigenous people more as “a matter of charity and ecclesial obedience”. That is to say that the church felt that, following the New Testament, in which a number of examples of charity and obedient service are given, it was duty bound to do the same to the needy indigenous people. In this way, sufficient time was not given to the evaluation and analysis of the entire context of their social responsibility. This context included the economics of the land. While they appreciably developed the spiritual basis of evangelisation, they did not adequately develop the material basis of evangelisation to enable them to be more balanced, more comprehensive and more broad-focused.

The characterisation of Africa as a dark continent<sup>14</sup> necessitated the need for evangelism. It was assumed that Africa was not only in spiritual darkness, but in intellectual and social darkness. The prevailing view was that Africa needed the light of the gospel of God's salvation and the enlightenment of European civilisation exhibited by progress in arts, sciences, technology, commerce and industry<sup>15</sup>. It appears that, somewhere along the way, missions that came after Livingstone started to feel that their prime task was conventional evangelisation, that is, preaching and teaching the gospel of God's grace to save humankind. Even though missions tried to contribute to the material well-being of people through charity and other social and community services, it was probably assumed that it was mainly the task of colonists, settlers, and industrialists to ensure that Africa was ushered into modernity patterned after Europe. They were content to contribute to the meeting of social needs of the indigenous people only to a certain degree. They felt that social change, politics, and economics, let alone policy issues, were largely the business of the colonial government and its collaborators. In this way, they allowed them to set the social, political and economic agenda for Northern Rhodesia, without any incisive ecclesial influence. They were satisfied with the higher drive for evangelisation aimed at spiritual salvation while attempting to fulfil their social responsibility through charity.

This missiological thinking and attitude of over-concentrating on evangelisation for the salvation of the soul was a departure from the legacy of Livingstone. Understandably, Protestant missions which came out of the 18<sup>th</sup> century revival movement had one primary focus: *preach (and teach) the gospel of God's salvation for all human creatures to the farthest ends of the world*. According to Groves (1954), those men and women who were touched by the fires of revivalism, first in Britain, and later in other parts of continental Europe and the Americas, started to re-orient their energy, talent, vision and will to two correlated objectives: *abolition of slavery and the spread of the gospel*. With regards to the spread of the gospel, especially in what were termed as non-Christian lands (like Asia, Africa and the Pacific), these pioneer missionaries, of whom William Carey of the Baptist Missionary Society was seen as the first to respond, were moved with compassion to help the "spiritually dying"

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<sup>14</sup> cf Bolink (1967)

<sup>15</sup> By calling for the elevation of Africans through gospel and commerce, and later through the mobilisation of the Western Judeo-Christian civilisation, Livingstone, as already noted, tried to teach and

people to gain salvation in Christ<sup>16</sup>. As for the Roman Catholic missions, it is generally argued that they wanted to find new areas which were untainted by liberalism<sup>17</sup>. Whatever the case, whether moved by revivalism or the desire to find new areas which were untainted by what was perceived as the corrupting influence of liberalism or any other reason, missions wanted to convert the Africans to Christianity<sup>18</sup>.

Generally speaking, this kind of approach – converting Africans to Christianity – permeated the mind and action of those missions which came to work in Northern Rhodesia. Livingstone’s “broader approach” (Bolink 1967:3) of preaching and teaching about the equal relevance of conventional evangelisation and material well being (especially through economic development as a means) was not highly considered. Instead, they chose a “parochial approach” to mission: *evangelisation for spiritual salvation as their ultimate objective while trying to execute their social responsibility as their penultimate objective*.

As a result, matters of economics were seen as secondary to those of salvation of “dying” human souls. In fact, even during his life time, Livingstone was criticised by the London Missionary Society Foreign Secretary, Dr A Tidman, for associating with “plans connected remotely with the spread of the Gospel” (quoted in Bolink 1967:2). His work of exploration, especially when he became a British government agent was seen as far re-

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preach the inseparability of Christianity and economics, or simply that of the spiritual and material entities.

<sup>16</sup> See also Isichei (1995) on the emergence of Protestant missionary activity.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, on Roman Catholic missions in Africa. Liberalism beginning in France at the start of the French revolution in 1789, with its central theme of equality, freedom, and fraternity, was seen as a threat to the Roman Catholic church authority as well as ideology bent on promoting rebellious attitudes against the established *status quo* which presented the church and the state (represented by monarchical rule) linked during the Constantinian era, as symbols of power and authority. The French revolution pushed both the church and the state from their pedestal and replaced them with elected peoples’ assemblies for political rule. It was, therefore, natural for the Roman Catholic Church to find new areas which were not yet visited by liberalism. See also MacCulloch (1987).

<sup>18</sup> Charles Allemand Lavigerie, the Roman Catholic primate of Africa and head of the White fathers based in Algiers, would even go to the extent of insulting Africa by calling it a barbaric continent of 200 million souls in need of the gospel - See Isichei (1995).

moved from conventional evangelisation<sup>19</sup>. The emphasis of spirituality over materiality (in terms of social, economic, and human progress) was problematic. Herein lies an imbalance in early missionary work during Livingstone's time, which unfortunately was extended to the time of the pioneers of Zambia's missiological and evangelisation process.

The following are the missions which came to work in Zambia after the time of Livingstone. They were partly inspired by his faithful work and love for the African continent and partly by their desire to extend the work of their respective missions. Verstraelen-Gilhuis lists them conveniently as follows (1982:33):

- The London Missionary Society, who entered North Eastern Zambia, established their first mission at Lofu in 1883 among the Lungu, and extended their work to the Mambwe, Namwanga and the Bemba Kingdom of Paramount Chief Chitimukulu;
- The Plymouth Brethren, first under brother Frederick Arnot, who entered Western Zambia, worked among the Lozi Kingdom of Paramount Chief Lewanika in 1883, due to lack of converts in the area, relocated to Angola and later, under Dan Crawford, re-entered Zambia, worked in Luapula among the Lunda in 1898, and extended work to North Western Zambia;
- The Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, under Francois Coillard, who worked among the Lozi as from 1885;
- The Primitive Methodists, who entered Western Zambia, under the auspices of Chief Lewanika, went to work among the Ila, in Southern Zambia, in 1894, and later extended their work to the Tongas;
- The Jesuits, who worked among the Lozi in 1905;
- The Scottish Livingstonia Mission who entered North-Eastern Zambia, worked at Mwenzo among the Mambwe in 1894, extended their work to the Bemba, Bisa and Lala;

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<sup>19</sup> Livingstone believed that he was equally doing mission work through exploration. For Livingstone, exploration of Central Africa: its waters, land, people, climate and resources – had everything to do with striking the balance, between gospel and commerce, eternal life and a fuller earthly life for Africans. See Bolink (1967).



- The Dutch Reformed Church Mission, who entered Eastern Zambia, worked among the Ngoni of Paramount Chief Mpezeni in 1899, and extended work to the Chewa, Tumbuka and Nsenga;
- The Seventh Day Adventists, who entered Southern Zambia and worked among the Tonga in 1905;
- The Universities Missions to Central Africa, the Anglicans, who entered Southern Zambia in 1910 worked among the Toka-Leya and Tonga, extended their work to Luapula province, Central province and wherever opportunity availed itself; and
- The White Fathers, who entered North Eastern Zambia, worked amongst the Bemba in 1898, and extended their work to Luapula among the Lunda and to Eastern Zambia.

Others included: The Wesleyan Methodists who entered Zambia from the south in 1912, worked among the Lenje in Central Zambia, and extended their work to the Lala (they later joined forces with the Primitive Methodists in 1932); The South African Baptist Mission, who worked among the Lamba from about 1905; and the United Missions to the Copperbelt, a British initiative, which started its united mission work, involving mainly British missions, on the Copperbelt as from 1936 (Bolink 1967 and Doke 1993).

These could be considered as pioneers of the missiological and evangelisation process in Zambia<sup>20</sup>. They all wanted to proclaim the message of salvation to the Zambian people. One of them, the London Missionary Society stated clearly the focus of its work as entrenched in its *Fundamental Principle*:

... that our design is not to send Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy or any other form of church order and government, but the Glorious Gospel of the blessed God, to the Heathen ... (quoted in Bolink 1967:33)<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Most of missionary societies and churches in the Evangelical, Charismatic and Pentecostal tradition came to Northern Rhodesia after 1940 (*Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia 1998 Handbook 1998a*).

<sup>21</sup> Bolink (1967) argues that matters of church order and government, rose up from time to time, especially in the course of deliberations leading to organic union in Zambia

They came to a land of savanna grassland and trees, sparsely populated by tribes who led a simple traditional and agrarian life when compared to sophisticated European standards. There were no street lights, lovely buildings, delicatessens, chateaus and the like. They simply had to start from the scratch to build and construct what could be termed as semblances of Western normalcy like a missionary house, a kraal, a storehouse, a dispensary and a small garden: just to help them organise their missionary work. This is true especially for those who came to Zambia before 1900.

As already noted, they had no time to reflect on “the economic basis of the Church of Africa” (Edwin Smith quoted in Bolink 1967:3). To begin to construct an adequate theology of economic development for colonial Africa, and later to map out a programme for the role of the church in the economic development of Africa, was not an agenda item. Their prime concern was conversion of the people. Contextually, what else could they have done in the absence of a capitalist industrial economy? All they saw were land, rivers, lakes, natural resources, and the big blue sky. Naturally, people had to be targeted so that they could be converted. Absence of a materially affluent society by European standards and the presence of human souls in Africa, as a *raison detre* of the missionary departure from Europe, probably further strengthened the prevailing view among the pioneer missionaries that they came for the fundamental purpose of winning African men, women and children to Jesus Christ.

It is these pioneer missions which went about to establish schools around the breadth and length of Zambia. Although educational work was “established primarily as an evangelistic tool”, as already noted, it, nevertheless, contributed significantly to the shaping of the intellectual soul of Zambia – laying a firm foundation for political organisation, national leadership, societal reconstruction, and the politico-economic dynamics of the nation. Here lay the greatest ecclesial response and contribution to economic development.

With the change of government from the British South African Company rule to the British Colonial Office rule as from 1 April 1924 (Ragsdale 1986:56ff), there came into being a number of educational improvements. This came especially with the establishment of the Department of Native Education in 1925 (*Ibid*:76). Mission schools came to be called “grant-aided schools” because of government financial support.

By 1945, mission schools, offering mainly primary education up to standard six were dotted around the country (Snelson 1977). The White Fathers in various places, the Methodists at Kafue mission, and the Scottish Presbyterians at Lubwa mission were missions which gave quality education comparable to that of the famous Overtoun institution of the Livingstonia Mission of the Free Church of Scotland in Malawi (Snelson 1977; Bolink 1967; Ragsdale 1986). While missions originally wanted education to be a means to conversion, more and more young Northern Rhodesians started to see mission education as a means to personal progress and a better life. This new philosophy among the young started to challenge the conventional missionary view. As the years went by, education was seen by more and more people as a stepping stone to what was perceived as a good and modern European life. Nevertheless, in spite of this change of attitude among young people, most missions still felt that their primary task was evangelisation for the salvation of the people.

It is indeed gratifying to note that education, provided first by missions, and later, in collaboration with the colonial government, ushered Zambia into the complexities and niceties of modern European life<sup>22</sup>. Missionaries fundamentally “used” it as a means to an end. And that end was *the conventional evangelisation of Northern Rhodesia*. In addition to this chief end, they did charity work and provided other social and community services within the context of evangelisation. In this way, they pursued a limited view of their mission which tried to speak ‘narrowly’ about the material foundation of mission. The legacy of Livingstone, even though it had its own inadequacies, should have been used as a basis to develop a fuller and adequate understanding of the mission of the church – a kind which balanced between spiritual and material needs. Missionaries who came after Livingstone

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<sup>22</sup> The forefathers of Zambia’s independence, for example Kaunda (1988) and Makasa (1984) heavily criticised the colonial government for neglecting the education of the Zambian people. This is true. It was indeed insulting, that after close to sixty years of British occupation, Zambia only had 100 university graduates at independence. In general terms, a number of African people could only be trained as teachers and clerks, considered to be higher white collar jobs for the indigenous. Missionary education, though praised for contributing to the emergence of modern Zambia, only provided education up to standard six (Snelson 1977). This was true especially in the period 1883 to 1945. It is only after independence that there was a proliferation of educational institutions including primary schools, secondary schools, technical colleges and two universities, all of a high calibre, especially in the initial stages of Zambia’s independence - thanks to the insight and benevolence of the founding Zambian leadership. With the onset of economic problems, especially beginning in the 1980s, the Zambian educational system has been experiencing a number of organisational, institutional and im-

decided not to implement his legacy of a balanced approach to evangelism. They chose, instead, to evangelise for conversion at the expense of their social responsibility and thus, became unbalanced in their approach to mission and evangelism.

#### 4.2.3 **The missionary church and the emerging industrial economy: the general missionary council and the united missions to the Copperbelt**

The missionary church was a church which was brought into being in Northern Rhodesia mainly due to committed missiological and evangelical action on the part of various courageous and resolute missionary societies. It was established by 1914 (Bolink 1967) and was mostly led by loving, self-denying and humble missionaries<sup>23</sup>.

This church was established in what are termed today as “remote” areas of Zambia. The arrival of the industrial economy on the Copperbelt in the 1920s, however, changed the course of missionary history. The missionary church had to adapt to the changing times. There were two main ecclesiastical bodies, which outstandingly attempted to respond to the challenges of modernity, industrialisation, and transformation, engendered by the discovery of copper ores. These were: the General Missionary Council (GMC) and the United Missions to the Copperbelt (UMCB). Their involvement in the affairs of the people, especially with regard to the socio-economic condition, brings about three interesting questions of research which are: firstly, to what extent did these bodies get involved?; secondly, how successful was their involvement?; and thirdly, what motivated and inspired them? These are the specific questions which this section would like to address in order to objectively ascer-

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plementational problems. With the economy picking up or through deliberate efforts of government, they will hopefully regain their former glory.

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This praise is not, however, blind to the fact that some of the missionaries had wishy-washy temperaments and just joined “the band wagon of mission to Africa”. Nevertheless, it must be noted that a good number of missionaries were willing to leave the comforts of modern European life just to come and proclaim the message of the Kingdom of God. For this reason, missionaries could be seen as true founders of the African Church. In founding various churches across the African continent, they were assisted by a number of nameless African teacher-evangelists who went about spreading the good news of the Kingdom of God (Bolink 1967; Isichei 1995; Bwalya 1989). While praise should be given for the humble and loving work of a number of missionaries, the same should be equally given for the good and enduring work of nameless indigenous “sowers of the Word of God”. To use and paraphrase the common words of Tertullian of Carthage, “the blood of missionaries and African teacher-evangelists was the seed of the African church”, which was spilled during the difficult phase of proclaiming Jesus Christ as saviour of the world. C.f. the hard-hitting critique of the missionary movement in Africa by Isichei (1995).

tain the changing role of the missionary church in the national affairs of the land and its economy.

It should be noted from the onset that prior to the great social and economic transformation of Zambia in the 1920s, clear lines of ecclesiastical distinctions started to emerge: churches or denominations, in accordance with the polity and doctrine of “the host” mission, started to emerge in Zambia. Soon the nation had the presence of the Roman Catholic Church in Luapula, in Northern Zambia, and in Eastern Zambia; that of the Church of Scotland in North-Eastern Zambia; that of the Dutch Reformed Church in Eastern Zambia; that of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Southern Zambia; that of the Evangelical Protestant Church (among the Lozi) in Western Zambia; and so on (Weller and Linden 1984; Bolink 1967). To their responsibility of evangelisation for the salvation of human souls and their social responsibility was added the task of serving the institutional churches for “the nourishment of the body of Christ”. This task include church sacraments (according to denominational affiliation), Christian education, stewardship, counseling, church discipline, and church government. The spiritual element of believers was held in high consideration. Whatever the priests, ministers, elders, stewards and other church people did, contributed primarily to the spiritual well-being of churches. It was evangelisation for salvation, institutionalism for salvation, and spirituality for salvation while trying to be social to a certain degree. The church, prior to the 1920s, could well be described as “an institutional, spiritual, evangelical, and ‘narrowly’ social church”<sup>24</sup>.

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As shall be seen later, in a case study presentation of the United Church of Zambia, the largest protestant church in Zambia (*The Europa World Year Book, Vol II, 1992*), in spite of strides in making the church more responsive to the socio-economic condition of the people, it remained “an institutional, spiritual, evangelical and ‘narrowly’ social church”. It is only in recent times that it has started to extend to the full its social responsibility and has moved beyond the narrative, the ethical, and the pro-

It is this church that was to encounter the effects of the industrial economy. Essentially, the missionary church was a product of the market economy of the industrial West. That is to say that missionary pioneers like L M S Missionaries, Primitive Methodists, the Jesuits and Seventh Day Adventists, were oriented to capitalist thought forms. In this way, they were generally influenced by the capitalist system and there was no way, at this stage, the socialist system could take an upper hand over their missionary economic philosophy. In fact by 1920, socialism was just being developed (c.f. Leatt *et al.* 1986). The point is that this church came to be under the influence of the capitalist individualist philosophy. Generally speaking, it saw nothing wrong with the emergence of industrial capitalism in colonial Zambia. As already noted, this was good for colonial Zambia (c.f. Livingstone quoted by Bolink 1967:1 ff). The path to economic development, it believed, was through Western capitalism which has its point of departure in scarcity. It is under this capitalist influence that this church continued to execute its social tasks and community programmes in order to respond to economic development. Nonetheless, it was an ill-equipped church in the face of this encounter, that is, in terms of handling urban ministry and negativities of industry. It is said that by the time copper ores were discovered on the Copperbelt, there was only one missionary society, the South African Baptist Mission at Kafulafuta, near Ndola rural, by this time under the Rev Alex Cross (Weller and Linden 1984).

Almost forty years had passed since the missionary church was established in rural Zambia. There was a lack of full-scale urban ministry. Weller and Linden attribute the “slow progress” in urban ministry to three major reasons, namely (*Ibid:* 145 ff):

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phetic to include the policy mode of moral discourse (Gustafson 1988). This transition is slow, but sure, and is being led by the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia which has started to be more policy-oriented in their approach to mission and development. This issue will be pursued in detail toward the end of this chapter and cited in other chapters. According to Gustafson (1988), Christian moral discourse should be looked at four levels, namely: the narrative (understanding biblical stories), the ethical (emphasising right and wrong), the prophetic (emphasising condemnation and correction), and the policy (seeking to understand government policy issues). By using the four moral dimensions, Christian moral discourse can be balanced.

- lack of preparedness;
- stretched resources; and
- the prevailing idea that the Copperbelt would not provide a permanent home for many Africans who came to work there<sup>25</sup>.

Weller and Linden observe that “until the mid 1920s, missionary work had been carried out almost entirely in a rural setting” (*Ibid*: 145). Most of their financial and material resources were expended here. Through their generosity and benevolence, backed by their home-boards and other contributors, they managed to construct well-known mission stations in the land such as Mbereshi and Kashinda missions of the London Missionary Society, Lubwa and Mwenzo missions of the Free Church of Scotland, Kafue and Chipembi missions of the Methodist Missionary Society, Chikankata mission of the Seventh Day Adventists, Chilubula and Ilondola Missions of the Roman Catholic Church, and Magwero and Madzimoyo missions of the Dutch Reformed Church (Bolink 1967; Snelson 1977). Understandably, given the limited financial resources, it was difficult to expand their work to urban areas. They were content to serve the local community, including those who trekked to and from Rhodesian and South African mines. The rural areas were their place of specialisation. They were not yet ready to launch their mission work in the emerging urban areas of Zambia. However, circumstances in the 1920s demanded that they change their focus: to extend their work to the urban centres of Zambia’s industrial life centered on the Copperbelt.

As already noted, copper ores were discovered in 1925 in the Copperbelt region of Zambia (Bolink 1967:149; Burawoy 1972:1-12). In the last half of the 1920s important copper mining towns came into being which have endured to this day: Luanshya, Nkana, Mufulira, Nchanga and Chambeshi (Bolink 1967:150). The owners of capital (foreign mining companies) in collaboration with the BSACo which had mineral rights (Macpherson 1977) and the British colonial power, were motivated by self-interest to make a profit for themselves. To keep the wheels of industry moving, they drew and attracted a number of indigenous people, including people from neighbouring Malawi and Tanzania (Taylor 1961) to come

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<sup>25</sup> Experience showed that a number of miners who went down to the south to work in Rhodesian and South African mines had the tendency to return to their home villages after working for a few years. In the wisdom of missionaries, home villages, where missions were located, rather than the urban areas, were the *loci* of church work. See Weller and Linden (1984).

and work on these mines. Apparently, a good number of them were converted to Christianity by various missions working in their home villages and consequently, they started to organise prayer meetings and Sunday worship services, leading to the formation of the African Union Church of the Copperbelt<sup>26</sup> (Bolink 1967).

Meanwhile, Northern Rhodesia was now “baptised into waters of industrial capitalism”. It was bound to be transformed permanently. The society was now changing rapidly: from a simple agricultural setting to a complex industrial existence organised by the capitalist ethos which glorify individual profit maximisation. It was indeed a great challenge to the African ethos which tend to promote communalism (Kaunda 1988). This could well be described as *Zambia’s first great transformation*, to use Karl Polanyi’s (1945) analysis. Apart from the benefits capitalism brought to Zambian society, it produced human, social, and communal chaos which forever affected and changed the entire nation. It was, in other words, both a constructive and disruptive phenomenon.

The change from an agrarian community to a sophisticated, industrial, capitalist community, though unavoidable, was catastrophic. Bolink observes:

*The amount of human tragedy and the host of social problems which followed in the wake of this industrial revolution can never be fully grasped by Europeans, who had had many decades to adjust to the age of mechanisation and industry, whereas these people had hardly anytime at all (1967:150).*

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This was a purely African initiative (Taylor 1961; Bolink 1967). These African miners organised themselves into a ‘formidable force’ with their own elders and deacons. They had come from various denominational backgrounds including the Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Evangelical Protestant and Methodist. They were drawn together by a spiritual need for prayer and fellowship in the Christian religion. As shall be seen later, this African development, was among the first to form a foundation for the future United Church of Zambia.



It was a process which destabilised the human, social and communal fabric of the nation. Human and social relations were slowly being arranged according to the purchasing power. Generally speaking, even though traditional villages still had basic requirements such as shelter, food and natural water which were usually obtained freely through sheer hard work and sometimes through barter, as time went on, the money economy (a feature of the market economy) swallowed up the entire nation. Zambians started to organise their relationships on the basis of how much money a person had. Society had transformed. There was no point of return. Among other things, this transformation had the following results<sup>27</sup>.

1. Total loss of the economic destiny of the indigenous people: *de facto or de jure*, the mineral wealth, and inevitably, all natural resources came to be controlled or possessed by the colonial industrialist and coloniser.
2. Alienation: between the old order represented by a cohesive and inclusive traditional African village and the new order, based on the free market principle (only those with the “purchasing power” were allowed to participate; those without this power were excluded – they became peripherised).
3. Gradual loss of reciprocity and redistribution: unlike the traditional society which cared for all people (old people, women, children, the maimed, the infirm, the lunatics, and others) through the principles of reciprocity and redistribution<sup>28</sup>, the new market society introduced a new feature: the individual, the satisfaction of his or her individual needs (including those of his or her immediate family), and profit or wage maximisation through the market mechanism came first. Gradually, the institutional fabric of chiefs and headmen or head-women was weakened, making them to fall into want and to fend for themselves<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> C.f. Polanyi (1945) and Bolink (1967).

<sup>28</sup> Reciprocity was usually a gesture of mutual sharing between friends, families, villages and clan. Redistribution was usually done by either a chief or a headman to demonstrate the principle that food and other material resources should be gathered at a central place and redistributed to the needy. In both cases, all people were cared for.

<sup>29</sup> The chief's palace, generally speaking, was a place of abundance. With the introduction of the market economy since the 1920s, poverty started to creep in. Some previously dignified palaces have now become an eyesore especially with the onset of structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilisation programmes in Zambia. Only hardworking and innovative chiefs are able to make ends meet in these difficult times.

4. Breakdown of the moral fibre: people had to adjust to new challenges created by beer-halls, markets, and other social places. In a tightly knit society, morality was regulated through the unwritten social contract. In this new society, which was loosely organised, people earned new habits in the absence of a firm moral regulatory mechanism, for example, reckless beer-drinking.
5. Transformation of language: from one based on the survival of the community<sup>30</sup> to one based on the Darwinian “survival of the fittest”, that is, those who could be resilient and could command power (to whatever degree) in the market place.
6. Gradual loss of a human society: it was now the reign of the market with laws, regulations, institutions, ideas, and education orientated to serve a market economy. A human society was slowly being replaced by a competitive market society (c.f. Polanyi 1945).
7. Loss of political power: this enabled the colonisers to put in place conditions necessary for the expansion of industrial capitalism for their benefit at the expense of the indigenous people.

Such a changed scenario needed the involvement of the church as one of the moral consciences of society. This involvement came to be demonstrated mainly by the General Missionary Conference (GMC) through their ethical-prophetic approach and the United Missions to the Copperbelt (UMCB) by trying to get involved comprehensively. The main challenge which these two bodies faced was: *the socio-religious impact of industrialisation and the modern age*<sup>31</sup>. Sooner than later, these two bodies started to be ethical and prophetic<sup>32</sup> in the face of injustices perpetrated by foreign powers and to be socially active in the face of a multiplicity of socio-religious needs. Their beginnings are well-documented by Dutch theologian, Peter Bolink (1967)<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> See “the principle of sacrificial death on behalf of the community among the Bemba” in Bwalya (1989).

<sup>31</sup> See Bolink’s analysis of the impact of industrialisation and the challenge of materialism (1967:118 ff).

<sup>32</sup> As shall be seen later, this was seen more as an appendage of the main ecclesial and missiological task: *converting people to be followers of Christ for their spiritual salvation*. Nonetheless, it laid a foundation for possibilities of a more refined and pragmatic approach to mission – an approach that is maturing from the mere verbal criticisms to a more critical policy-oriented approach, especially in recent times.

<sup>33</sup> See also Weller and Linden (1984).

The General Missionary Conference came into being due to the initiative of the Primitive Methodists who were working in an area known then as North-Western Rhodesia. It grew out of co-operative ventures between the Primitive Methodists and other missionaries who were working on Bible translation in the area. It is the Kasenga language committee meeting of November 1913 which sanctioned the Rev J W Price, a Primitive Methodist, and the Rev J D MacLennan, an Anglican, “to arrange the first gathering and to invite every mission in North-Western Rhodesia, North-Eastern Rhodesia still thought as too remote” (Bolink 1967:132). The first conference took place in June 1914 and included the following societies: the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society, the Universities Mission to Central Africa, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the Brethren in Christ<sup>34</sup>.

One of their objectives, according to the General Missionary Conference report of 1914, was “to watch over the interests of the Native races” (quoted in Bolink 1967:132). This was a heavily-loaded ‘overseer’ responsibility. It simply meant overseeing a wide spectrum of indigenous interests including the socio-economic ones. It is here where one begins to trace ‘a new way of doing things’ in the face of the colonial segregative and divisive onslaught. By the time this objective was formulated, the industrial economy was not yet a threat to the indigenous interests. It was the use and execution of colonial power in a colonised country which posed a threat to indigenous interests. It was only in the mid 1920s and beyond that the emergence of industrialisation and modernity posed a very serious threat to the interests of the indigenous people.

Whatever the case, the GMC was able to contribute to a redefinition of the church’s role in the affairs of the local people. It called on the missionary church to launch a verbal political ‘attack’ against those in the corridors of power in government and industry. This ‘attack’

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<sup>34</sup> By 1931, the conference had a membership of nineteen societies in the entire Northern Rhodesia including the Roman Catholic orders namely: the White Fathers, the Jesuits, the Franciscans and the Capuchin Fathers (GMC 1931 Report quoted in Bolink: 132).

took the form of an ethical-prophetic stand against any colonial injustice – economic, social, or otherwise. This happened whenever ‘injustice’ raised its ugly head.

In this way, the missionary church, through the GMC, became the ‘voice of the voiceless’<sup>35</sup> (Colin Morris quoted in Bolink: 136). As already noted, even though the GMC tried to be ethical and prophetic prior to mid 1920s<sup>36</sup>, its ethical-prophetic role came to prominence when the wheels of the mining industry started to roll; especially in the 1930s. What transpired is that by 1930, the Copperbelt region saw an unprecedented proliferation of buildings, infrastructure and plant areas. More and more African people from the countryside and beyond the frontiers of Zambia started to come to the Copperbelt – leading to an increase in labour.

Unfortunately, in 1931, the copper mining industry in Northern Rhodesia was severely hit by a world-wide depression. It is reported that African labour which stood at 231,941 miners by September 1930 reduced to 7,523 miners by September 1932 (J Merle Davis quoted in Bolink:119). The results were catastrophic for the Africans. This was a clear example of the failure of capitalism to fully address scarcity. Bolink observes: “Thousands were forced to return to their villages, dis-illusioned and disturbed” (1967:119). In

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<sup>35</sup> In recent times, the phrase ‘voice of the voiceless’ whether used religiously or politically or socially, has come under attack. Most people feel that the voiceless, that is, the down-trodden and powerless, should be helped by others to liberate themselves and thus, have their own voice about their destiny. Eminent Peruvian Roman Catholic theologian, Gustavo Gutierrez, explores this idea in his book: *The Power of the poor in history* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1981).

<sup>36</sup> Bolink gives a catalogue of main examples of the church’s commitment to looking after indigenous interests prior to 1925: (1) In 1922, the GMC meeting (a) condemned the forced movement of able-bodied men from villages to European centres through the newly introduced poll tax of 10 British pence instead of a hut tax of 5 British pence (they thought this destabilised village life), (b) called on the colonial government to apportion money collected from taxes from the indigenous people and use it for the improvement of “education, medical care and assistance in agricultural development”, (c) appealed to government to institute special education for chiefs so that they could be more appreciative of the new western-type of education which was being availed to young people by missionaries; (2) In the same year, approached the colonial government “with a well documented resolution that no more land should be alienated from the Africans”, and which called for the creation of “Native reserves”; (3) In 1924, at its meeting, called on the governor to consider “the question of the representation of the Africans in the Legislative Council” (a matter which instigated debate on the future role of Africans in colonial politics) (1967:136 f.f.). See also Weller and Linden (1984:141 f.f.).

addition to this, there came into being a growing suspicion over against the white foreigner (*Ibid*:119). The mining economy could not sustain the miners because of low copper prices. Miners were now exposed to the rise and fall of the industrial capitalist economy, which, in the event of poor copper prices, was willing to “shed off” excess labour. The loss of employment and fear of insecurity for those who were retained, were blamed by Africans on the colonisers and foreign industrialists.

This experience made Africans to begin to think seriously about their situation in relation to work conditions in the mines. It was a time of great re-awakening for African workers. They had already suffered two losses as from 1897 (Verstraelen-Gilhuis 1982): *the loss of political rule and that of economic control*. Like “silent lambs”, especially with the military subjugation of the Bemba empire and the Ngoni empire at the end of the 1800s, they had submitted to colonial political government and foreign economic management. They were willing to work within this state of affairs, for a time, and move towards improving labour conditions of service. It is this quest for improved conditions of service which provided an opportunity for the GMC to take an ethical-prophetic stand.

Events of the 1930s and 1940s illustrate this point. Bolink observes about this:

*... there was a growing African distrust of the sincerity of the European as far as African welfare, economic and social development were concerned (1967:120).*

About the mid 1930s, the mining industry picked up. By this time, African miners were now a mature lot in as far as the issue of their rights was concerned. They were now ready to express their anger and disappointment about poor working conditions. In 1935, the first violent outbreak of African discontent was recorded in the mining industry (*Ibid*:120). This is regarded as the first African strike in Northern Rhodesia. It was very severe in Mufulira, Nkana and Luanshya (Weller and Linden 1984:195). Unfortunately, at Luanshya, “police opened fire on a crowd, killing six people and injuring seventeen” (*Ibid*:195). Bolink observes that the immediate cause was the sudden increase in poll tax from 10 pence to 15

pence<sup>37</sup> (1967:120). According to Bolink, the immediate cause was just a spark. Other long-standing unresolved concerns included: rates of pay, pay deductions, housing, and rations. The coming of age of African miners to reflect on their conditions, through organised mass action, marked the beginning of a long struggle against colonial economic disadvantage and political slavery.

The missionary reaction to this tragedy in the mining industry was convincingly ethical and prophetic. It was initiated by the Methodists who attended the 1935 June 7 to 13 GMC meeting at Ndola. Bolink summarises the proceedings of that meeting:

*A fortnight after this incident on June 7-13, the seventh meeting of the General Missionary Conference took place at Ndola. Here the Rev J G Soulsby, the Superintendent of the Methodist Missionary Society, severely criticized the government in his presidential address (1967:155-156).*

The governor of Northern Rhodesia was forced to travel to Ndola to defend government's position. However, conference members stood strongly in support of the president of the GMC, and consequently, government instituted a commission of enquiry to "ensure a more objective report on this tragic affair" (*Ibid*:156). The missionary group took stand an ethical and prophetic stance and, influenced the course of events so that truth and justice could be established in the land. Though being a-once-in-a-while event, it was important that the missionary church was demonstrating sensitivity to national issues, especially when indigenous rights were being threatened by the politico-economic process.

An unfortunate incident occurred in March 1940, when thirteen Africans were killed on the Copperbelt during a second violent strike (*Ibid*:121). A similar commission of inquiry was instituted by government to look into the Copperbelt disturbance. By this time, both church and state were "swallowed up" by war issues. It was only towards the end of the war that Methodists came to state that "colour discrimination" was deeply entrenched in the Northern Rhodesian society (*Ibid*:121). It is possible that this second outbreak of African discontent was a protest against colonial discriminatory tendencies based on colour.

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<sup>37</sup> This was an exhibition of colonial extortionist tendencies: you colonise people politically and you

By 1948, Africans had organised themselves into a mass political party. They now had a “voice” through which they could express their grievances against colonial injustices – political, economic, and otherwise. However, it should be pointed out that, in spite of the political re-awakening of Africans, especially in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, the GMC (which in 1945 transformed itself into the Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia [Ragsdale 1986:46]), did not stop to be political from time to time. For example, the federation of Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, was vehemently opposed by missionaries as a colonial imposition (Bolink 1967:137 ff). By being political, in other words, or rather by being ethical and prophetic about the politics of the land, they indirectly tried to safeguard the socio-economic interests of the indigenous people.

As noted above, even though missions and churches were not prophetically silent “in the critical years of the birth of African nationhood in Northern Rhodesia”, Bolink observes that “the voice of the Church scarcely earned a hearing” (*Ibid*:144). This was partly due to the rise of the freedom struggle outside the Church. The point is that the freedom struggle, though supported by some churches and some individual missionaries, was the “baby” of freedom fighters in political parties. It became national agenda item number one. Africans were all pre-occupied with the dawn of the new era. They had come of age and now wanted political power which they achieved through a well-organised political programme of action which earned Zambia’s independence from the British in 1964. As a result, the ecclesial ethical-prophetic stance “thinned out”, as the indigenous people started to have their own “voice” on the political and economic future of the nation. It should be said that Zambians themselves, though influenced by the ecclesial presence, became the architects of political independence and the future destiny of economic development in the nation.

Very little, indeed, can be said about the UMCB. It started on a very promising note, but

was “liquidated” within twenty years of its existence amidst accusations and counter-accusations among the constituting societies. It was originally meant to respond to the socio-religious impact of industrialisation on the Copperbelt. Unfortunately, it was not allowed to mature beyond 1955.

The background to the formation of UMCB is very interesting, indeed. In 1931, the Department of Social and Industrial Research of the International Missionary Council decided to send out “a commission to make a thorough study on the spot” (Bolink 1967:152). And that spot was the Copperbelt. It was chaired by Mr J Merle Davis. In July 1931, at the GMC meeting at Broken Hill (Kabwe), in the presence of the Merle Davis commission, main discussions centred on “the problems created by the sudden emergence of industrialization in the primitive society<sup>38</sup> of Central Africa” (*Ibid*:152). A plan of co-operation of missions in the Copperbelt was drafted and later sent to UK-based societies. In anticipation of the imminent formation of a united missions, the London Missionary Society sent R J B Moore in 1933 who settled in a LMS area in Luapula and later arrived at a place known today as Mindolo on the Copperbelt in July 1934.

Even though Moore’s work could be described as pioneering and helpful to the strengthening of African Union Churches which were flourishing on the Copperbelt, his missionary approach was not comprehensive: he concentrated more on evangelisation for spiritual salvation.

Meanwhile, the International Missionary Council Commission finished its work in early 1933 and published a voluminous report entitled: *Modern Industry and the African* (*Ibid*: 153). The main contents of this report were:

1. “the impact of European civilisation on the indigenous people” and
2. “the position of Christian missionary societies in this impact in all its relationships”.

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<sup>38</sup> As already noted, the use of the terms such as “primitive society” is a manifestation of a Western judgmental attitude which borders on Western cultural triumphalism.



One of the recommendations, with regard to missionary work, read as follows: “the missionary work of the Protestant Free Church Societies on the Copperbelt to be united under the care of one missionary society” (J Merle Davis quoted in Bolink: 153). In February, 1934, a meeting of representatives from mission boards concerned with mission work in the Copperbelt was called in London (*Ibid*:154). A plan was drafted “suggesting lines on which possible action could be taken to get a co-operative project under way” (*Ibid*:154). At this meeting, they agreed to cooperate with the existing African Union Church and to invite R J B Moore to work with them. A memorandum of understanding was given to John R Mott, Chairman of the International Missionary Council, who planned to visit Northern Rhodesia in April and May of 1934. During his visit in Northern Rhodesia, he was fortunate to meet twenty seven missionaries from “nearly all the missions in Northern Rhodesia” who were attending a GMC meeting from 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1934 at Ndola (*Ibid*:154). A committee chaired by Moore, was formed to look into the question of united missionary work on the Copperbelt. It was after this meeting that Moore took up residence at Mindolo to begin his initial preparatory work.

UMCB could only be formed by mid 1936 after “deliberations on the home base and on the field” were concluded (*Ibid*:158). Those who participated in this missionary and evangelistic project were mainly British societies, namely: the London Missionary Society, the Livingstonia Mission, the Universities Mission to Central Africa, the Methodist Missionary Society, the South African Baptist Mission, and the United Society for Christian Literature<sup>39</sup>. The Rev A J Cross was chosen as leader of the UMCB. Its scheme of work included: church and evangelistic work, educational and welfare work, establishment of social and recreational centres, reading rooms, and distribution of literature. From this scheme of work, one would observe that the UMCB did not only address the institutional, evangelical, and spiritual needs of the people of the Copperbelt, but that it tried to address welfare, educational (initially for evangelisation and later for societal well-being), social, and leisure

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<sup>39</sup> Others who participated on a small scale were: the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa (through their financial support); the Congregational Union of South Africa (by providing a minister among European Congregations); the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (through the provision of indigenous evangelists) and the Plymouth Brethren (through indigenous evangelists as well) (*Ibid*:159). It was only in 1939 that the Dutch Reformed Church Mission and the Roman Catholics tried to cooperate with UMCB on the education-delivery efforts (*Ibid*:159).

needs. Their intention was simply to address the needs of humans in total, that is, both the spiritual and the material. It appears that the ethical-prophetic role was not part of their agenda. Since all participating mission of UMCB were members of the GMC, it was probably felt that GMC was better placed to exercise an ethical-prophetic role whenever indigenous interests were threatened. Nevertheless, their intended comprehensive approach to mission and evangelism was most encouraging. If only this approach was allowed to grow, develop, and mature, the legacy of Livingstone, which tried to combine gospel and economic development (as an aspect of human materiality) could have been taken a step further. Unfortunately, this did not happen.

Bolink divides the work of the UMCB into four periods, namely: first period (1936-1940); second period (1941-1945); third period (1945-1950); and the fourth period (1950-1955) [*Ibid*:160]. According to him, the first period concentrated on church matters and education. This was rather a traditional task of the missionary church which was, as already noted, “an institutional spiritual, evangelical and ‘narrowly’ social church”. He also observes that the second period came to be associated with differences of opinion on priority of work. It was the battle between a “church-centric” approach which was parochial in nature and a “comprehensive approach” which was pragmatic and open. For example, R J B Moore left UMCB early because his over-concentration on church and evangelistic work could not be tolerated by other team members. In addition to problems of priority of work, other member of UMCB started to exhibit denominational tendencies, that is, to emphasize a denominational approach at the expense of an inter-denominational one<sup>40</sup>. He further observes that the third period was riddled by failure in church, social and educational work. The main reasons include lack of finance and personnel. It appears that the participating missions spent more money and deployed more personnel in their own societies than they did when it came to their financial and personnel contributions to UMCB<sup>41</sup>. In this way,

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<sup>40</sup> The Anglicans were singled out as those who tried to influence team members to agree at the 1944 team meeting that in UMCB schools a period for religious education be devoted to denominational teaching. This was a complete departure from the original plan of preserving an inter-denominational character in the team. See Bolink (1967:163).

UMCB was set on a “slow death” course. No mission or church could succeed without any financial resource and personnel (especially a motivated type). The last period experienced an inevitable break up. The situation grew worse in the early 1950s. As a result of a lack of financial support and other logistics, educational work was handed over to the colonial government in January 1952 (*Ibid*:168). This was a serious blow to missiological intentions that were aimed at meeting the entire needs of human beings. After this most unfortunate event, UMCB continued to limp until in June, 1955 when it sadly folded up (*Ibid*:169) amidst organisational problems. After this dissolution, the Copperbelt Christian Service was set up for the purposes of doing mission and church work co-operatively – it inherited land rights on behalf of missions and later set up Mindola Ecumenical Centre. Church work and evangelism was handed over to the Union Church and the Free Church Council<sup>42</sup>, which up until this time had enjoyed the services of ministers, evangelists, and other church leaders from UMCB.

The UMCB wasted its valuable time in defining and redefining its role in the Northern Rhodesian society during its almost twenty-year life span. Riddled by financial, personnel and other organisational problems, it collapsed. Its social, educational, and church work came to a sad end. In this way, it was not a clear demonstration of the church’s commitment to a “comprehensive approach”, let alone the church’s involvement in economic development. It failed to extend, to the full, the social responsibility of churches. Nevertheless, in spite of its collapse, it should be praised for laying a firm foundation for organic unity which saw the formation of the United Church of Zambia, for contributing in a small way to the educational development of the nation, and for making a statement that, given the right support, the church can contribute to the communal and social well-being of the people among whom it exists – of which economic development forms a part.

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<sup>41</sup> Bolink alludes to this in his work (1967).

<sup>42</sup> The Free Church Council was essentially European and English-speaking. It consisted of the settler community, from various denominations, who had come to work on the Copperbelt. As we shall see

At this juncture, it is important to return to the three questions which we raised at the beginning of this presentation. It is only in this way that a good wrap-up of this section can be done.

Firstly, to what extent did these bodies get involved? As we have already noted, both of these bodies tried to share the view that in all their work and programmes, they came to evangelise Northern Rhodesia. Church work, evangelism, and education, formed a big chunk of their work. Nevertheless, both of them wanted to connect concretely with what was happening in the Northern Rhodesian society. On one hand, the GMC, while being a mouthpiece of the major missionary societies and while supporting the church, evangelistic and educational work of member societies, decided to come out and be ethical and prophetic on a number of national issues which affected the indigenous people. Its ethical and prophetic role was significantly reduced in the wake of the African struggle for political independence, nationhood, self-rule, and economic emancipation, which came to prominence in the 1950, and early 1960s. That is to say that political freedom fighters became “prophets” to their own people. In fact, an analysis of Kaunda’s language prior to independence reveals that he spoke of a new era of peace, justice, and freedom<sup>43</sup>. In this period, whatever the church said and did, ethically and prophetically, was simply a small, but significant contribution, to the “louder voices” of Zambian politicians who, on their own terms, cried for justice and freedom. On the other hand, the UMCB decided to be comprehensive in its approach, but unfortunately, could not see the full materialisation of its intentions because their project simply came to a disastrous end in 1955.

Secondly, how successful was their involvement? Their involvement was successful in that both of them demonstrated the point that the church can go beyond the traditional role of evangelisation, that, as part of the role of the church, it can afford to be ethical and prophetic as an expression of ecclesial social responsibility by speaking about ruler injustices, and that mission should be comprehensive, that is, it should consider all human needs such as wel-

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later, it only organically united with the African Union Church, through the Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia, in 1958.

fare, social and spiritual. They were not successful by being content with the verbal ethical-prophetic stand in their mission which they exhibited from time to time. It was not enough simply to “speak out” on matters. As shall be argued later, the church should have been more policy-oriented especially on economic matters in its Christian moral discourse. This approach was probably seen as a waste of time at that time: *it was felt that it was probably easier just to “speak out” without due reference to policy issues.* They were also not successful by simply not allowing the full extension of their social responsibility and by not allowing their comprehensive approach to see the light of day. For this to materialise, it needed both financial resources and motivated personnel who were fully supported by participating missions. Unfortunately participating missions chose to maintain the denominational presence at the expense of a united missiological front in the Copperbelt.

Thirdly, what motivated and inspired them? Both of them were partly motivated and inspired by changes within the international missionary movement which started to consider seriously matters of socio-economic well-being as being part of the missiological and evangelisation agenda. This came to the fore through the visitation of the Merle Davis commission, under the auspices of the International Missionary Council, which went to Northern Rhodesia and surveyed the impact of industrialisation on Africans in Northern Rhodesia from 1931 to 1933. Their main point was that church and society, or religion and society, cannot be separated. That is to say that what happens in society, unavoidably, impacts on church (or religion). For the church to be meaningful and relevant, it should be able to understand and constructively react to changes in society in order to attempt to contribute to the meeting of human needs. This inspiration and motivation was very cardinal in laying the foundation, in varied degrees, for a balanced and comprehensive ministry of the contemporary Zambian church.

As already noted, missionaries in GMC and UMCB were influenced by their social tasks such as educational development and health care which implemented under the influence of the capitalist individualist philosophy. It is not that all of them were “confirmed” capitalists, but that their social response was generally influenced by capitalism which has scarcity as

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<sup>43</sup> This language is common amongst those who experience very difficult socio-politico-economic conditions and who, by design or not, tend to speak of better times, or theologically, “new heavens and

its “point of departure”. In fact, for example, when it comes to educational development, products of missionary schools were prepared to serve in a capitalist society. As part of this preparation, it was incumbent upon missionary educators to prepare Zambian pupils according to capitalist ethos which *inter alia* include class competition and hard work (c.f. Weber 1933).

Both GMC and UMCB, in their own rights, attempted to respond to the emerging industrial economy on the basis of what they felt was their priority. In spite of their various weaknesses, some of which have been pointed out in this text, they are praised for teaching the church in Zambia that there exist enormous possibilities for service in society as the church endeavours to be true to the christological commission: “Go ye in all the world and make disciples of all nations”. These bodies were neither silent nor inactive. They tried to uphold their Christian moral ideals, given the sometimes difficult prevailing circumstances in which they operated. It is up to the post-independence Zambian church to pick up from where they left. Drawing on lessons from the missiological and evangelisational past, the Zambian church, as will be emphasized and explained later, can afford to balance between its pastoral role and social responsibility on the one hand, and between its ethical-prophetic role and policy oriented approach on the other hand, in the context of an evolving economy.

#### 4.3 **THE POST-INDEPENDENCE CHURCH IN ZAMBIA AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: “AN INSTITUTIONAL, SPIRITUAL, EVANGELICAL AND ‘NARROWLY’ SOCIAL CHURCH” – THE CASE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA**

This thesis argues that the church that came into existence soon after Zambia’s independence up to 1980, was essentially “an institutional, spiritual, evangelical and ‘narrowly’ social” reality. It was “institutional” because it was an established historical structure connected to the universal church, but with its own line of command within society. Its organisational features were not homogeneous, but varied from denomination to denomination. For example, the Roman Catholics pursued the episcopalian model; the Dutch Reformed Church followed the Calvinist-Presbyterian model; whereas the United Church of Zambia

reclaimed elements from Presbyterianism, Congregationalism, and Methodism. The connecting thread was institutionalism which portrayed leadership structures, membership structures, and service within these structures. It was “spiritual” because almost all denominations aimed at the spiritual enhancement of their leaders and members, and thus, attain true Christian humanliness. It was “evangelical” because they concerned themselves with the effective spread of the gospel of Christ for the salvation of the human souls within and outside the church (this was, in fact, their cardinal emphasis). Lastly, it was “‘Narrowly’ Social” because the social responsibility of the church had three major flaws: firstly, it was executed mainly as a matter of charity and church obedience – care was not taken to develop an in-depth, long-lasting understanding of the material basis<sup>44</sup> (including the economic basis) of the church’s involvement in charity work and social issues; secondly, it was executed in an imbalanced way – more emphasis was placed on the conventional evangelical responsibility at the expense of their social responsibility; thirdly, when it came to speaking out against injustices or societal wrongs as a principle of social responsibility, they tended to overly emphasize the ethical-prophetic role of the church at the expense of a policy-oriented approach. In this way, the ecclesial social responsibility was ‘narrowly’ conceived and implemented.

This is admittedly a rather generalised view. These characteristics mentioned above were stronger in certain denominations than others. For example, it is generally agreed that from independence, the Roman Catholic Church has been predominantly social in its programmes in respect to society, and therefore, may not be called ‘narrowly’ social. Nonetheless, there are certain Roman Catholic Church leaders who today still feel that their main task is pastoral work which promotes the institutional, spiritual, and evangelical elements of the church<sup>45</sup>. Also, it is generally agreed that a good number of pentecostals and charisma-

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<sup>44</sup> By ‘material basis’ is meant a comprehensive Biblically-inclined and theologically-viable philosophical and conceptual framework on which to base the church’s understanding of concrete issues such as economic development, in relation to the Christian proclamation of the gospel.

<sup>45</sup> See Joseph Chanda who argues that within the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia, there exist certain church leaders who separate pastoral work from social responsibility like involvement in development: “Pastoral Work and/or development” in *AFER*, Vol.25 1983, pp42-46. The point is that even though the Roman Catholic Church has been speaking about “integral evangelism” since 1964, the process of realising adequately this concept has been gradual. It is especially in the light of structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilisation beginning especially in the 1980s that this concept has all the more been clarified, explored, and applied. In this regard, as shall be seen later, the Roman Catholic Church has become a pace-setter.

tics have been highly evangelical. In fact, in certain cases, they are not even social. As we shall see later, they are slowly changing as well.

The point is that these characteristics were a carry-over from missionary churches to post-independence Zambian churches. The churches had not yet “matured” enough to begin to strike the balance between their conventional responsibility and their social responsibility, that is, broadly speaking, *their task of contributing to upliftment, enhancement, and the promotion of the well-being of society at large*. They were more oriented to the first responsibility: prop up or serve the institutional church, seek the spiritual nourishment of the church, and uphold the proclamation of the “evangel” for the salvation of souls. The second responsibility – social responsibility – was fulfilled through charity, without any serious “wrestling” with the socio-politico-economic context within which they operated,. When it came to correcting injustices and wrongs of the ruling elite, it was rather verbal, without due in-depth reference to matters of policy. In this way, their social responsibility was somewhat ‘narrow’. As we shall see later, this disequilibrium between their first and second responsibilities has, for many years, affected the practice of ministry by churches: churches tend to be very specific in missiological and ecclesial matters, but when it comes to socio-politico-economic issues, they do not seem to be that specific<sup>46</sup>.

To illustrate this point, a case study is presented on the United Church of Zambia, a post-independence church. It is presented under two sub-headings, namely: a short historical background of the United Church of Zambia: “streams which formed a lake” and an analysis and evaluation of the constitution, doctrine, worship, government, and discipline

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Some churches are simply ahead of others and are attempting to strike the hoped for balance; some churches have not even started to evolve the material basis of the churches’ involvement in national affairs; and so on. This thesis argues that social matters, politics, and economics are too important to be left in the hands of experts only. Churches, like other social realities, have a stake in the social, political and economic destiny of the nation, and cannot simply abdicate their social responsibility.



of the United Church of Zambia: is economic development an ecclesial and missiological agenda item?

**4.3.1 A short historical background of the United Church of Zambia: “streams which formed a lake”**

To understand the characterisation that the post-independence Zambian church up to 1980 was generally “an institutional, spiritual, evangelical and ‘narrowly’ social church”, it is vitally important to go into the historical background of the United Church of Zambia, albeit, briefly, and then see whether economic development was part of its inaugural agenda.

The story of the United Church of Zambia can be described as “streams which formed a lake”. Six churches, as streams, joined together at successive stages in history to form a lake of one organic church, out of which a river of Christian witness and life flowed to nearly all corners of the nation. The formation of one organic church brought about a number of benefits, including: shared material and spiritual resources, shared witness, expanded ecclesial presence, and Christian unity.

Bolink (1967) observes that early church union negotiations (1936-1945), from where we trace the roots of the United Church of Zambia, were essentially carried out by white missionaries from the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Nyasaland (Malawi), the London Missionary Society (LMS) in Northern Rhodesia, the United Missions to the Copperbelt (UMCB) and the Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) in Nyasaland. After attending to some of the issues, anxieties, and fears which revolved around church government, doctrine, and discipline, the London Missionary Society, the African Union Church of the Copperbelt (with full support from UMCB), and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Presbytery in Northern Rhodesia (an extension of the Livingstonia mission of the free church of Scotland in Nyasaland) went ahead and merged to form the Church of

Central Africa in Rhodesia<sup>47</sup> (CCAR) on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1945, at Chitambo mission (*Ibid*:246 ff).

Its role was a conventional one: to support CCAR as an ecclesiastical institution, to pastorally look after the spiritual needs of members, and form its leaders, to continue the spread of the gospel for spiritual salvation, and to continue to implement their social responsibility, in a small and limited way, through charity, social and community services like schools and health centers. The ethical-prophetic task was being carried by the broad-based and representative Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia<sup>48</sup> to which CCAR belonged.

In 1958, the second merger leading to the formation of the United Church of Zambia took place. Bolink observes: “On Saturday, 26 July 1958, the consummation of union between CCAR and CFCC took place at Mindolo” (*Ibid*:334)<sup>49</sup>. The Copperbelt Free Church Council (CFCC), as noted already, was a European Council which assembled mainly English-speaking congregations from the settler community who came from various denominations. Both CFCC and the Union Church in the Copperbelt (UCCB) were being served pastorally by UMCB up until the time of its dissolution in 1955. With the merger, English speaking European congregations at Kitwe, Chililabombwe, Chingola, Ndola, Kalulushi and Luanshya came to be under the pastoral care of this new ecclesiastical body now called the United Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia (UCCAR) with its headquarters at Mindolo. The CCFC was the fourth church.

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<sup>47</sup> It was the June 1947 CCAR meeting at Mindolo which recognised that CCAR was a separate church from CCAP (*Ibid*:270). Weller and Linden argue that that a merger took place between a presbytery of CCAP and other churches and not with the entire CCAP was done deliberately by the CCAP of Malawi to appease the DRCM who doubted the doctrinal and organisational orthodoxy of LMS (1984:146). LMS was seen by the DRCM, especially the Mkoma wing in Malawi, as being loosely organised and as being without a well-defined doctrinal stand. The DRCM had intentions for organic union, but were still unready. To open a way for future union negotiations with the DRCM, the CCAP felt that they should not unite with the LMS, but instead allow their Northern Rhodesian Presbytery to unite with them.

<sup>48</sup> The Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia, the successor to the General Missionary Conference, as noted already was formed in 1945 (see also *The Constitution of the Christian Council of Zambia 1985*).

<sup>49</sup> See also Weller and Linden (1984)

The third merger which ushered in the United Church of Zambia on a permanent basis took place in 1965. Weller and Linden observe that: “Unlike any of the previous unions, the formation of the United Church of Zambia was the result of African “initiative” (1984:151). This initiative was very important to the viability and sustainability of an African church. Africans, through support from missionaries, were now on a threshold of a new beginning: to put in place an African project which would endure for years to come and contribute its resources, spiritual and material, to the Zambian nation. Realistically, though being a genuine African initiative, it had to face organisational, doctrinal, social, and financial problems as it grew from infancy to manhood and womanhood.

The third merger was between the Methodists, the Church of Barotseland (Evangelical Protestant) and UCCAR<sup>50</sup>. After protracted discussions and many years of “delay” caused by the Methodist homeboard in England, Methodists in Northern Rhodesia were finally given permission to unite with the UCCAR. This happened during the Methodist Conference which took place in London in 1964 (Bolink 1967:360). Similar events took place in the Church of Barotseland. Bolink observes: “On September 27, 1964, a delegation from the Headquarters in Paris declared the Church of Barotseland an autonomous body” (1967:362). When all this was happening, the African church leaders in all camps – Methodist, Church of Barotseland and UCCAR – were in the forefront, determined with new resolve to push joyously for the formation of a united church (Bolink 1967; Weller and Linden 1984). The dawning of independence acted as a catalyst towards the speedy formation of the United Church of Zambia. About this Weller and Linden observe: “There is no doubt that the imminence of the country’s independence was a major reason for the urgency which was shown in pressing for the decisions of 1964” (1984:151). The Methodist Church and the Church of Barotseland became the last two churches to complete the organic union of the United Church of Zambia.

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<sup>50</sup> Desire for organic union on the part of Methodists and the Church of Barotseland date back to the 1930s. See Bolink (1967).

The United Church of Zambia was soundly, joyfully, and sanguinely sealed – ready to take flight into a land which was replete with spiritual, social, political, and economic challenges.

From its inception, judging especially from *An Act of Worship to Constitute the United Church of Zambia* (1965), its mission to the Zambian society was well-presented in terms of the three conventional basic tenets already alluded to: institutionality, spirituality, and evangelicity. A re-emphasis of its social responsibility in the context of the emerging politics and political economy of a newly born republic was simply “missing” from the inaugural service. One may argue that inclusion of this aspect might have been inappropriate because they gathered for the purpose of organic ecclesial union. This argument is partly true: leaders of the church concerned themselves with what they felt was their priority. Arguably, their priority was the celebration of the birth of a denomination which is part of the universal historical church, of the strengthening and renewal of the body of Christ, and of its salvific role to humankind. Nonetheless, its social responsibility hid behind its celebrated priority. The point is that the UCZ should have re-emphasized its social responsibility because of its charity work, social and community services, especially through schools and health centres<sup>51</sup>. As a result of this anomaly, the UCZ, at inception, could be described as “an institutional, spiritual, evangelical, and ‘narrowly’ social” denomination. Thus issues pertaining to its contribution to economic development as a matter of its social responsibility were, unfortunately, not part and parcel of the inaugural agenda.

Ever since, with its headquarters at Lusaka, it has grown from an estimated number of 32 000 members in 1965 (*Ibid*:365) to an estimated number of 1 million in 1991 (*Europe World Year Book* Vol.II, 1992). It has a number of congregations and other church institutions all over the country and participates in the implementation of social responsibility, in a

limited way, through its schools, training and health centres<sup>52</sup> in the country.

It has matured and has continued to develop its pastoral responsibility to the Zambian society. Its main challenge now as shall be argued in the following chapters is to extend to the full its social responsibility. Firstly, it will be argued that it has to move beyond mere charity work and obedient provision of social and community services. The UCZ, like any other church, has to begin to “wrestle” with the socio-politico-economic milieu within which it exists and develop an adequate material or social basis of its mission in as much as it has developed its spiritual basis of its mission. Secondly, it will be argued that, like any other church, it has to move beyond mere verbal criticisms of government policy action to begin to be more policy-oriented, that is, to understand clearly policy matters before rushing to issue statements. This is the way forward which can enable the UCZ to maintain balance between its pastoral responsibility and its social task, of which economic development forms a part.

#### 4.3.2 **An analysis and evaluation of the constitution, doctrine, worship, government and discipline of the United Church of Zambia: Is economic development an ecclesial and missiological agenda item?**

The purpose of this section is to address specific items and see if one can find elements of economic development in the ecclesial and missiological agenda of the United Church of

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<sup>51</sup> L M S, Church of Scotland, Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, and Methodist Missionary Society which contributed to organic union of the UCZ, were involved, from the beginning of their work, in the social delivery system through schools, training and health centres.

<sup>52</sup> The UCZ has inherited four major secondary schools, namely: Sefula Secondary School from the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, Njase Girls Secondary School and Chipembi Girls Secondary School and Kafue Boys Secondary School from the Methodist Missionary Society. In addition to these schools, it has managed to construct St Andrew’s High School in Ndola, Kanchindu basic Secondary School in Gwembe Valley, and other small self-help church schools. The first four are fully supported by the government of the Republic of Zambia through finance and personnel. Its training centres include Nyengo Makoma Youth Skills Development project in Western province, Chipembi Farm College in Kabwe, and the now defunct Kaputa Agricultural Development Project in Kaputa. Its health centres include Mwandu General Hospital in Western province and Mbereshi Mission hospital in Luapula which are heavily funded by the Zambian government. One of the major obstacles to effective social responsibility of the UCZ is the lack of adequate financial resources. It is trying to address this partly through a full-fledged projects department at Synod headquarters. See UCZ Synod and Synod Executive minutes for the years 1989 to 1999 stored at the church’s headquarters in Lusaka.

Zambia. In this regard, an attempt is made to analyse and evaluate critically five specific core elements, namely: the constitution, doctrine, worship, government, and discipline.

The phrase “The Constitution of the United Church of Zambia”, in general terms, refers to “the system of church government; laws and principles according to which it is governed” (cf *The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English* 1987). All in all, an ecclesiastical constitution is a legally compiled and binding document which defines the nature and purpose of the church – in this regard, the United Church of Zambia. It is a very important ecclesiastical document which gives traces of church thinking on socio-economic matters – including economic development. A brief background of the constitutional development is, therefore, necessary.

Bolink (1967) has ably given a brief survey of the constitutional development of the United Church of Zambia. It took 18 years (1947-1965) to develop, evolve, and make it available for the inaugural service in 1965. Since then it has undergone several editions and revisions. The most recent edition was done in 1994<sup>53</sup>.

According to Bolink the first draft was prepared by the Rev Kenneth D Francis, a LMS missionary, in 1947 (1967:366). Since then, it was edited six times until it reached its current form in the inaugural year. All in all, it is a document which combined Presbyterian elements and other valuable methods from the London Missionary Society and the United Missions to the Copperbelt. These valuable methods or elements included: congregational autonomy, emphasis on congregationalism, and the role of church elders and deacons. Unfortunately, during the CCAR Presbytery meeting in 1947, Francis’ constitutional proposals were simply ignored. In stead, they chose to put in place a constitution committee which during the 1949 CCAR presbytery meeting tried to complete its first draft under the able leadership of the Rev George Fraser, the then head of the UMCB at Mindolo. Their document followed closely the CCAP draft, and took into consideration, this time, the proposals of the 1947 draft which was compiled by K D Francis. According to Bolink, the 1949 draft

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<sup>53</sup> See *Constitution, Rules and Regulations of the United Church of Zambia* (1994)

was “an almost Presbyterian document” (1967:368). Copies of the 1949 draft were then distributed to concerned mission boards and church courts for their scrutiny. The Church of Barotseland felt that there was need to have a clear doctrinal basis, and that it was necessary not to make the draft too Presbyterian. The Methodists proposed that a “pastoral session be upheld and that they should be no separate African and European congregations” (*Ibid*:369). The Church of Scotland felt that there was need to simplify the brief statement, that a formula for ordination be developed for ministers and elders, that a credal statement be worked out and spelt out, and that members be obliged to commit themselves to an undertaking which would make them be accountable to the highest court of the church. The Congregationalists felt that a congregation should be given chance to function in its own right and that the granting of dispensation to administer sacraments by elders be based on the criterion that should an area have the need for this, special authority should be given. On the whole, they felt that on the basis of the 1949 draft, Presbyterianism was out to “suffocate” Congregationalism (*Ibid*: 369).

In 1956, the Constitution Committee released a new draft – thanks to the insight and foresight of the Rev George Fraser and the Rev Kenneth D Francis. According to Bolink this “bore a less distinct Presbyterian stamp” (1967:370). He further observes that “although the structure was still Presbyterian, it adopted certain Congregational and Methodist features” (*Ibid*:370). Generally, “this draft was more ecumenically oriented than the previous two. Exclusive Protestant and Reformed accents were avoided” (*Ibid*:371). To top it all, all forms of worship before the union, were allowed to flourish and develop simultaneously.

In 1958, the 1956 draft was revised by the church union committee which gathered appointed representatives from CCAR, Free Churches on the Copperbelt, and the Methodists. It is the revised 1958 draft which served as “interim constitution” for UCCAR which was formed in July 1958. It is the same draft which formed the basis “on which the UCCAR, the Methodists, and the Church of Barotseland worked toward union” (*Ibid*: 372). It went “through three revisions in 1958, 1959 and 1963, before it reached its final shape in 1965” (*Ibid*:372). Unlike the first merger, in the second and third mergers, church leaders were

keen to see to it that the constitutional character of the United Church of Zambia was sufficiently laid down for the benefit of future generations of believers.

The constitution was a bequeath of the forefathers and foremothers of the union church to the contemporary members. So far, it is clear that in the course of the constitutional development of the UCZ, leaders sought to arrive at what could be termed as “an adequate form of church government” which would include valuable elements of the three ecclesiastical models, namely: Presbyterianism, Congregationalism and Methodism<sup>54</sup>.

All matters of Doctrine, Worship, Government, and Discipline of the United Church of Zambia are well-outlined in the constitution. In this way, it is an essential guide to the doctrinal, liturgical, and disciplinary character of the denomination. It is from these themes that one can trace ecclesiastical thinking on economic development.

In terms of its theological and religious teaching, Bolink observes that the doctrinal basis of the UCZ has “grown from a two-fold source: first, the “Brief Statement of the Faith” of the CCAP and secondly, the doctrinal statements used in the Union Schemes of South India, North India, Ceylon and Nigeria” (1967:390). That is to say that there are a number of doctrinal similarities between the UCZ and other sister churches which earlier sought to define their doctrinal stand in their regions<sup>55</sup>. They used these sources to construct what came to be genuinely UCZ. According to the Constitution (1994:1):

*The United Church holds the faith which the Church has ever held in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the World, in whom we are saved by grace through faith, and in*

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<sup>54</sup> Evangelicalism which was a gift of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society as one coming from a Calvinist Reformed tradition, shared, in many respects, features from the Presbyterian model and the Congregationalist model, but with great emphasis on “the doctrine of Priesthood of all believers” and their equality therein. For example, the role of elders in church government was equally emphasized. In this regard, Evangelicalism, though being an important element of Protestantism, cannot be described as an “ecclesiastical model”

<sup>55</sup> See the “Brief Statement of the Faith” of the CCAP and Union Schemes of South India, North India, Ceylon and Nigeria quoted in Bolink (1967:388ff).



*accordance with the revelation of God which he made, being himself God incarnate. It worships one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*

Its *faith*, its *historicity*, its *universality*, its understanding of *redemption*, *salvation* and *revelation*, and its *trinitarian worship*, all point to the fact it is indeed institutional, spiritual, and evangelical. Doctrinally, the above-mentioned constitutional statement does not point to the social task of the UCZ. In other words, its social responsibility to the nation is not mentioned.

The documentary basis of its faith are the Holy Scriptures, the Old and the New Testaments, the Apostles Creed (of c200 CE) and the Nicene Creed (of 325 CE) as “witnessing to and guarding that faith which is continuously confirmed in the spiritual experience of the Church of Christ” (*Ibid:2*). Broadly speaking, the Holy Scriptures, apart from pointing believers to the institutionality, spirituality, and evangelicality of the universal church, do raise, from time to time, the social imperatives of ecclesial life and work. Unfortunately, both of the ancient creeds are oriented to the institutionality, spirituality, and evangelicality of ecclesial life and witness and do not, whatsoever, bring out the sociality of the universal church in terms of its socio-politico-economic responsibility to society.

It is interesting to note, *inter alia*, that the nature and process of salvation “gained for us by Christ” is for “the whole man - body, mind and soul” (*Ibid:2ff*). It is here where the UCZ comes out emphatically to state that they are not just interested in the salvation of the soul, but of the whole person. Unfortunately how this will occur in a concrete Zambian society is not explained.

From the foregoing, it is crystal clear that doctrinally, it is the UCZ’s pastoral responsibility, in terms of its institutionality, its spirituality, and its evangelicality, which is emphatically presented. Its social responsibility is clearly *oblivionised*, except by implicit allusion to the statement that “this salvation is for the whole man - body, mind and soul” (*Ibid*). As already noted, the salvific implications of the whole person in his or her environmental, social, political and economic milieu are not fully explained. It is only the spiritual enhancement and salvation of persons which is tersely, credally, and ecclesiastically presented.

The worship of the UCZ, that is, the way it conducts its prayers, services and other faith-expressions, is generally presented first under the general title “The Doctrine and Worship of the Church” (*Ibid*:1). It is not specifically addressed by the constitution *per se* as in the case of doctrine. Its main ideas are further dotted in the pages of the constitution here and there, especially pages 1 to 14 (*Ibid*).

It recognises the Doctrine of the Priesthood of All Believers implemented in its liturgical context, which among other things, emphasises that, “all its members can approach God through Christ; all its members share in the calling and authority of the whole church” (*Ibid*:9). It, however, specially recognises ordained ministry of both men and women<sup>56</sup> (*Ibid*:12,13) whose ministerial task is essentially institutional, spiritual, and evangelical, which include the following duties: to watch over the congregation committed to them; to visit the members of the congregation; to visit especially the sick and those who go astray; to encourage, teach, warn and rebuke; to maintain the doctrine and discipline of the Church; to be leaders in the work of preaching of the Word in the Congregations; to bring sinners to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness; to encourage and give opportunity for the exercise by Church members of their various ministries; to encourage all efforts for the promotion of justice<sup>57</sup>, harmony and righteousness; to encourage the removal of wrong in the

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<sup>56</sup> Ordained ministers do exercise prime influence on various congregations of the UCZ. In fact, the institutionality, the spirituality, and the evangelicity of the UCZ is basically directed by ministers. The training of ministers in the UCZ started in 1949 at Kashinda Bible School in Mporokoso district (Bwalya 1989) and has continued at the now United Church of Zambia Theological College in Kitwe. Even though the academic standing of the college has greatly improved from a mere Biblical and ministerial course to an advanced university diploma course offered by Makerere University in Uganda (and now by St Paul’s United Theological College in Kenya in collaboration with other theological colleges in East Africa), theological education and ministerial formation is highly oriented to the enhancement of the “pastoral responsibility” of ministers at the expense of their “social responsibility”. Aspects of social responsibility are briefly presented under diploma courses such as mission and development and Christian ethics. It is now up to the college as an academic idea-generating institution to revisit its syllabi and programmes so that it can begin to help the UCZ begin to seek the vital equilibrium between its pastoral task and social responsibility, thereby help it to be fully comprehensive in its mission to the nation. See the University of Makerere, Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy, *Syllabus for Diploma in Theology, 1987* and St Paul’s United Theological College, Limuru *Diploma in Theology Syllabus, 1994*.

<sup>57</sup> Ministers are called upon to exercise their social responsibility by employing a critical ethical-prophetic stance. However, the UCZ needs to equip its ministers to the level that this is done appropriately and with solid Christian ethical balance which, *inter alia*, emphasize a policy-oriented approach.

community<sup>58</sup>; to lead the worship and to administer the sacraments; to conduct the other services to the Church; to instruct the young; to prepare candidates for admission to communicant membership; to preach the Gospel to non-Christians; to be diligent in Biblical and theological studies; to be diligent in prayer; to attend meetings of Church courts as required (*Ibid*:12-13).

As already noted, the liturgical nature of the UCZ is mainly a celebration of its institutional, spiritual, and evangelical character. Its social character is briefly mentioned through offertory and intercessory prayers, for example, asking God for the good stewardship of its resources, for the provision of charity, social and community services, in society, and invocation of God's wisdom for the political elite and leaders of industry. The point is that the question of material resources and the church's role in the socio-politico-economic affairs do not form a major segment in the liturgical agenda – if anything, they are just mentioned in passing. What is emphasized more is the pastoral task of the church in terms of the institutional-spiritual-evangelical orientation. In this way, the worship of the UCZ is inclined towards looking after, pastorally, the needs of its members and leaders first and then second, those of other human beings, especially those of the higher spiritual goal of sanctification, regeneration, and final salvation of human souls.

In terms of its government as an institutional ecclesiastical body, the UCZ recognises five major courts in which church elders (including church ministers when the biblical term “elder” is applied) play a very significant role. These courts in ascending order are: Section, Congregation, Consistory, Presbytery, and Synod (*Ibid*:15). The Synod, in this structure, is “the supreme supervisory, governing and law-making body of the United Church (of Zambia) and its final court of appeal” (*Ibid*:24). These courts spell out clearly their specific

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<sup>58</sup> Similarly, the correction of wrong in society requires that ministers are trained in balanced Christian

mandates. As shall be seen below, it is the pastoral mandate rather the social mandate which is emphasised.

The organisational structure is such that each court is governed by head office bearers, namely: the Congregational chairman (who is usually a minister and who supervises the work of sections), the Consistory chairman (who is usually a minister), the Presbytery Bishop (who is normally a Synod minister and whose duty is to “be primarily the pastor, guide and adviser of all Ministers, particularly newly appointed ministers, full-time lay-workers of presbytery staff, church, officers and congregations within the Presbytery area”), and the Synod Bishop (who is usually a Synod minister) (*Ibid:15ff*)<sup>59</sup>.

The role of the Synod Bishop is to ensure that UCZ as a church organisation functions well by “first and foremost” providing “leadership in all aspects to the United Church ...” (*Ibid:28*). In this regard, he or she is the head of the UCZ. To give chance to the Synod Bishop to concentrate in the pastoral “overseer” responsibility, the Synod employs a general secretary (who is usually a Synod Minister) whose duties, *inter alia*, are to “be the Chief Executive Officer of Synod ...” and “be the Official correspondent on behalf of Synod” (*Ibid:29*). The general secretary is assisted by a financial secretary and an administrative secretary who are usually drawn from suitably qualified lay members (*Ibid:31-34*).

An in-depth analysis and evaluation of the functions of the five ecclesiastical courts on the one hand, and the duties of the four head office bearers of courts on the other hand reveal that the UCZ is inclined towards its institutional, spiritual, and evangelical character

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ethical engagement.

<sup>59</sup> Before 1993, Presbytery Bishops and the Synod Bishop used to be called Presbytery moderators and Synod moderator, respectively. Certain people felt that the use of the term “bishop” was more appropriate especially when other bishops from other denominations gathered together with UCZ leaders in ecumenical gatherings. The change from “moderator” to “bishop” was a movement “to be like other churches”. What the UCZ probably needs to do is to set up a committee which would investigate properly the historicity, validity, qualifications, conditions of service, and general regulations of the historical office of bishops, so that the change from “moderator” to “bishop” may not simply be a change of titles and that it may not simply be a mechanism to satisfy status – oriented church leaders who, nevertheless, function in an essentially Presbyterian context. See Synod Executive Minutes of the United Church of Zambia 1993 (December).

(*Ibid*:15 f.f.). That is to say that the organisational structure is inclined more to the pastoral role than the social responsibility. Even though the church is involved in charity work, social and community services, its social responsibility within its organisational structure is not well pronounced. Thus its social responsibility within which to engage economic development issues, governmentally speaking, is peripheral.

The UCZ usually interprets the term “discipline” mainly in terms of the good moral standing of all its Christian members and of the good repute of its life and witness (*Ibid*:38). In general, it is a term which is used to “describe the practical methods and rules by which Christ through the influence of the whole community, seek to help each member to be healthy in his own Christian growth and discipleship, and to make his best contribution to the life and witness of the whole body” (J D Douglas 1978:302). These practical methods and rules have a high moral and ethical content. So when the UCZ talks about church discipline, it refers to the whole question of how its members ought to live and how it ought to conduct its affairs and therefore, those who fraught the “code of discipline” are suspended from full communicant membership for a period of time. The UCZ states that “the purpose of Church discipline is for the good of the offender and the purity and witness of the church” (*Ibid*:38). Disciplinary cases are usually determined by pastoral committees at various church courts. Most of these cases relate to both private and public (that is, in the community of persons) misconduct which is liable to church discipline<sup>60</sup>. Disciplinary offences committed in the context of executing one’s duty in the public service, in parastatals, in the private sector, and other sectors, are not usually brought to the church. For example, if a church member is disciplined by his or her company for abuse of office, the case is not usually brought to the church. The church feels that it is within its powers to deal with “common sins” such as murder and assault committed by its members in their communities and homes. It feels that it is not within its powers to intervene ecclesiastically when a member is disciplined by his or her company<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> See also Bolink (1967) and *Constitution, Rules and Regulations of the United Church of Zambia (1994)*

<sup>61</sup> The UCZ probably needs to strike the balance between two sides of discipline – company and church

From the foregoing, it is clear that when the UCZ talks about church discipline, it talks about church offences of its members which need to be described, defined, and corrected for “the good of the offender and the purity and witness of the church” (*Ibid*:38). These ecclesial offences go against the good institutional, spiritual and evangelical standing of the UCZ. In other words, they fall within the pastoral responsibility of the church. They have either less or nothing to do with the social responsibility. That is to say, as already noted, the UCZ rarely speaks about, as a matter of its social responsibility, the social and public wrongs of its members in secular organisations, unless if they are connected with straightforward immoral activities such as rape.

Coming back to the question: Is economic development an ecclesial and missiological agenda item? The answer is “no” and “yes”. “No” in the sense that in the UCZ the priority agenda items are those which enhance its institutionality, spirituality, and evangelicity such as evangelism and Bible classes. “Yes” in the sense that the UCZ does indirectly put economic development issues on its ecclesial and missiological agenda, only that this is usually seen as a secondary item. This is evidenced through its charity work and the provision of social and community services like schools in a limited way. Also, from time to time, especially through the Christian Council of Zambia, it does contribute in a small way its ethical-prophetic voice on influencing economic development issues.

The UCZ has a long way to extend to the full its social responsibility, practically, ethically, prophetically, and otherwise so as to make “economic development” one of its major agenda items. This is the way it can achieve comprehensivity and adequate balance in its ecclesial and missiological service to the nation and beyond.

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discipline. For example, a serious case of fraud by a church member in a company can warrant suspension from full communicant membership. In this way, a member will experience double discipline - company and church – which will work for the good reputation of the church. Members who are guilty of serious offences in their secular organisations cannot just go scot-free in the church. There needs to be a certain measure of ecclesiastical ethical intervention which is inclined to simultaneously disciplining and compassionately resuscitating an erring brother or sister.

#### 4.4 THE CONTEMPORARY ZAMBIAN CHURCH AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: THE RENEWED ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND MACROECONOMIC STABILISATION IN ZAMBIA

The contemporary Zambian church is slowly, but surely changing in as far as engaging socio-economic issues is concerned (c.f *The Future is ours: Pastoral letter by the Catholic Bishops of Zambia* 1992). One of the motivating impacts is the changed unfavourable economic scenario in Zambia which has brought about a “slump” in living standards of ordinary citizens. Ideally, members of the Zambian society are members of various denominations. In this regard, the Zambian church, as one of the moral consciences of the nation, is well placed to listen to the cries of the people, feel their hurts, and thus, embrace their pain in order to contribute to the quest for a more lasting solution to the deteriorating socio-economic conditions<sup>62</sup>.

Prior to 1980, when Zambia entered into economic crisis, the Zambian church was still enjoying its status as a post-independence body in a newly independent republic. It was still adjusting to the reality of ecclesiastical self-rule when a number of denominations started to have “black” Zambian church leaders. During this period, it did not shed off the conventional missionary characterisation – an institutional, spiritual, evangelical and ‘narrowly’ social church – in varied degrees from denomination to denomination. It was a period of “economic easy”. The church went on with its pastoral responsibility to the nation, while trying to execute its social responsibility, as a matter of charity and ecclesial obedience, to a certain degree. It is only the 1972 conference on *Churches and National Development* in Lusaka which tried to begin to “wrestle” with the socio-politico-economic context within

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<sup>62</sup> Priscilla Jere-Mwindilila, formerly communications officer with the Christian Council of Zambia, in her article “The Effects of SAP on women in Zambia” (*Reformed World*, Vol.44, 1994, pp 59-65) has alluded to the misery, destitution, depravity, and hopelessness which are being experienced by a good number of women and children in Zambia and elsewhere as a result of structural adjustment and stabilisation programmes. The cry and pain of women as keepers, preservers, and enhancers of life, make the quest for lasting solutions to socio-economic difficulties by all sections of society extremely urgent.

which churches operated and with their specific role in development<sup>63</sup> (Woodhall *et al.* 1972).

This conference was held at the time when the Zambian economy was experiencing “boom” years. Unfortunately, this conference did not build any effective ecclesial consensus to begin to help Zambian churches stretch out their social responsibility to the most possible effective frontiers. After the conference, churches went back to do their conventional roles of propping up their ecclesiastical institutions, enhancing their spirituality, preaching and teaching the gospel of God’s salvation, and contributing, in varied degrees, to the social and economic upliftment of the people through charity, social and community services. In this way, ecclesial and missiological weight was oriented more to their pastoral responsibility than to their social responsibility – the pastoral-social balance was simply lacking.

One of the reasons for this is that churches did not “push enough” for the enlargement of their social responsibility because, generally speaking, they felt that socially and economically, things were not yet out of hand and the government of the day was fulfilling its social imperatives. In spite of the 1975 debacle, Zambians, up to 1980, still lived in relative ease: *most families still had three meals a day; the morale of education in the country was high; the health-delivery system was relatively fine; unemployment was kept at bay - thanks to the epochal generosity of the parastatal economic machinery.* During this period of relative economic ease, the socialist and humanist Kaunda regime fared very well – thanks to its policy of social and industrial subsidisation. Unfortunately, this policy was shortlived: the government could no longer afford to subsidise its people and its industries. 1980, therefore, as already noted, marked the breakdown of “law and order” in the

socio-economic delivery system. Living conditions simply deteriorated – characterised by incessant shortages of goods and services. It is from this period that the contemporary

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At this conference, which was called by the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia and the Christian Council of Zambia, important papers were given, which included the following topics: Why the church should be involved in development, by Archbishop E Milingo; The role of the church in national development, by W Nkowane; What does the Second National Development Plan mean for churches and church leaders? by M Temple; and Churches and Development Survey for Zambia, by C Woodhall (Woodhall *et al.* 1972).



Zambian church re-awakened in order to re-formulate and re-implement its social responsibility with renewed vigour and vision.

To follow up this re-awakening process properly, this section will be presented under two main sub-headings, namely: The dawning of the new era of ecclesial involvement and the leading role of the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia: Bridging the gap between the spiritual and the material bases of the proclamation of the gospel, and between the ethical-prophetic task and the role of the church to understand specific problems of basic economic policy.

#### 4.4.1 **The dawning of the new era of ecclesial involvement**

The “wind of change” has blown over almost the entire spectrum of ecclesial presence in Zambia, motivating and encouraging the Zambian church to be more responsive to socio-economic issues. In this way, it is gradually renewing its role in economic development in the light of the unfavourable effects of structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilisation which reached their climax at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The contemporary church is no longer ‘narrowly’ social, but ‘expandingly’ social. It has started to seriously expand gradually its social responsibility through practical socio-economic engagement and a more balanced approach to Christian moral discourse. This is a clear demonstration of ecclesial involvement for the sake of human, social, spiritual, material, and environmental progress. This is a step by step process which is leading to transformation of the Zambian society.

Notable in this process are the Christian Council of Zambia, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, and the Episcopal Conference of Zambia (we shall return to them later). It appears that churches which fall under these ecclesiastical bodies are saying that they can no longer afford just to be significantly institutional, spiritual, and evangelical, but should equally also be ‘expandingly’ social. In this way, churches are beginning to be increasingly relevant and meaningful in their service to the nation. They are surely making a paradigm shift: *from mere charity and priestly functions to a quest for equilibrium between their pastoral and social tasks (under which economic development is being seriously addressed).*

The Christian Council of Zambia was legally established in 1964 (*Constitution of the Christian Council of Zambia* 1985). It was successor to the Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia which was established in 1945 when its precursor, the General Missionary Conference, with both Protestant and Catholic representatives, ceased to exist, after being in existence from 1914 to 1944 (*Ibid*:1). Today it has fifteen member churches and eighteen associate member organisations (*The Christian Council of Zambia Newsletter* 1996).

Related to the question of ecclesial involvement in economic development are two of its objectives<sup>64</sup> which read as follows (*The Constitution of the Christian Council of Zambia* 1985:2):

- “To help encourage Christian leaders to attain a more effective Christian Ministry in the Country”
- “To promote the social development of the people in Zambia”.

The CCZ seeks to make tangible the following functions<sup>65</sup> which impinge on the socio-politico-economic-religious well-being of society and which are fully intertwined with its objectives (*Ibid*:2):

- “To bring together representatives of its constituent members for consultation and discussion in order to help form an enlightened Christian public opinion on all issues affecting the spiritual, moral, social and physical welfare of all peoples in the Republic of Zambia”
- “To promote the study and investigation of problems relating to the progress of the Kingdom of God and the development of the people of God”.

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<sup>64</sup> Much of its institutional, spiritual, and evangelical objectives are usually met by its member churches and associate member organisations. In other words, the bulk of its pastoral task is taken up by these members. Nonetheless, from time to time it does contribute to the growth of churches, spread of the Kingdom of God and spiritual development (*The Christian Council of Zambia Newsletter* 1996). In this regard, its programmes are tilted more toward its social responsibility than its pastoral task. For this reason, it has sought practically and morally to develop, consolidate, and implement its social task premised on a very strong material basis of Christian ministry. In retrospect, it has carried over the social task of the General Missionary Council and has tried to take it to higher heights: from the ethical-prophetic to the ethical-prophetic-practical. Thus, it is trying to demonstrate its expanding social responsibility.

Objectively and functionally, the CCZ aspires for “effective Christian ministry”, “social development of the people”, an appropriate ethical-prophetic stand on all aspects of life, and for an intelligible, reasoned out approach to problems “relating to the progress of the Kingdom of God and the development of the people of God”.

Missiologically, since 1964, the CCZ has sought “to work towards a holistic ministry to the people for the glory of God” (*The CCZ Annual Report 1997:3*). With the onset of economic difficulties, especially in the 1990s, CCZ has all the more attempted to stretch out its social responsibility to the nation, especially through practical socio-economic involvement. Its programmes and projects are fashioned in such a way that they either have a direct or an indirect impact on the socio-economic well-being of the people. In this way, it is a contributor to both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. Its work is departmentalised into four sections, namely: Women’s work, Development, Education and Communications and Social Justice. It is these departments which carry out specific CCZ programmes and projects (*Ibid:3ff*).

Women’s work is currently involved in the following programmes and projects:

1. Home-based care training, as a response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic (apart from trying to sensitise people on the need to care for HIV/AIDS patients, this programme is contributing to healthy sexual conduct for the well-being of the nation)
2. Gender and Economic literacy in which small-scale business management training sessions and loan facilities are given to women;
3. Community Workers programme which is “intended to create awareness among community leaders about how they can organise communities in order to effectively utilise available material and human resources for their own development” (*Ibid:4*);
4. Human Rights and Legal Education, especially in the wake of abuse of women and their rights;

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<sup>65</sup> Similarly, CCZ, as a church body, is stronger in the execution of its social responsibility functions than its pastoral task ones.

5. Youth behavioral Change programme which is “intended to help young people change their attitude and behaviour in relation to life” and is “designed to instill confidence and self-esteem in young people so that they can make good choices about their own lives” (*Ibid:6*), especially in the wake of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The Development department has two major projects, namely: Post-drought Recovery Programme which aim is to promote sustainable development and self-reliance, especially the enhancement of water and agricultural skills, in the wake of “unpredictable” weather patterns which sometimes lead to drought; and the Lusaka West Farm whose main goal is to make CCZ a self-supporting organisation. It is the intention of CCZ to turn this place in future into an “agricultural research facility”, now that it has started to use it as “a centre for the exchange of agricultural development knowledge and ideas between farm staff and CCZ member churches” (*Ibid:7*).

The Education Department has continued to contribute to the attainment of higher education through the David Livingstone Teachers Training College in Livingstone and Malcolm Moffat Teachers’ Training College (*Ibid:7*). This time around, it is not “education for evangelisation” but “education for human and social development”.

The Communications and Social Justice Department, whose main task is to co-ordinate the communication systems of CCZ and to engage in social justice vis-à-vis socio-political-economic issues, is slowly, but surely rising from its “slumber”. Its biggest project to date is the initiation of “the ‘Operation Zero debt’ effort with the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, the Zambia Episcopal Conference and some specific church denominations” (*Ibid:11*). This project is aimed at the cancellation of Third World debt.

Its other special projects and programmes include: a counseling unit at the University of Zambia CCZ Chapel grounds, in the light of mounting social problems; and the Ukwimi Resettlement centre in Eastern Province whose goal is to resettle the youth with the necessary skills and logistics, in the light of high youth unemployment (The Christian Council of Zambia *Newsletter* 1996).

It is quite clear from the foregoing that these projects are selected and small-scale. Nonetheless, CCZ is making a point that the Zambian church can afford to expand its social responsibility and that this should target all areas of human and social endeavour. For this reason, CCZ has gone out of its way to respond positively to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, to contribute to the economic empowerment of women, to enhance community leadership for development, to protect women and vouch for the legal protection of women's rights, to contribute to the emergence of healthy youth who are the leaders of tomorrow, to respond to the need for sustainable, community-oriented, contextualised, and life-affirming agricultural development, to prop up the agricultural sector as a contributor to national development, to seek the education of Zambians for national progress, and pursue social justice for all and for the good progress of the nation. These are good signs of social responsibility which are expanding and which will certainly grow, with the necessary support, into large-scale projects and programmes.

Apart from its vibrant practical abilities, the CCZ renders her voice to the ethical-prophetic role of the Zambian church, which it does in collaboration with other two church bodies, namely: the Zambia Episcopal Conference and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia. For example, on December 1, 1995, the Zambia Episcopal Conference and the Christian Council of Zambia issued a statement on "the Constitutional Debate"<sup>66</sup> which, *inter alia*, called for an "in-depth discussion of the Constitution throughout all sections of Zambian Society". The Constitution spells out how a nation is to be governed, and ultimately, has everything to do with political economy and economic development.

The Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) has also experienced what can be described as a "radical change" in its missiological approach. Previously, generally speaking, its members were associated with a one-track view of the proclamation of the gospel: the message of the Kingdom of God should be preached to all corners of Zambia so that men, women and children, could be "born-again", and thus be "snatched" from the fires of hell when they died and be part of the group who will inherit the "new heavens and new Earth"

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<sup>66</sup> This paper, entitled "Church Leaders' statement on the Constitutional Debate", was signed by Bishop T G Mpundu, chairman of the Zambia Episcopal Conference and by late Bishop Clement H Shaba, chairman of the Christian Council of Zambia. It can be obtained from the general secretariates of both bodies.

when Christ comes again. In all their programmes and projects, they aimed at evangelisation and the spiritual preparation of “born-again” Christians – for Christ is to come soon and take his true church. The spiritual preparation was mainly done through the development of spiritual gifts and ministries as given by the Holy Spirit. This attitude promoted, in their circles, a heaven-bound, other-worldly, and from-above focus, which tended to be escapist in relation to human concrete reality and thus earth-denying. In most cases, they articulated in word and deed, a ‘privatised’ faith, that is, faith as a private matter and for individual salvation.

With the onset of economic problems in Zambia, especially in the 1980s, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia has started to orient its mission to human and social realities in this life, and thus, seek an equilibrium between its pastoral task and its social responsibility. About this, Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia Operations and Projects Manager, Pukuta Ndombi Mwanza, observes: “EFZ and its members can no longer afford to be heavenly and spiritual in their approach to mission. They have started to address human and social problems, and thus, try to be holistic in their approach”<sup>67</sup>.

EFZ was formed on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1964, in Lusaka<sup>68</sup>. Today, it has seventy eight member churches and para-church bodies (EFZ *Evangelical Voice* Vol.1, No.1, 1998b:2). Two of its objectives, related to its social responsibility, and ultimately, to economic development, read as follows<sup>69</sup>:

- “To render special services, selective social action, channeling emergency relief and developmental assistance ...”
- “To serve humanity in general and the church in matters of justice and peace, relief and development and empowerment of vulnerable groups.”

Its pastoral work is done through the Evangelism and Missions Department which attempts to promote the work of churches, for example, through seminars and workshops. Its social

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<sup>67</sup> Interview with Mr Mwanza at EFZ headquarters in Lusaka – 28<sup>th</sup> April 1999c.

<sup>68</sup> EFZ pamphlet “Introducing the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia” n.d.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*

responsibility is usually carried out by the Departments of Ethics, Society and Development, and Women's affairs.

The Ethics, Society and Development Department is currently involved in four major projects<sup>70</sup>, namely: the European Union Food Relief Project in Luangwa and Gwembe where residents have been hit hard by incessant drought and poor agricultural harvest. The European Union has provided funding for sourcing grains and transporting them to Zambia, the EFZ manages the distribution part; the Luangwa Sunflower Extension Project in which local farmers are being assisted with expansion of sunflower growing; the Gwembe Livestock Restocking Project in which they are helping peasant farmers to revitalise cattle production and boost beef production; and a small-scale credits project especially to vulnerable women in Lusaka. Other small projects include tailoring and carpentry.

The Women Affairs Department has two outstanding social projects: the Orphan Care Project and the HIV/AIDS Education project<sup>71</sup>. Like the CCZ, the EFZ is trying to respond positively to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Zambia which has left a trail of social problems such as uncared for children and sexual health risks.

The EFZ is indeed trying to maintain a balance between its pastoral and social responsibility through its selected and small-scale projects. Even though it can be said that EFZ and most of its members are still highly 'spiritual and evangelical' in their missiological approach, it can equally be said that an *epistemological shift* is slowly, but surely happening in their circles: *they have started to be more earthly, more realistic, more public, more historical, and more practical*. Their faith has become "deprivatised", that is, a faith that includes public concern and accountability in order to render concrete service to the Zambian society without any distinction whatsoever. For this reason, apart from their practical involvement, in a small way, in socio-economic issues, they are open and willing to participate in ecumenical and inter-church projects and programmes in order to foster a common Christian mind, promote Christian unity, and be ethical-prophetic. For example, as already noted, they are

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<sup>70</sup> Executive Director's Report to the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Council Meeting of EFZ held at St Andrew's Motel, Lusaka, 26-29 April 1999.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* See also EFZ *Evangelical Voice* Vol.1, No.1 1998b.

fully participating in the Debt Cancellation Campaign<sup>72</sup>. A new era of ecclesial involvement has indeed dawned on the previously heaven-bound EFZ. They now realise that while they are looking forward to the consummation of the Kingdom of God in the near future, like other church bodies, they can still make a lasting contribution to the socio-economic well-being of the nation – thereby preaching and teaching salvation in total.

Below is a brief survey of the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia which this thesis considers to be “pace-setters” in seeking to bridge “the gap between the spiritual and the material bases of the proclamation of the gospel, and between the ethical-prophetic task and the role of the church to understand specific problems of basic economic policy”.

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<sup>72</sup> EFZ Executive Director’s Report (April 1999).



**4.4.2 The leading role of the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia: bridging the gap between the spiritual and the material bases of the proclamation of the gospel, and between the ethical-prophetic task and the role of the church to understand specific problems of basic economic policy**

There is no doubt that the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia has been very active in both religious and societal life from the time of the White Fathers as early Roman Catholic missionaries set foot in the nation as from 1898. These and others did not depart from the idea of conventional evangelisation. In this regard, their missiological and ecclesial focus was very similar to their Protestant missionary counterparts.

Up until 1964, they shared the general characterisation of the Zambian church: institutional, spiritual, evangelical, and ‘narrowly’ social. Like their Protestant counterparts, they too were ‘narrowly’ social in that they executed their charity work, social and community services, just as a matter of charity and New Testament ecclesial obedience. That is to say, in doing these great works for social upliftment they were motivated by the New Testament message which called upon followers of Christ to exercise compassion and act charitably and obediently to serve fellow men and women. Their charity work, social and community work, were simply subordinate to their evangelical goal, and therefore, an appendage to the higher spiritual goal of conventional salvation. Nonetheless, it goes without saying that the execution of their social responsibility was exceptional. For example, between 1883 and 1945, the White Fathers were leading in education delivery, outstripping all the efforts made by major Protestant missions in education (Snelson 1977). With the dawning of independence, the Roman Catholic church missiological focus changed. Since 1964, the Roman Catholic Church was engaged in redefining its role in society. About this General Secretary of the Zambia Episcopal Conference, Fr Ignatius Mwebe observes:

*For a long time, early missionary work laid a lot of stress on evangelisation. After 1964, the Roman Catholic Church started to pursue ‘integral evangelism’, that is, the development of the whole person – social, intellectual, spiritual, etc. The Roman Catholic Church has now gone ‘full blast’ to address all human aspects. For example, the church regards education as ‘a basis for development’. This is why the*

*church is fully involved in primary, secondary, and tertiary education. So the question of 'integral evangelism' is something that forms a vital segment of the mission of the church*<sup>73</sup>.

One of the movements, with global impact, which tried to motivate the Roman Catholic Church to begin to think in this way, was the well-known Vatican II, 1962 to 1965, called by the late Pope John XXIII. In general, this council called upon Christians to begin to get involved in matters of balanced and holistic development<sup>74</sup>.

The quest for a re-definition of the role of the church did not just take place overnight. It took some time for the Roman Catholic Church to entrench the idea of 'integral evangelism' among its leaders and members. In spite of the excellent social works, there still existed a certain number of Roman Catholic leaders who felt that their prime task is pastoral work. Matters of sociality such as development were not part of their business<sup>75</sup>. In fact, in spite of the fact that the Roman Catholic Church had accumulated a number of charitable, social and community projects, which were being run professionally and properly, up until 1980, it was its institutional, spiritual, and evangelical character which was very prominent. Many Zambians remember the healing and evangelistic mass rallies organised by Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo (1977) in the 1970s. In short, the celebration of its institutionality, spirituality, and evangelicity was more in the foreground than that of its sociality. Its social responsibility, though practically demonstrated through its many charity works, social and community projects, had not yet been redefined, reconceptualised, and fully clarified.

The economic problems of the 1980s and especially of the 1990s helped the Roman Catholic Church to develop an adequate understanding and implementation of 'integral evangelism'. They are truly seeking a balance between the pastoral task and social task on the one hand, and within their social task commitments, seek an additional balance between the ethical-prophetic task of the church and its bid to understand problems of basic economic

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<sup>73</sup> Interview with Fr I Mwebe at the Zambia Episcopal Conference Headquarters in Lusaka – 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1999a.

<sup>74</sup> For a further understanding of Vatican II and its message, see Cadorett *et al.* eds (1992)

<sup>75</sup> cf Chanda (1983).

policy on the other hand. In this way, they have become “pace-setters” in the quest for balance and comprehensivity in the mission of the Zambian church.

Today, apart from their well-organised institutional, spiritual, and evangelical activities, the Roman Catholic Church supervises over a wide spectrum of clearly defined programmes and projects through which its social responsibility is realised. It is involved in almost every field of human endeavour, such as education, agriculture, social development, charity work, medicine, primary health care, skills development, and HIV/AIDS Awareness, Education, and Care.

It is steadily developing the material basis of the church’s mission to society. For example, in the Pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia, entitled “The Future is Ours”, which was issued in February 1992 and addressed to the Zambia people, the Bishops called on:

- The Zambian people and government to embrace “a new moral culture of responsibility and a new political and economic culture of accountability” which would alleviate gigantic problems such as the poor nutritional status of nearly 60% of Zambian households, the decline in overall national output and the unabated unemployment growth, unbridled inflation which was running over 100%, the collapse in health delivery system, and which would enhance an increased public health awareness in the wake of the AIDS pandemic which was depleting Zambia’s “most productive sectors in society” (1992:3).
- The Zambian people and government to work hard whereby, *inter alia*, the new government would “fulfil its promises”, the people would work and grow towards “greater self-reliance and less dependence on government and on charitable hand-outs”, increase “national, community and personal productivity”, exercise “a sense of conscientiousness and professionalism”, promote “greater respect ... for public properties and institutions”, and eliminate “the anti-social behaviour which tears apart the fabric of our communities (e.g. stealing, killing, drunkenness)” (1992:3-4).

- The Zambian church to be “a model for society”, that it should promote “this new culture of responsibility and accountability” and that as a church they “cannot call others to virtues which we ourselves (they themselves) do not make an effort to practice” (1992:4)
- The promotion of democratic governance and the strengthening of human rights (1992:5).
- The orientation of the Zambian economy to the service of people that liberalisation, privatisation, and the free market system (which were adopted by the MMD government) are not “natural laws to be blindly obeyed in the operation of the economy”, but they should be used as “merely human instruments which must be constantly evaluated in terms of their promotion of the common good” (1992:6).
- The setting of the “recovery of Zambia’s agricultural potential” as “number one priority”, that adequate employment be created, that the educational and health delivery systems be boosted, and that the tax regime be just and fair especially for the low income bracket (1992:8).
- The international community to exempt Zambia from the debt which was tied to the implementation of economic structural adjustment to enable Zambia to begin to meet peoples’ needs (1992:1-10)
- All Zambians “to respect the constitutional guarantee of freedom of conscience and freedom of worship and expression” in the wake of the declaration of Zambia as a “Christian nation” by the second Republican President, Frederick Jacob Titus Chiluba, on 29<sup>th</sup> December, 1991 (1992:10)

The foregoing is a clear demonstration of serious “wrestling” with the socio-economic context within which the Zambian Church operates. It is in clear view of these issues and others that the Roman Catholic Church is carrying out its social responsibility to the nation<sup>76</sup>.

Within its social task, the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia has taken further the ethical-prophetic task of the church: it has now added to the ethical-prophetic attribute the policy-oriented attribute so that it can now be described as an ethical-prophetic-policy-oriented

church (see and c.f. Gustafson 1988). It is no longer satisfied with mere political verbal criticisms of government, but it seeks to understand carefully government policy, especially economic policy, in order to present a well-argued ecclesial and missiological case on matters which affect the livelihoods of workers and their families, companies and the public at large.

For example, through its Justice and Peace Department, it has set up the SAP Monitor: “the project to monitor the impact of SAP on the poor in Zambia” (*SAP Monitor* Issue No.20, Jan/Feb 1999b). Through a bimonthly bulletin (*SAP Monitor*), the Justice and Peace Department is able to write on and to follow up important national development issues such as food security and agricultural liberation, primary health care and public health, education, making a living in Zambia, and post-budget analyses<sup>77</sup> (*Ibid*).

The Roman Catholic Church in Zambia must be complemented on their effort to seek the necessary balance between an ethical-prophetic approach and a policy-oriented approach. A simple and naive verbal attack on government alone is simply not adequate. The Zambian church needs, as shall be argued later, a certain measure of in-depth policy understanding, evaluation, and analysis before rushing into verbal criticisms of government ac-

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<sup>76</sup> For more information on the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia and its social teaching, see Zambia Episcopal Conference *Politics, Economics and Justice* (1990), and *You shall be my witnesses: evangelisation for the second century* (1991).

<sup>77</sup> See the 1999 Post-budget Statement by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace entitled *Visions, Priorities and Parliamentary Responsibilities* (March 1999a) kept at the Catholic Secretariat headquarters in Lusaka. It is the normal practice for post-budget analyses and evaluations to be a preserve of financial business and banking institutions like Barclays Bank of Zambia limited and the Economics Association of Zambia. That the church - led by the Catholics - is able to do this is a step in the right direction which is certainly contributing to the formulation of the “economic basis of the proclamation of the gospel of Christ”.

tion, in order to make a lasting impact on the socio-economic destiny of the country.

The energy and vision of the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia is not yet expended nor dissipated. It is still determined to forge ahead with its quest for 'integral evangelism', which balances between the pastoral and the social, between the ethical-prophetic and the policy-oriented. Time has come that this 'energy and vision' should encourage other Christian churches and bodies who are seeking this balance to go a step further in their ecclesiological and missiological focus. The result is that, together, an 'expandingly' social Zambian church will emerge, ready to meet challenges of modern Zambia in order to, in a balanced, comprehensive and holistic way, contribute to the meeting of whole-person needs.

#### 4.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

There are two cardinal issues which have come out of this critical historical survey of ecclesial response to economic development in Zambia. Firstly, the Zambian church has implemented its social responsibility from scarcity as a "point of departure". That is to say that from the beginning, the Zambian church did not oppose the conventional wisdom that relative scarcity is solved from the standpoint of the notion of scarcity. As for the system or philosophy by which to solve relative scarcity, the Zambian church did not provide an alternative economic system or philosophy. Instead, it carried out its social responsibility under either the influence of the capitalist individualist philosophy or the socialist collectivist philosophy. In this process, it has contributed small-scale community and social programmes which are aimed at socio-economic upliftment and community health. Even though these may be seen by some critics as indirect, lacking capacity, and without any overall significant impact on the economy, the point still remains that, through its small-scale projects, the Zambian church has contributed its share to the well-being of the Zambian economy. Take, for example, education, those who were and are educated in church institutions do not just participate in the economy on the basis of the enlightened minds and sharpened abilities, but they bring to the fold discipline and hard work, especially if they come from well-run ecclesiastical educational centres.

Secondly, the Zambian church is no longer narrow in its understanding of social responsibility – that is, it is no longer seeing the social role as a mere appendage to the main pastoral role of winning men, women, and children to Jesus Christ. Instead, the social role is being seen as an equally important role. The Zambian church has indeed started to expand its understanding of social issues, especially in the light of deteriorating living conditions. It is “expandingly” social and not just seeking an equilibrium between its pastoral and social tasks, but endeavouring to balance between all modes of moral discourse – including the prophetic mode and the policy mode. This is in order to appropriately engage matters of economic development.

Nonetheless, as already observed, scarcity may not be an adequate “point of departure” for economic development (see Goudzwaard and De Lange 1997; Meeks 1988). In chapters five and six, an alternative “point of departure” which has relevance for churches and humanity at large and which is rooted in appropriate moral criteria, will be developed and presented. In addition, how the social role of the Zambian church can be strengthened will also be tackled. Ideally, there ought to be an appropriate “point of departure” which should help humanity to appropriately re-define “the rules of the economic game”. To this end, the Zambian church ought to re-assert itself and enhance its social responsibility to the greatest height possible.