

CHAPTER 15

THE KIMBANGUIST CHURCH

1. Introduction

This chapter shifts from the West to the Central Africa to focus on another prophetic figure whose ministry and influence extended beyond his country. The charismatic leader's indigenous church in the République Démocratique du Congo (formerly Zaïre under Mobutu), is probably the first of its kind in the Central Africa region. This region is made up of other countries such as the Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Gabon, Tchad, Cameroon and Angola, which is closer to the Southern region. The group we will examine in this chapter is called: *Eglise de Jesus Christ sur la Terre par le Prophète Simon Kimbangu* — The Church of Jesus Christ on Earth through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu (EJCSK). It is better known as the Kimbanguist Church.

Our objective in this chapter is to provide an overview of the origin, the development of EJCSK, and some salient practices of the group.

2. Origin

As with most of the indigenous churches already examined, Kimbanguist Church is also a child of circumstances. Politically, the country was under the Belgian colonial rule at the Church's inception. The religious origin of our subject is however traced to the work of the London-based Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) whose ministry commenced initially in 1879 at Ngombe Lutete.⁹⁰ One of the methods of evangelising the people is the establishment of mission stations where converts were cut off from mixing with their traditional life. The station-dwellers were then called Muntil Mundele or Mundele Ndombe, meaning Blacks living like the White or Black with European manners (Ibid.: 127). It was in this context that Simon Kimbangu received his elementary education in a BMS quarter, reading up to the fourth grade.

3. Simon Kimbangu's Birth

Simon Kimbangu was born in Kimbangu, a village of Nkamba on 12th September 1887. His mother died in his early age, and he was reared by his aunt, Kinzembo. He grew up within the BMS setting, and got married to Muilu Kiawanga, and were both baptized on July 4, 1915.⁹¹ This was the day Kimbangu "found the way of faith" while a member of the Baptist church in Ngombe.⁹² They had three sons, the youngest, Diangienda Kutima was born on March 22, 1918, and was the spiritual leader of the Kimbanguist Church until 1993 when he died. He is often referred to as *Mfumuanlongo*, meaning "spiritual head," who was "born from Marie Mwilu conceived by the Holy Spirit Simon Kimbangu."⁹³ He is thus the absolute and respected head of the Kimbanguist Church.

4. The Call to Preach

While Simon Kimbangu was serving as a catechist, he was attached to one Lembokila for instruction. In 1918, he had a vision that he wanted to do the work of God, meaning to be a preacher or teacher

⁹⁰ Welo-Owango, "The Impact of the Kimbanguist Church in Central Africa," in *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center* Vol. 16:1/2 (Fall 1988/Spring 1989): p. 124.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁹² D. J. Mackay, "Simon Kimbangu and the B.M.S. Tradition," *JOURNAL OF RELIGION IN AFRICA (JRA)* Vol. 17:2 (1987): p. 124.

⁹³ André Droogers, "Kimbanguism at the Grassroots: Beliefs in a Local Kimbanguist Church," *JRA* Vol. 11:3 (1980): p. 202.

within the church setting.⁹⁴ This was delayed because there was no deacon in Ngombe. At this time, to become a worker in the church, one must be attached to an established teacher or deacon as an apprentice. Finally, one Kimbangudi, a deacon and a travelling pastor became Kimbangu's teacher. At Nkamba, home church of Kimbangu, members wanted him as their evangelist, but the missionaries refused on the ground that Kimbangu could not read well. The decision was based on the report of Kimbangudi. According to Mackay, "Kimbangu's verdict on Kimbangu as a pupil was that he had not the spirit to read, but he had much understanding of religion. He was only allowed to be a lay preacher mainly for weekday services in his village of Nkamba.

At this time the vision and dreams of Jesus' call to preach continued. Kimbangu felt inadequate to be a full-fledged preacher, and he fled to Kinshasa to look for a job different from the work of the Lord. He sought permission from his church but he did not get it because members already considered him fit as a church worker. He informed a missionary based in Ngombe Lutete of his intention, and he readily endorsed his leaving.⁹⁵ Kimbangu hoped that going outside his village would stop or reduce the visions. This did not happen, rather, the visions intensified. He was also unfortunate to work in an oil company for three months without pay, though he was listed as a worker. He was forced to go back home. While returning home, he was diverted again by using the money contributed for his train fare to buy smoked fish for sale. He ran into problems again when some soldiers defrauded him of his fortune. This forced him to accept the second offer to take the train back home.

No sooner had he returned home than the visions continued to recur, this led him to believe that God wanted him to work for the church. However, he was disappointed by the attitude of the church when they refused to make him their evangelist. Rather, they made his stepbrother, Musiete Paul, the evangelist, and asked Kimbangu to assist him to preach only when Musiete was absent. It was this incidence that probably led him to begin his itinerant evangelistic work.

5. The Birth of Kimbanguism

The birth date of the Kimbanguist Church may be traced to the healing that was done by Simon Kimbangu on April 6, 1921.⁹⁶ The arrival of some elders or deacons from Ngombe to see what was happening probably added impetus, or was a booster to Kimbangu's ministry. They concluded that what Kimbangu was doing was the work of God.⁹⁷ Several of them stayed with Kimbangu, and probably were some of the Twelve he appointed as some of the leaders of the new movement.⁹⁸ The visit may account for the 13th March which Nfinangani, Kimbangu's biographer, gave as the birthdate of the movement. Owango-Welo, the present General Secretary of the Kimbanguist Church, who supports the April 6th date, gave the following account of the beginning of the Kimbanguist Church:

Kimbangu was forced against his own will to enter the house of Nkiantondo, a lady who was ill in the nearby village of Ngombe-Kinsuka. Laying hands on her and praying, Simon Kimbangu healed her in the name of Jesus Christ. The fire was set ablaze and the news of the healing

⁹⁴ Cf. Mackay, *Ibid*, p. 127. This call in his adulthood appears to be a confirmation of the report by his mother that an old missionary had blessed her for protecting him from some attackers. The missionary, called Cameron, blessed the young Kimbangu that he would do the work of the Lord when he grew up. The mother disclosed the old encounter with Cameron after Kimbangu started experiencing the call of God.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 125.

⁹⁶ According to Nfinangani. Kimbangu's biographer, the healing of Nkiantondo took place on 13th March 1921 which is four weeks earlier than the official document. The argument on the discrepancy in dates is not the concern for us, but that the healing took place (cf. Mackay, *Ibid*. p. 133)!

⁹⁷ C. Irvine, "The Birth of the Kimbanguist Movement in the Bas-Zaire, 1921," *JRA*, Vol. 6:1 (1974): p. 36.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 67.

*spread quickly. Kimbangu began to be called a healer, a magician, a miracle worker ... By this miraculous event, a healing by a mere prayer and the laying on of hands, something strange and new happened that made people wonder and marvel. The seed was sown, and the occasion is what is generally called the "Pentecost of Nkamba."*⁹⁹

Owango-Welo's account indicated that some circumstances forced Kimbangu to begin this work. One of such was the failure of the BMS church to make him an evangelist, and the other which was paramount for him was the bidding of the Holy Spirit to involve himself in healing ministry. He was still interested in working within the context of BMS as he directed converts to be baptised in the mission churches in villages from where people came. This boosted the number in some of the BMS churches, but the Catholics were not happy with the success.

The Catholic missionaries and other business groups, such as white farmers whose businesses have been affected adversely by the success of Simon Kimbangu started to mount pressure on the colonial authorities to stop him and his movement. The reason is not farfetched. Many people started making pilgrimages to Nkamba, leaving their work as kitchen and garden boys for the whites, or their forced labour in the plantations to go and listen to Kimbangu. Walder Anders, a missionary was quoted to have written in 1922 thus:

*During the last year, a spring wind of spirituality has blown over some of our zones of ministry. In many villages, people have forsaken their idols and have begun to seek the Lord ... The words of Kimbangu had a powerful and miraculous effect ... they extended over the whole country and carried along with them idols ... on sides of the roads. Idols and bags sorcery (or witchcraft) thrown and abandoned bore witness to the radicality of the movement. Faith in idols crumbled as by a spell.*¹⁰⁰

The infectious revival emptied some of the churches. This of course caused uneasiness among some of the missionaries and the administrators who feared there might be a rebellion. The Belgian authorities started accusing Kimbangu of xenophobia, that he was inciting the people not to pay taxes, and generally causing disorder in the province. The Whites considered Kimbanguism a pan-African movement, thus not only religious but politically inclined.

On June 9, 1921, barely two months after Kimbangu's healing and preaching ministry, attempts were made to arrest him. The attempts to arrest him were foiled by members of his group, and consequently Kimbangu went underground.¹⁰¹ He finally gave himself up on September 12, . 1921. On October 3, 1921, he was tried by a kangaroo court-a . -three-man military tribunal sitting in the district's capital, Mbanza Ngungu, formerly Thysville, probably led by Morel, the Belgian administrator since there was no lawyer to defend him.¹⁰² The government was convinced that Simon Kimbangu's movement was subversive. He was sentenced to death! The Belgian King Albert however commuted it to life imprisonment far away from his home town of Nkamba (the prison was about 2000 kilometers away) due to protests by a member of the tribunal and some missionaries of the BMS and the American

⁹⁹ Welo-Owango, "The Impact of the Kimbanguist Church in Central Africa," *op. cit.*, p. 126. Welo-Owango is also a professor at the Kimbanguist Seminary located in Kinshasa.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

¹⁰¹ J. Chomé, *La Passion de Simon Kimbangu* (Bruxelles: Presence Africaine, 1959), p. 6.

¹⁰² E. Anderson, *Messianic Popular Movement in Lower Congo*, *Studia Ethnographica Upsaliensia* XIV (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wilsels Boktryckeri, 1958), p. 49.

Baptist Foreign Mission Society.¹⁰³ He died in Lubumbashi (formerly Elizabethville) prison in 1951, after spending 26 years as an inmate. The Kimbanguist Church has succeeded in acquiring the prison estate, possibly to turn it into another shrine for their organisation.¹⁰⁴

The persecution and his death in prison turned Kimbangu into a messianic figure. He thus became a rallying point, an institution, a religious legendary figure that became difficult to wipe out by means of force or legislation. Nonetheless, Kimbangu's movement was banned, and his members then were scattered and went underground, while some of the members were deported to other nearby countries. One of the key leaders then was Matuba Samuel, who was deported to Tchad.¹⁰⁵ According to Kimbanguist Church historian, Marie-Louise Martin, about 37,000 of Kimbangu's followers were banned, imprisoned or killed from 1921-1957. The resultant effect of the ban was the mushrooming of many prophetic figures with their groups claiming loyalty to Simon Kimbangu. This is popularly known as Ngunguzism or prophetic groups with their ngunguzas or tribal prophet-seers. Practices alien to Simon Kimbangu's orthodox Christianity started to filter into the various groups. This may be responsible for the hero worship of Kimbangu as is often the case with nativistic groups. Anderson provided background stories of several of them.¹⁰⁶ For the next 38 years, the Kimbanguist Church was thriving underground.

In 1955, an orderly Kimbanguist demonstration was held near Léopoldville to call the government's attention to their religious deprivation. Again the following year, a memorandum was sent to the United Nations for their intervention. By 1957 all deportations relating to the movement had stopped.¹⁰⁷ Such protests and several representations continued until December 24, 1959 when the Belgian colonial government was forced to lift the ban as a form of official recognition. The lifting of the ban came prior to the 1960's political independence granted by Belgium to Kimbangu's country. The Kimbanguist Church was formally incorporated in August 1961 (cf. *Congolese Monitor* No. 19 [August 23, 1961]).

6. Salient Practices or Basic Beliefs

Attempts will be made to discuss some of the basic beliefs of the Kimbanguist Church as they are "still in flux" as claimed by a member and author on Kimbanguism.¹⁰⁸ Droogers claimed that Martin retouched and argued away every indication of "heretical" and the "syncretist" in her work.¹⁰⁹ This is quite understandable, giving the fact of her membership and loyalty to the Church, which however beclouded the issue of academic integrity. It is likely that some key leaders of Kimbanguist Church are so slippery that hardly can a non-African understand fully what goes on. Droogers himself recalled an encounter with one regional inspector of the Church who said:

When the strangers come, they are clever ... Because the intellectuals are seeking which way we will go ... That is why they stay with us, they don't do anything, but in the meantime they

¹⁰³ James E. Bertsche, "Kimbanguism: A Challenge to Missionary Statesmanship," in *Readings in Missionary Anthropology* II (enlarged 1978 00.), edited by William A Smalley (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1978), p. 279.

¹⁰⁴ V. Y. Mudimbe, "Kimbanguism," *CANADIAN JOURNAL OF AFRICAN STUDIES* Vol. 18:2 (1984): p. 450.

¹⁰⁵ See H. W. Turner, Chart of Modern African Religious Groups" in Victor Hayward, ed. *African Independent Church Movement* (London: WCC, 1963), p. 13.

¹⁰⁶ Anderson, *Messianic Popular Movement in Lower Congo*, pp. 117-138. He cited leaders such as Matswa André and his *Amicale Balali*, and Mpadi Simon with his *Khakists*, whose members wear khaki uniforms, probably because he was a village sergeant in the Salvation Army.

¹⁰⁷ Bertsche, "Kimbanguism: A Challenge," p. 384.

¹⁰⁸ Marie-Louise Martin, *Kimbangu: An African Prophet and his Church* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975), p.171. Bertsche, op. cit., p. 390, also claims that Kimbanguism "continues in a stage of great fluidity."

¹⁰⁹ Droogers, "Kimbanguism at the Grass Roots." op. cit., p. 188.

steal you (they really get to know what happens). But they cannot do that with the Holy Spirit. Because mama Martin has tried to understand the Holy Spirit and she has not succeeded. Tata (Diangienda) also has said: "You won't understand."¹¹⁰

Whatever is meant by the above account may not be clear until further research is undertaken, but there seems to be some secrets that only the initiates can understand. However, there are some elements that are identified.

There are four catechetical booklets produced by the church leaders. These contain statements of doctrine that is identical to BMS doctrinal expressions. According to Bertsche, there is not much deviation from the Protestant creed and practice, and that "there is considerable uniformity and orthodoxy." In other words, Kimbanguism's theology flowed out of its origin, or the BMS distinctive.

The following are some of the basic practices and beliefs of Kimbanguism; first the four main practices:

I. Practices

(a) Bible Reading and Prayers

It is observed that "Kimbanguists read the Bible and pray to God more often than the average member of the other churches."¹¹¹ This is probably because of their founder's background as a catechist who evolved into a preacher. It was also revealed that more Bibles were bought during the revival that broke out under the ministry of Simon Kimbangu. The Psalms of David (*nkunga Dafidi*) which Kimbangu adopted as prayer guide is used frequently during prayers.¹¹²

Music is very important for the Kimbanguists' worship practices. While Simon Kimbangu led his followers to sing songs to the tunes used by the Baptist Mission, the group later put together their own hymns compiled in their so-called *cantiques captés* — about 6000 collected hymns. These are received by revelation and under inspiration, and many of the hymns depict the leader, Kimbangu, as the visible Holy Spirit given to Africa.¹¹³ They have all kinds of musical instruments, a complete *fanfare* — a full orchestra with musicians, some of whom were sent to Belgium to learn music. The Kimbanguist Church has what is known as *Bureau des Chants Kimbanguistes* under the direction of one Pastor Nsambu Twasilwa.

(b) Working for the Church

Within the Kimbanguist Church, every member must be involved in all kinds of activities that are considered as working for God.¹¹⁴ As a result every member is worthwhile because of so many titles conferred on members. In other words, no member can stand on the fence or remain on the periphery. The works include regular church attendance, cutting grass around the church premises, collecting sand and stones for local church building, and then giving.

There is so much emphasis on giving that list of names of contributors is drawn for the leader to see. If a member fails to give, his or her name could be wiped out of the list of the redeemed. Droogers claimed that collecting of money is so elaborate that it takes about three hours on normal Sundays!

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 200.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 191.

¹¹² Mackay, "Simon Kimbangu and the B.M.S. Tradition," p. 138.

¹¹³ Gordon Molyneux, "The Place and Function of Hymns in ,the EJSCK." JRA Vol. 20:2 (June 1990): p. 153.

¹¹⁴ Droogers, "Kimbanguism at the Grass Roots., p. 193.

Giving is competitive between men and women. During this time, members dance in circles, and each group has its circles — circles of pastors, youths, women, choir, security officers, etc. There is what is called *nsinsani* (Kikongo name for competition) that is held once a month in all churches for the purpose of collecting money for the church's ministries. An insider refers to this issue as social groups engaging in socio-economic and socio-cultural activities. "Most of these activities are financed in two-ways: (1) by collective giving through group competition in a system of fund raising called "Nsisani", or (2) through free labor, the work of volunteer church members."¹¹⁵

The Kimbanguist Church was probably forced to use this method of fundraising when in the early 1960's, their children were kicked out of missionary schools, and Kimbanguist patients were refused admission in mission hospitals. The money so realized was spent on building dispensaries and primary schools in villages. A modern hospital has since been built in Kinshasa with a capacity for 250 beds.

(c) *Propaganda*

The Kimbanguist Church is also noted for good publicity, as well as effective use of propaganda among themselves.¹¹⁶ Materials are frequently distributed in several languages for effective dissemination. The aim is simply to explain Kimbanguist's aims and views. Kimbanguist leaders have had regular radio time on the several radio stations. The emphasis of their propaganda is the stress on Africanness of their church. In consequence, other churches are considered foreign. The leader is respected as a king, and people have to crawl in his presence. One has to kneel when talking with him as well. In a sense, the leader is idolised. This is reminiscent of Mobutu's attitude of being the absolute ruler of his then Zaire, who must be revered, and who is accountable to no one!

(d) *Standard of Personal Conduct*

One striking emphasis of Kimbanguism is a strict adherence to the biblical code of conduct. All fetishes must be abandoned, and confession of personal sins must be done promptly in public. Members must not engage in polygamy. Members of the Kimbanguist church must not use tobacco, hemp, and they must abstain from alcoholic drinks. They must not eat pork or monkey. Members are also urged to pay taxes promptly, and respect must be shown to those in authority. Love is preached quite often, and members are urged to love all, irrespective of race or colour. They are to pursue "every religious practice which favors respect and harmony among men and nations, which is the essential foundation of true peace and harmony in the world."¹¹⁷

II. Beliefs

As discussed above, Simon Kimbangu's theology could not be "developed" beyond what he acquired initially from the BMS before he was imprisoned. There is no record of any writing or document containing his dogma. This may be due to his limited education. The modern Kimbanguist Church has however "improved" upon their founder's doctrinal expressions, that is, what he preached and did before he was interrupted by his imprisonment. The following are the basic beliefs:

(a) *The Holy Spirit*

The belief in the "Holy Spirit" is frequently stressed in the Kimbanguist churches. This is however one of the beliefs that is so fluid with the Kimbanguists, and to some extent is heretical to say the least. It is clear there is some confusion as to what the present leaders understand about the biblical teachings on

¹¹⁵ Welo-Owango, "The Impact of the Kimbanguist Church., p. 133.

¹¹⁶ Bertsche, "Kimbanguism: A Challenge., p. 388.

¹¹⁷ Article 4 of the Church's published statutes, appearing in the CONGOLESE MONITOR See also Bertsche, "Kimbanguism: Challenge," p. 387.

the Holy Spirit. The legendary leader has been referred to as the Holy Spirit in some of their pronouncements. For instance, Simon Kimbangu was given the title of *ntoma*, meaning the "One Sent," or the messenger, equating him to John 14 passage about the Comforter that would come after the Lord had departed. An excerpt from one of their hymns recorded by Droogers goes thus:

*It is the love of god (sic) the Father and of His Son that they decided to send tata molima ("father spirit") to be born in Africa Halleluyah, let us praise the Lord for everything that he has done for us, for the love of the spirit, Lord we thank Thee, tata Kimbangu Holy Spirit (molimo mosantu) many thanks, we rejoice. . . .*¹¹⁸

The statements above probably connects their teaching on Eleka, or the promise of God, through Kimbangu and his family. Salvation or heavenly reward are part of the promise to those who obey the law of God through his messengers, Jesus, Kimbangu and his children included. Again, this is an indication of a misunderstanding of the biblical teachings on the Holy Spirit as hinted earlier. What remains to be practiced is the orthodox beliefs of their leader/founder, Simon Kimbangu on the Holy Spirit.

(b) *Mpasi* (Suffering)

Suffering characterised the beginning and the growth of the Kimbanguist Church, thus it becomes part of their faith. The majority of the membership comes from the lower income strata of the society. It is thus stressed in their various teachings and preaching that one must struggle to get to the promised land. One of the causes of suffering is sorcery, therefore members must avoid it. So also "is the temptation of the world and its sins." Those who are part of the world's systems and its trappings would not share in the new Jerusalem. Some of the sins mentioned are lying, stealing, insulting others, adultery, murder that is related to sorcery, and seeking revenge. It is still appropriate to quote Droogers on this issue of worldliness and sin:

When sins are spoken of, this is often couched in one of the following metaphors: dirt contrasted with purity and cleanliness. . . darkness¹¹⁹ contrasted with light; . . . wearing the sins like clothes, instead of "wearing God"; combat with Satan in which the faithful will attain victory with its reward of eternal life. Invariably, the first prayers in a church service contain references to the sins of the past week and to the unworthiness of the speaker with his "dirty mouth."

While stress is placed on suffering, there is the opposite of it, which is *Kimia* or quietness of the heart, and eternal life.

(c) *Belief in End-Time* (Eschatology)

The EJCSK members are urged on a constant basis to be prepared for one's last day, that is, the end of the world. Every member must work diligently while on earth for such member's name to be on heaven's list. One's interest on money invested in God's work on earth would be paid, and one's labour in God's work would be rewarded as well. A song to that effect says:

¹¹⁸ Droogers, "Kimbanguism at the Grass Roots," p. 198.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 195.

*The whole world is called to Nkamba Jerusalem. There we will be purified for the eternal life Let us Go and accomplish the promise at Nkamba Jerusalem in the Eternal glory.*¹²⁰

Nkamba is very important for the Kimbanguists as they go on pilgrimage, especially on 6th April. On that day, they wear sackcloth, and fast for six days for penance, and of course for healing and other personal needs. While in the city, members must walk barefooted as a sign of respect for their "Jerusalem" and their leader.

There is no church building that can be compared with the Kimbanguists' temple in Nkamba. It is very big with altars overlaid with gold. The building is painted white and green, while members wear the same colours. The colours are symbolic as the Holy Spirit is believed to manifest Himself in green that stands for "peace," and white that stands for "purity."

The Kimbanguists continue the tradition of their leader in relation to healing. It is believed that the water of the spring of Nkamba — *nlangu Nkaniba*, - is efficacious for all kinds of ailment which is attracting "pilgrims" to the Kimbanguist Jerusalem, Nkamba. Of course much premium is placed on fasting and prayer. Visions and dreams play a prominent role in their private and corporate worship life too.

One of the strange things about the Kimbanguist Church is the infrequent administration of baptism and communion. Since its inception, the first baptism and communion were held in 1971.¹²¹ With the growth and expansion of the EJCSK, these important services must have become regular features.

The Kimbanguists appear to enjoy the support of Mobutu government, or his regime was favoured by them. There are three seats at the altar, one for the leader, one for Mobutu and the other for his wife. In consequence, they are very loyal to the government. Droogers claimed that "In none of the other churches did I see many party buttons as in Kimbanguist church."¹²² This definitely worked to their advantage as their Church did not suffer persecution under the Mobutu dictatorship. It is very likely they would have become cautious with the new political dispensation under President Kabila.

The issue of succession to leadership in the church appears to be dynastic. When the old leader, Diangienda died, in 1993, he was succeeded by his older brother, Dialungana. One would have expected their new General Secretary, Dr. Luntadila who was trained as a theologian in Switzerland to succeed Diangienda. There is the likelihood that this leadership based on dynasty would not last, and the exit of Kimbangu's sons may open the door to new ideas and innovations. The new political dispensation in the country may also force the Kimbanguist Church to reform. It is also likely that the influence of their theological schools, *Ecole de Théologique Kimbanguiste in Kinshasa and Ecole Supérieure de Théologie Kimbanguiste* in Kinshasa-Lutendele may infuse necessary appraisal of their practices that may not be biblical.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 193.

¹²¹ Mackay, "Simon Kimbangu and the B.M.S. Tradition," p. 155.

¹²² Droogers, "Kimbanguism at the Grass Roots," p. 205.

7. Summary

In this chapter, we have been able to provide an overview of the birth, spiritual journey, the healing ministry, and subsequent persecution and final imprisonment of the founder of the Kimbanguist church. For many years after Kimbangu's incarceration and death, the movement mushroomed underground, culminating to the 1959' s government approval of the movement. We have been able also to discuss briefly the practices and beliefs of the Kimbanguist Church.

8. Post-Test

- (i) How far is it true that Simon Kimbangu did not plan to begin his own church?
- (ii) Discuss the role of the Belgian colonial government in suppressing the Kimbanguist Church?
- (iii) "Simon Kimbangu was truly a fanatic follower of the missionaries of the Baptist Missionary Society." Discuss.
- (iv) What would you consider to be the main practices and beliefs of the Kimbanguist Church?
- (v) To what extent has Simon Kimbangu become a legend to his followers?
- (vi) What challenges did the Kimbanguist Church pose to the Missionary endeavours in Central African countries?
- (vii) How far is the statement true that the Kimbanguist Church's theology flowed out of the BMS tradition?