

Political Changes in the DRC and the Contextualization of Bakongo People's Identity: Based on Ne Muanda Nsemi, BDK and BDM*

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1. Introduction

The Bakongo people contextualize or re-context the Kongo Kingdom in the history of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (hereafter referred to as the DRC). Bakongo people have ethnic, linguistic and historical homogeneity based on strong historical consciousness unlike other ethnic groups of DRC (Kim 2014: 37, Kim 2015: 4-5). Therefore, the word 'Kongo dia Ntotila / Ntotela' represents the historical consciousness and identity of all Bakongo people (Kim 2014: 16, 38, Verhaegen 1962: 16-11, Covington 2008 : 256).

The Bundu dia Kongo (later described as BDK) was organized in 1969 by Ne Muanda Nsemi, who is a believer in the Messianic Bakongo. BDK is mainly supported in the Congo Central Province, where Bakongo residents live mainly. The BDK continues its identity as a political, religious, and cultural organization that emerged in 1950 as the Alliance des Bakongo (hereinafter abbreviated as ABAKO). BDK aims to unite and integrate the Bakongo people scattered in Angola, the DRC, the Republic of Congo and the western part of Gabon and aims to recreate the glory of the former Kongo kingdom (Kim 2016a: 265, 271).

Ne Muanda Nsemi created the Bundy dia Mayala (later described as BDM), a political party in 2008. The BDM, which has not been authorized by the DRC government, has been formally accredited on September 30, 2015 and is now a party. The BDM is a new political party that is two years old and its influence is weak, but BDK legally appeared on the political stage of DRC through BDM (Kim 2017: 28).

However, this situation is becoming unpredictable due to drastic political changes in DRC since 2017. On March 3, 2017, the DRC government arrested and imprisoned Ne Muanda Nsemi, who is the leader of the BDK and the head of the BDM, and other key members for the cause of BDK's violence in Congo central province. BDK's attacked on the Makala prison in Kinshasa, the capital city, and the prisonbreak of 50 BDK members including Ne Muanda Nsemi on May 17, 2017, made the future of BDM uncertain.¹⁾

* This paper was supported by the Korea Research Foundation (NRF 362-2010-1-B00003) funded by the Ministry of Education in 2010 and the academic research fund of the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in 2017. This paper is developed from the presentation at the second half annual conference of the Korean Society of African Studies on December 16th, 2017.

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1) Please refer the following link about this. Aljazeera. 2017/05/17. "BDK leader Ne Muanda Nsemi

It is not known at this time whether this situation was due to illegal activity of the BDK, or to create a legitimate reason to extend the regime by suppressing the emergence of large opposition parties and suppressing the activities of small political parties such as the BDM. Currently, all activities of BDK and BDM are banned, and political activities of Bakongo people are also being monitored by the government. In the future, this situation is likely to be closely linked to Joseph Kabila's current governance style.

The purpose of this paper is to reveal how the Bakongo people are historically contextualizing their identity in the changing political situation of DRC since 2017 through the activities of Ne Muanda Nsemi and his BDK and BDM. Research on the political activities of the Bakongo peoples' organizations of BDK and BDM, is important in that it can predict the political situation of the DRC. It is not only to examine how the political activities of BDK and BDM indicate the contextualization of ethnic identity of Bakongo people in the political context of DRC where there are about 260 political parties representing various interests such as region, ethnicity, religion and ideology but also to use it as a measure of understanding of DRC's democracy.

However, the present situation reveals that there is a limitation of data in the preparation of this paper. Ne Muanda Nsemi and BDK, whose official activities have been suspended since 2017, are only using to express their views through the Internet, such as the Youtube, to avoid government regulations and through the BDK promotional material *Kongo Dieto*, which is being issued secretly. In addition, DRC government news reports on BDK and Ne Muanda Nsemi are very limited, and DRC's current political situation is constantly in flux and needs continuous research.

2. The organization and identity of the Bakongo ethnic group

ABAKO started as a cultural organization for Bakongo people to defend their language, culture and tradition but developed into a political organization and led the independence movement from Belgium (Lemarchand 1961: 344). ABAKO can be said that the historical consciousness of the Bakongo people formed based on the historical identity of the Kongo kingdom in the past was expressed as a movement for cultural identity seeking to protect language and culture. The purpose of protecting the Bakongo people's historical and cultural heritage was to be a powerful force to change into a political organization while facing the real problems of the Belgian colonial ship

flees after DRC jailbreak." May 17, 2017. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/bdk-leader-ne-muanda-nsemi-flees-drc-jailbreak-170517073722196.html> (search: 2017.05.22.), Reuters. 2017/03/04. "Congo police arrest separatist cult leader after violent standoff." March 4, 2017. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-congo-violence-idUSKBN16A294> (search: 2017.05.22.), africanews. 2017/03/03. "At least 8 killed during clashes between DRC police and religious sect." March 3, 2017. <http://www.africanews.com/2017/02/03/at-least-8-killed-during-clashes-between-drc-police-and-religious-sect/> (search: 2017.05.22.).

and the independence of the entire Congo. Bakongo's historical and cultural identity was one of the many ethnic groups in the DRC, where the Bakongo could first create an organization called ABAKO to initiate a movement to protect cultural identity. It is also possible to explain how the identity of the party can be changed and developed for the first time (Kim 2014: 37-38).

ABAKO leaders and members regarded the ethnic, linguistic and historical homogeneity of the Bakongo ethnic group as an important identity. The Bakongo people's cultural identity, attitudes to power, political orientation, providing a base for collective mobilization, and a common basis for geographic boundaries (Kim 2014: 27-28).

Ne Muanda Nsemi argued that BDK is an organization that pursues African cultural, spiritual and physical freedom. The BDK was given the divine mission of social reform, and the goal was to restore the Bakongo people's cultural, historical, wisdom, and religious traditions of their ancestors (Ne Nememi 2003: 4). Covington defines the BDK as a political, religious, and nationalist movement of the Bakongo people. Claiming that the former Kingdom of the Democratic Republic of the Congo should be raised again and returned to the traditions of the Kingdom of the Congo (2008: 15). BDK has a hybrid identity as a religion, politics, and cultural organization organized by the Bakongo ethnic group of the Kongo kingdom (now Angola, the DRC, the kingdom in the West of Congo and Gabon) in order to revive the Kingdom of the Kongo (Kim 2016a: 265).

BDK can be defined as a religious, political, socio-cultural organization and advocates Bakongo nationalism. To this end, the BDK continued Kongo Kingdom's resistance to the colonial rule of Belgium and Leopold II, the identity of Kimbanguist Church of the African Independence Church and the identity of ABAKO in the process of decolonization. The following factors were involved in BDK's hybrid identity formation. First, the most important national identity plays an important role. The Bakongo are a major ethnic group in the DRC, the Republic of the Congo, and have a common historical and cultural identity. Especially, their identity about language and culture is strong. Secondly, the religious beliefs of Kimpa Vita and Simon Kimbangu, who resisted the Portuguese colonial rule, had a significant impact. Third, it is based on strong historical consciousness and identity of the Kongo kingdom that Bakongo people built. Fourth, ABAKO, which appeared in the process of independence and resistance to colonial rule, also had an important influence (Kim 2016a: 271).

The identity of the political party BDM made by BDK can be summarized as follows. First, BDM is a regional party that is not receiving national support. BDM has party branches in five provinces: Kongo central, Kinshasa, Kasai, Bandundu, and Equateur. However, most political activities take place in Kongo central province. Therefore, it acts as a minority party, not a nationwide party. Second, it is a national political party based on national identity. Bakongo people, who are the descendants of the Kongo kingdom,

wants to have a political unity while maintaining their culture and identity. Third, BDK and BDM are not completely separate organizations rather they are under the same organization. Ne Muanda Nsemi is the beloved Messiah of the Bakongo people, who is both the president of the BDK and the president of the BDM. He claims to be the Messiah succeeding Yaya Kimpa Vita and Simon Kimbangu. Fourth, cultural identity is very important for BDM. Moreover, BDM considers it a political identity to maintain the culture and customs of Africans and Bakongo people. According to BDM, all political conflicts appear to be caused by a lack of understanding of culture. The BDM claims that their culture has been destroyed by colonial rule and should be restored to its status in the pre-colonial period. Fifth, BDM advocates the ideologies of socialism, Pan Africanism, and African Renaissance. This ideological background is based on community consciousness that has been most important in the African traditional society. It argues that African restoration and revival of traditional African culture can lead to the overall development of Africa (Kim 2017: 51-53).

The emergence of BDM is a political act based on the identity of the Bakongo people who have been collectively recognized by their unfair treatment or deal. Identity politics is based on the perception of repressed collective identity. In other words, the Bakongo people perceive that their identities are fixed, unchanged, marginalized and politically ineffective. Thus, it can be seen that the Bakongo people are in a political struggle that clearly expresses their ignored and repressed identity. However, BDM has a different appearance due to the manifestation of political action connected with Messianism (Kim 2017: 54).

In conclusion, BDM is said to have a mixed identity because history, culture, religion, and ideology are mixed together with national and regional backgrounds. In order for BDM to develop into a political party, it needs the support of the DRC people. The future of the BDM depends on the ability of BDM, which is based on regional, national and religious foundations, to present a vision of how it can develop into a party that can appeal to the public. It is important to note that BDM is following BDK's path while at the same time it is trying to act as a political party. BDM can not be said that its activities are completely out of ethnocentrism and exclusive nationalism. However, until its political activity was banned by government in 2017, BDM has been insisting that DRC's presidential election should be fairly held. BDM's argument for political issues may be interpreted as the disappearance of the existing identity of BDM and the formation of its new identity as a political party (Kim 2017: 53).

3. DRC's Presidential Election and Political Change

This chapter examines the political change of DRC that occurred in relation with the presidential election schedule. I attempted to clarify that powerful opposition political parties have failed to emerge because of Kabila's intention to continue to extend his power by postponing the presidential election despite opposition from the people.

3.1 The extension of Kabila's power and opposition from the people

Kabila's second term in office expires on December 20, 2016 and the constitution does not allow him to run for the next presidential election. But on 27 November 2016, the presidential election was said to be been delayed due to political instability. There was resistance to this situation and resulting in many victims.²⁾

On September 29, 2016, the Commission Électorale Nationale Indépendante (CENI) announced that it would not hold elections until early 2018 for reasons that it has not yet accurately identified the number of qualified voters (Mbatha and Wilson 2016). The opposition blamed Kabila for deliberately trying to maintain power without conducting election.³⁾

In December 2016, President Kabila agreed with the opposition to hold the presidency until the end of 2017 when election was to be held. However, on July 7, 2017, Corneille Nangaa, Chairman of the Board of Elections (CENI), announced that it would be impossible to prepare for the presidential election by the end of 2017 (Associated Press 2017/07/09). Opposition leader Felix Chasse Kedi denounced the announcement on Twitter, claiming that Nanga "declared war on the people of Congo" (Tshisekedi 2017).

The Election Commission announced that the presidential election in October 2017 would not be held until April 2019, raising concerns about violence and resistance. The US special envoy, Nikki Haley, met with Kabila in October and warned him that if the 2018 election is not to be held, DRC will be blamed and unsupported internationally.⁴⁾

The presidential term of the DRC was scheduled for December 20, 2016, with the presidential election scheduled for November 27, 2016, but the election was not held

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- 2) Please refer the following. Jullien, M. 2015. "DR Congo president unlikely to give up power." December 23, 2015. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35072001> (search: 2018.07.04.), BBC News. "DR Congo election: 17 dead in anti-Kabila protests." September 19, 2016." <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-37406407> (search: 2018.07.04.), The Guardian. 2018/02/07. "DRC crisis: aide says Kabila not standing in elections." February 07, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/07/joseph-kabila-will-not-stand-in-next-drc-elections-aide-says> (search: 2018.07.04.).
 - 3) Please refer the following link about DRC's postponed general election and political situation. Aljazeera. 2016/10/17. "DRC delays election to 2018 despite opposition anger." October 17, 2016. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/10/drc-delays-election-2018-opposition-anger-161016135155845.html> (search: 2016.11.21.). Berwouts, Kris. 2015. "DRC: The Final Countdown to the 2016 Elections or Just Another Transition?" October 9, 2015. <http://africanarguments.org/2015/10/09/drc-the-final-countdown-to-the-2016-elections-or-just-another-transition/> (search: 2016.11.14.). Mbatha, Amogelang and Wilson, Thomas. 2016. "Congo Election Body Proposes Two-Year Wait for Presidential Vote." September 30, 2016. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-09-29/congo-to-hold-elections-in-2018-at-earliest-electoral-body-says?cmpid=google> (search: 2016.11.21.). Shaban, Abdur Rahman Alfa. 2016. "DRC's Constitutional Court rules that elections be postponed." October 17, 2016. <http://www.africanews.com/2016/10/17/drc-s-constitutional-court-rules-that-elections-be-postponed/> (search: 2016.11.21.).
 - 4) Please refer the following link. Aljazeera. 2017/11/06. "Fighting erupts in Congo's eastern city of Bukavu." November 06, 2017. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/11/fighting-erupts-congo-eastern-city-bukavu-171105125611219.html> (search: 2018.07.06.).

on schedule and consequently the presidential term was extended. Since President Kabila has been in office for two successive terms, he cannot stay in power for the third term without revising the constitution. It is expected that the political instability of the DRC, such as, the event of a rebellion in the eastern part of the country or an unexpected disruption, could lead to an election failure and natural extension of power. However, even without such a situation, Kabila's presidency is expected to be extended (Kim 2016b: 432).

President Kabila appears to have an intention to extend his rule. He could be learning this from the neighboring country, Burundi, extending presidential election by giving reasons of political instability and sustain presidential term. Or maybe he is thinking of putting out a person who can take his place like Putin of Russia did and then returning to the presidency afterwards.

On November 5, 2017, the DRC Board of Elections (CENI) announced that the presidential election will be held on December 23, 2018 due to violence in the Kasai region (Wembi 2017). It is not yet clear if this will be done on schedule or if it will be postponed, but it is unlikely that Kabila will continue to postpone the election.

3.2 The Sylvester political agreement

On October 18, 2016, under the African Union (AU) mediation, Kabila and the opposition leader agreed to elect a new president at the end of his presidency on December 19, 2016. The Council of Catholic Bishops (CENCO) created a Saint-Sylvester Political Agreement (Saint Sylvester Agreement) after a comprehensive dialogue on 31 December 2016. However, progress of the talks has been sluggish at present (Africa Faith & Justice Network. 2017/03/13).

The United States expressed its disappointment that the Sylvester political agreement was not being implemented on schedule. The United States expressed concern that the DRC government and leaders of the opposition coalition Rassemblement, could not draw the compromise needed to implement the agreed provisions in the agreement including the appointment of a prime minister. According to this political agreement, the Congolese people will constitute a new government through elections and along with the first DRC peaceful and democratic power transfer. The United States has announced that it will give unwavering support to this plan and that the Council of Catholic Bishops (CENCO) continues to push forward to the implementation. The United States warned that failure to advance the accord would undermine the will of the people of Congo and jeopardize the progress made so far. The United States also asked the DRC government and opposition leaders to refrain from any speech or action that could lead to violence and instability (Toner 2017).

The Sylvester political agreement is a milestone in overcoming the political and constitutional crisis of the DRC. This agreement is important because it has led to mutual consensus and concessions. The agreement stipulates that Kabila, the current

president who is in compliance with the Constitution and running the office twice since 2001, can not continue his third term. In addition, it states that Kabila should constitute a transitional government and hand over power to the newly elected president by the end of 2017.

However, this agreement has a blind spot for continued consultation. In addition, the ruling party and the opposition party are also divided, making it difficult to proceed as planned. A DRC government official notes that the agreement is very good, but very impractical to implement. The opposition is leading the government to prepare for the election. The opposition party will surely pass the deadline and the government will point it out to the opposition as it did in December. It is clear that the DRC government has shown no commitment to prepare for the election. Opposition leader Étienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba died in February 2017, but the DRC government has not taken any action ever since. The opposition suspects that the reason the DRC government registers the electoral rollers is to amend the constitutional regulations, which consist of a two - term presidential term, in the current constitution by voting. By June, the situation is that local violence is increasing and the government is not in control. There was no armed violence in the Kasai Central area, but violence broke out later in August 2016. Along with the violence, a new armed group, Kamqina Nsapu, emerged. The violence that began at the end of 2016 lasted until January 2017 and expanded significantly in February. This has been happening in many parts of the country (Berwouts 2017).

3.3 DRC's next presidential candidate

Tshisekedi died at the age of 84 on February 1, 2017 in a hospital in Brussels, Belgium. He was born on December 14, 1932 in Kananga, Kasai (Luluabourg at the time). Tshisekedi has been a politician with the most infamous Mobutu Sasezeko for almost 20 years. In 1960, when Mobutu succeeded in a coup, he appointed Tshisekedi as a member of the Council of General Commissioners. He was appointed Deputy Minister of Justice (Deputy Commissioner) while he was a student majoring in law at Lovanium University (now Kinshasa National University). In 1961, he became the first Congolese to receive a doctorate degree in law. He soon became the head of the National School of Law and Administration (ENDA) and was away from politics during this period. After Mobutu's success in the second coup in 1965, he decided to appoint him as interior minister and started politics again. Later, he played an important role as the core minister of the Mobutu regime. In 1967, the Constitution was enacted, the majority party system was rejected, and the People's Revolutionary Movement (MPR) led the party. However, in the late 1970s, Mobutu's corruption and reality led to a gap between the two, and in December 1980, Tshisekedi, with other twelve members of parliament, sent a 52-page letter to the President and broke up with Mobutu. He argued in the letter that multiparty democracy should be restored. Mobutu arrested and

tortured the conspirators and he imprisoned and exiled them in remote places.

In 1991, Mobutu, under pressure from both home and abroad, authorized party activity and asked Tshisekedi to serve as prime minister, but was rejected. He was recognized by the people as a symbol of opposition, but Laurent Désiré Kabila, who drove out Mobutu, deported him to his hometown, Eastern Kasai. Since Joseph Kabila took power, Tshisekedi has emerged as the most popular opposition leader. He did not run for the 2006 presidential election, but ran for the presidential election in 2011. The election results were announced as a victory for Kabila, but there were suspicions of election fraud. Tshisekedi was called "Vieux (Old Man)" during the election and was stamped as a symbol of democracy and human rights of Congo (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2017).

Tshisekedi has struggled for DRC's democracy as leader of the opposition for the last 30 years and his death has resulted in weak opposition forces. He was leading the opposition coalition Rassemblement and the opposition coalition "G7", along with former Katanga governor Moïse Katumbi. His death is pushing the ruling party to postpone the presidential election, making it difficult to prevent the intention to extend the ruling party's administration. He created the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) in 1982 and is supported mainly in his hometown Kasai and the capital Kinshasa. He is a symbolic figure who historically claimed the realization of democracy and showed resistance against three presidents, including Mobutu Sese Seko, Laurent Kabila and Joseph Kabila.

Tshisekedi returned to the DRC on July 27, 2016 and was welcomed by many. Tshisekedi was chairman of the opposition coalition Resemblance Conseil des Sages, which gave political opposition and politicians confidence in politics and above all was welcomed by politicians and public officials. Due to his death in 2017, political negotiations and cooperation are facing a real difficult situation. The opposition forces faced new challenges as Charles Mwando Nsimba, deputy chairman of the G7 and vice-president of Rassemblement, died in December 2016. As a result, Katumbi became a representative of the opposition party. However, he is still in exile abroad and is under political pressure from the DRC government. In addition, since Katumbi does not belong to any political party, his supporters are uncertain and he is not comparable to Tshisekedi as a leader of the opposition (Hoebeke and Moncrieff 2017).

Moïse Katumbi, a prominent entrepreneur and former governor of Katanga, announced on Twitter on May 4, 2016, that he would run for presidential election. The next day the police surrounded his house, but in the end, the police abandoned the siege under the pressure of the DRC UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). In fact, the background of Katumbi's announcement to run for the presidency was in line with the expiry of Kabila's presidency. Over the past few years, President Kabila has tried to revise the current Constitution, which limits two presidential terms. Congressional spokesman Aubin Minaku in September 2014 tried to amend the

Constitution, and in January 2015 the government failed to come up with new electoral laws again. In the end, the only strategy was to slipper or "le glissement" the regime with deliberate postponement of the election. In 2014, Kabila was already aware that support for the regime was weak. Seven parties, including the Partis du Peuple pour la Reconstruction et la Démocratie (the People's Party for Reconstruction and Democracy: PPRD) led by President Kabila, formed Alliance of the Presidential Majority (Alliance pour la majorité présidentielle: AMP). The seven-party association known as the G7 was driven out of the ruling coalition because of their demand to the president that he no longer cling to power. And Katumbi immediately declared that he would withdraw from the ruling PPRD. On the other hand, the anti-Kabila sentiment spread to the state of Katanga and the core forces that were the basis of Kabila's power were getting weaker. Katumbi has been firmly established as a runner-up against Kabila since 2014, and from 2008 to 2015 it was a key factor that he succeeded as a successful governor of Katanga Governor. Katumbi has firmly established himself as a runner-up against Kabila since 2014, and the key factor for his popularity was that he succeeded in carrying out successful policies as a governor of Katanga Governor from 2008 to 2015.

Katumbi has a problem to resolve in order to become president. The people of Congo question with doubt about the wealth of Katumbi and his reputation. Businessmen in Lubumbashi look in suspicion of his greediness and his use of political power to expand the economic empire. In addition, Katumbi is perceived as an outsider in domestic politics. He is not yet recognized for his political power and is also suspected of being able to lead to broad cooperation. In December 2015, the Front Citoyen (2016) was formed for an extensive cooperation to defend the Constitution. But in 2016 the opposition did not show a new vision or strong influence (Berwouts 2016).

The Congo Research Group (CRG) conducted a survey of 7,545 respondents in 26 states in October 2016. According to the poll, 33% said they would vote for Katumbi, 18% for Etienne Tshisekedi and 7.8% for Kabila. In addition, 81% of respondents said they would oppose changing the constitution so that President Kabila could become the third president, and 44% said he should step down from the presidency in 2016 (Ross 2016).

According to a poll of 7,500 respondents in May 2017, Katumbi received 38%, Kabila received 10%, Vital Kamerhe, Jean-Pierre Bemba and Tshisekedi received 5% each. 24% said they supported less than 5% and 13% said they did not. Support for Kabila fell to its lowest level, but a peculiar point was that despite the opposition to Kabila, support for Prime Minister Bruno Tshibala was 51% (Congo Research Group (CRG) 2017/05/23).

A survey conducted by CRG in March 2018 found that Katumbi received 26%, Tshisekedi 14%, Adolphe Muzito and Kamerhe each 9%, Kabila 7%, Augustin Mataya Ponyo and Aubin Minaku received 3% each (Cros 2018). According to a survey by Top Congo FM which was conducted to 20,561 people in June 2018, Katumbi has 54%, Kamerhe 34%, Bemba 7% and Tshisekedi 5% support. This shows that the most

powerful candidate to replace Kabila is Katumbi (Mwebantu 2018).

3.4 Worsening economic and political instability

As DRC's political uncertainty and instability continue, DRC's economy is at its worst. The Federation of Congolese Enterprises (FEC) is complaining that it is having difficulties with high taxes, harassment by tax authorities, unstable exchange rates, imports of cheap goods from neighboring countries, and low demand. On November 4, 2016, the FEC announced that the Bralima brewery in the town of Boma in Kongo central province was closed for this reason.

During the past decade, the DRC government has focused on macroeconomic stability and investment. The DRC government has made efforts to build Congo Airways, a new government building, airport and roads in Kinshasa. However, the results showed that these efforts did not make a major contribution to resolving the prevalence of inequality in the country. Due to high mineral resource prices, Congo's GDP rose 7.7% between 2010 and 2015, but grew only 4.3% in 2016, slightly above population growth. This situation had a serious impact on national finances and the government reduced spending from US\$ 8 billion to US\$ 6 billion. However, the actual expenditure was only US\$ 4.5 billion. Ultimately, it was impossible to enforce a new policy or to conduct a US\$ 1 billion election. In January 2016, Prime Minister Matata Ponyo announced 28 measures for economic restructuring. In October 2016, the government and opposition parties agreed to launch a comprehensive Inclusive National Dialogue (Kim 2017: 43) in order to keep the presidential election as planned in 2018. Accordingly, the opposition party nominated Samy Badibanga Nitita as the prime minister. However, he appeared to be limited in diversifying the economic structure that depends on the mining industry under various political pressures. The economic crisis is causing the devaluation of the Congolese Franc (FC). It was relatively stable at 920-930 Franc per dollar for three years prior to 2016, but it was devalued to 1,170 Franc from the end of 2016. The foreign exchange reserve of the Central Bank of Congo is very low at less than about US\$ 1 billion (Hoebeke and Cintu 2017).

DRC's political situation is getting worse in the first half of 2017. Local conflicts and national-level crises can create very dangerous situations. The recent regional DRC conflict has a problem that it can develop into a war and an unstable situation that can affect the whole country. First of all, the DRC is facing a political and constitutional crisis because the presidential election is not held as scheduled. Due to the failure of conducting the elections scheduled for December 2016, the nation is facing a state of frustration with resistance from the citizens and response from the government.

On December 31, 2016, the government and the opposition coalition agreed to form a transitional government through political agreement and to hold the presidential election by the end of 2017. However, the implementation has been slow and the situation has become even more uncertain due to the death of Chess Kedi, who led the

opposition coalition in January.

In early April, President Kabila appointed Bruno Tshibala as prime minister, and peaking up the tensions. Kabila promised to nominate a prime minister from the opposition, but he nominated a person who was kicked out of the opposition UPDS by Tshisekedi. Until now, the line of action of the opposition coalition is not yet clear, but if Kabila once again breaks his promise, it is not known in which direction the opposition coalition and other insurgents will act. This situation is like a time-bomb that could explode to cause instability on a national scale (Benson 2017).

4. Ne Muanda Nsemi and BDK, BDM political activities

This chapter deals with how Kabila's government is politically oppressing Ne Muanda Nsemi, his BDK organization and the political party BDM, as well as how the Bakongo people are representing their identity. The Bakongo, who are critical of Kabila's government on the basis of historical, cultural and religious identity, are being oppressed by Kabila in order to maintain his regime. The suppression of the Bakongo ethnic group may eventually be a warning and threat to numerous small political parties, and it has an impact on making it impossible for powerful opposition to emerge by accepting government's plea.

4.1 Ne Muanda Nsemi's arrest and escape

The DRC government announced the arrest of Ne Muanda Nsemi on March 4, 2017. Ne Muanda Nsemi, who is a member of parliament, was arrested at his home in Ngaliema. According to official reports, two automatic Karashnikov rifles, one pistol and many weapons were found at the home of Ne Muanda Nsemi. During the arrest, four BDM members and one police officer were killed. A total of 307 people, including 235 men, 61 women, and 11 children, were questioned by the police and 170 people were identified to live in Kinshasa and they were sent back home. 137 members of the BDM Party in the Congo central province have been arrested and it was announced that they will be sent back to their homes (L'OBSERVATEUR 06/05/2017).

On May 17, 2017, the prison of Makala was attacked and many prisoners escaped. It is not confirmed by law enforcement, but according to rumors BDM followers were trying to break Ne Muanda Nsemi out of jail (Show 2017a). About the escapes of Makala prison and Kasangulu prison in Kinshasa on May 17 and May 19, 2017, Ne Muanda Nsemi claimed that angels protecting the Bakongo people (Nekongo angels) and ancestors liberated them and that the prison breaks were the result of the struggle. Since then, BDK has promised to continue resistance in the future against the government. He warned that breaking prison doors is the beginning of resistance and that in the near future the resistance will be at the Presidential Palace and it will turn out to be like in the Makala Prison (Show 2017b).

No one is unaware of where Ne Muanda Nsemi is now after his escape from Makala

prison. He is currently under arrest warrants by the prosecution and is being asked for a nomination. Many people speculate that he is probably hiding in the Kongo central province. Currently, the BDM party headquarters is inaccessible to the public, and National Intelligence officers thoroughly monitor the headquarters of the party. In December 2017, the DRC government announced the Saint-Sylvestre Political Agreement in order to break through the political situation. Accordingly, the DRC government promised to allocate one seat to the BDM, but Ne Muanda Nsemi declined the proposal. Papy Mantenzolo, vice-president of BDM and Member of Parliament, ignored Ne Muanda Nsemi's insistence and accepted the vice minister position of Infrastructure, Public Works and Reconstruction as proposed by the DRC government (Fundi, Mukando, 2017. 11. 01, Personal correspondence).

According to police spokesman, Pierrot Rombaut Mwana Mputu, 19 people were killed, seven were injured and 31 BDM followers, including three women, were arrested and detained in protests in Kinshasa and the Congo central province on August 9, 2017. It was reported to the press that they resisted the police with red bands on their heads and armed with guns and other weapons in the areas of Ngaliema, Selembao, Njili and Matete. Police said they were aiming to attack Kinshasa's main facilities, and the main targets were radio broadcast headquarters in Binza Pigeon, Njili Airport, National Radio and Television Station (RTNC), and they were planning to declare a political statement later. It was reported that they violated law and attacked the police not only in the regions of Matadi and Boma, but also in Mwanda, Seke Banza, Luozi, Lukala, Songololo, Mbanza-Ngungu, Kimvula and Madimba of the Kongo central province (Agence Congolaise de Presse(ACP) 2017/08/09).

The DRC government believes that Ne Muanda Nsemi, who is the representative of BDK and BDM and a member of parliament, is behind the violence that is currently occurring in Kinshasa and Kongo central province. Prosecutor General Flory Kabange Numbi and military inspector Josep Ponde Isambwa issued a joint statement saying that Ne Muanda Nsemi faces seven charges, including attacks on the head of state, murder, malicious destruction, criminal conspiracy, promotion of ethnic hatred, and the disobedience of citizens. In addition, Ne Muanda Nsemi has regularly raised complaints about the discrimination, unfairness and state governance of the Kongo central province through its promotional material, *Kongo Dieta*, which put him at odds with the government of Kabila (Agence Congolaise de Presse (ACP). 2017/08/24, L'OBSERVATEUR 2015/05/06).

Ne Muanda Nsemi has expressed his complaints about this.

I asserted that BDK members were murdered in Congo, Belgium, France and the United States since 2008. I became one of the most dangerous people in the Kongo central province. Anyone found holding my pictures is arrested. Anyone who tries to know about me (who is a member of the parliament) is arrested. Is this the democracy France, Belgium and the United States speak about? (Nsemi 2017a)

4.2 Division of BDM

On February 13 and 14, 2017 there was a clash between the police and the BDM. Eight people were wounded, 20 people were arrested, and cars were set on fire. The clash occurred in Ngiri-Ngiri and Ngaliemi, where Ne Muanda Nsemi lives. The conflict began a few weeks ago in Kimpese in the Kongo central province, where members of BDM attacked and plundered the house of Mantenzolo. He was appointed Minister of Infrastructure, Public Works and Reconstruction by the newly appointed Prime Minister of Badibanga. Eden Kojo, a former Togo prime minister, was acting as mediator by the African Union (AU) for the DRC's peaceful transfer of power, and she proposed to the BDM's Mantenzolo a post of vice-minister in order to bring national reconciliation and integration. Even though Ne Muanda Nsemi demanded that Mantenzolo abandon his position as a member of parliament and refuse the offered post of vice-minister, he resigned from his position as president of the BDM.

Ne Muanda Nsemi sent Mantenzolo, the president of BDK, to negotiate with the government, but he was frustrated and angry to see Mantenzolo become a man of Kabila and attack Nsemi himself. He says about Mantenzolo that 'he is a great demon. Just as Judas betrayed the Son of God, Mantenzolo denounced the same betrayal' (Nsemi 2017a). This can be seen as a great disappointment since not only that Ne Muanda Nsemi become naturally excluded from the conversation, but also of not being offered a key governmental position that matches his title of spiritual leader of the Kongo central province. In fact, previous governments allocated a relatively small amount of government ministerial posts to the Kongo central province. The Bakongo people were dissatisfied with the allocation of senior positions to outsiders and handing out of mines to outsiders. Ne Muanda Nsemi has argued that this is unacceptable and inequitable. In order to solve this problem Nsemi wanted to explain and solve the problem through a private meeting with Kabila as a representative of the Bakongo people (L'OBSERVATEUR 15/02/2017).

Ne Muanda Nsemi argues that BDM is the most unique public party in the DRC and is supported by all the citizens of Kongo central province. He claims that the ruling party, PPRD, has bribed Mantenzolo with money, according to rumors that he gave Mantenzolo US\$2 million. Mantenzolo was escorted by five cars from the presidential security office (Bana Moura) to go to his hometown of Kimpese, and he denounced Ne Muanda Nsemi on a radio broadcast. As a result, the Bakongo people were angry and they plundered everything in his house. After Mantenzolo left Kimpese and went to visit Matadi, on his way back to Kinshasa, BDK members attacked Mantenzolo in Kisantu, resulting in 10 casualties (Nsemi 2017c).

Boma's Mayor Marie José Niongo has renewed the ban on BDK's activity, which was promulgated on March 2, 2017. She announced that any person who is found wearing BDK's outfit or is held committed illegal acts would be arrested and referred to trial. She also banned political rallies such as marches, conferences, or all kinds of gatherings

(Agence Congolaise de Presse (ACP) 2017/08/22).

4.3 Ne Muanda Nsemi's political claim

4.3.1 Urging resistance to Kabila's regime

Ne Muanda Nsemi, who is a member of parliament, accused President Kabila of failing to hold the presidential election. In order to extend his regime without holding election, Kabila and the Rwandan Tutsi tribe have begun a war across the DRC. Nsemi argues that Kabila started war in Kimpese in the Kongo central province, but failed. According to Nsemi's assertion, President Kabila intends to expand the conflict zone, as he did in the state of Kasai, in order not to hold the presidential election. Now, in Kasai, thousands claim to have been murdered, buried in a collective cemetery, and thousands have entered the state and Angola, neighboring Kasai. Kabila ordered the killing of foreign reporters in the state of Kasai to hide this fact, claiming that two American reporters were killed and they were beheaded. About the killing of American journalists, Kabila shifted the responsibility to Kamuena Nsampu, who is a traditional local leader known as a terrorist, to avoid international investigations (*Kongo Diets* 29/10/2017, no. 3255 , 1-2).

Ne Muanda Nsemi said that the Bakongo people led the protest on July 7, 2017 and that BDK members participated in demonstrations in several places. BDK members say they will evict Hyppolite Kanambe (Joseph Kabila's real name) and he will flee to Rwanda, Tanzania, or Seychelles. At the time of the protest, Kabila's soldiers wore red band on their heads, just like BDK members, and murdered people and claimed that BDK members did not resist. Ne Muanda Nsemi argues that all Congolese should attack Kabila and attack the Rwandan Tutsi, who are assisting him. To this end, he appealed to the Catholic believers, CENCO, Kimbangu believers, and Protestant believers to participate in the demonstrations.

On July 1, the Bakongo people protested in Muanda, Boma, Tshela, Matadi and Kimpese, claiming that around three million people participated in the protests. He also encourages them to take part in the demonstration again on August 21. He uses myths and legends to encourage participation in demonstrations. He declares that the Bakongo will occupy all professions and demand the independence of Kongo central province if 3 million supporters do not participate in the demonstrations.

People who are skilled in our tradition can move thunder and turn into snake and leopard. They move the thunder to hit the place where Hyppolite Kanambe is, and they turn into a snake to bite him and become a leopard to gnaw him (Nsemi 2017b).

Ne Muanda Nsemi urged UNC, UDPS, MLC, BDK, and citizens to unite and set a protest date in October. He is urging the DRC to unite by arguing that they are at risk of being colonized by the new Rwandan Tutsi. He views the presidential election in 2006 as an illegal election. In the 2006 presidential election, Kabila was elected

president with 58.05% support. However, even though Jean Pierre Bemba was elected president, the election was manipulated to make win Kabila with the support of Tanzania, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. According to Nsemi, the 2011 presidential election was also an illegal election, claiming that Tshisekedi has won. Kabila was backed by Tanzania, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe, overturning the election results (Nsemi 2017e).

Ne Muanda Nsemi has accused Kabila, who is of Rwandan Tutsi origin, of serving twice as President of the DRC and intending to extend his rule beyond the two consecutive terms specified in the Constitution. He sees that Kabila is about to launch a war to avoid presidential elections. In Kasai, Kibbutz and Kongo central province, they are trying to avoid waging war. In Kasai, Kivu, and Kongo central provinces, they are waging war in order not to hold elections.

Ne Muanda Nsemi argues that a responsible politician should not ask the public what to do, and thus must appoint a specific day in October and hold protest. Congolese have a common identity as the Bantu, so they can live together in a federal state. However, if there are people who love Rwandan colonization, Nsemi says that the Bakongo people will split up and declare the Kongo Central Republic. He claims Kabila would be kicked out of power if about three million of the 12 million Kinshasa populations were to take part in the demonstrations (Nsemi 2017e).

Ne Muanda Nsemi argued that Belgian people should be dispatched to the United Nations for three to five years to rule the transition of the DRC and to create a new electoral roll. He argues that France has always been interested in the former French colonies and therefore can not be a proper representative. However, Belgium is a country that has dominated past Belgian Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, and Nsemi believes that it can stabilize the DRC political situation and have priority.

He also said that seven Congolese in seven states should be appointed to help the new Belgian UN representative and that they should carry out the minister's office. He mentioned the seven ministers representing each state are Ne Muanda Nsemi of Kongo central province, Aubin Minaku of Bandundu, Jacques Njoli Esengekeli of Équateur, Hève Bazayiba of Eastern Province, Vital Kamere or Anzuluni Bembe of Kivu, Moïse Katumbi of Katanga, and François Muamba Tshishimbi of Kasai.

The Belgian UN delegate will become the actual president of the DRC during the transition period and the seven Congolese ministers must complete the electoral list through the census. When the new president is elected, the Rwandans should return to Rwanda, the Congolese to Congo, and the Burundians to Burundi, especially Kabila whose origin is from the Rwandan Tutsi must return back to Rwanda (*Kongo Dieta* 13/11/2017, No. 3263, 1-4).

Ne Muanda Nsemi proposed to UNC's Vital Kamere, MLC's Jean Pierre Bemba, UDPS's famous Tshisekedi, RASSOP's Moïse Katumbi, to APARECO and all the people to struggle against Kabila and drive him out. Nsemi insisted that he was arrested and imprisoned, despite the fact that he had the privilege of immunity from the National

Assembly, because he criticized Kabila for lengthening his regime and extending his dictatorship. Because the Kabila dictatorial government is preventing political parties such as UNC, MLC, and UDPS from taking political action, Nsemi says it is holding a meeting for demonstrations and rallies through BDM's branch in the UK (*Kongo Dieto* 18/10/2017, No. 3240, 1-4).

Ne Muanda Nsemi expressed his sadness about the attitude of the international community and some nations about Kabila's attempt to extend its regime. He pointed out that some states agreed to the CENI claim that there is no money to hold the election in 2016, which ultimately aims to extend Kabila's regime. In fact, Kabila lied and the international community was deceived, despite the fact that he had prepared the election expenses on schedule every year since the presidential election in 2011.

It was agreed at a CENCO-led meeting that the constitution requires Kabila to resign and a new president need to be appointed if the presidential election is not held on December 31, 2017. And CENI and CENCO have not announced about any technical problem with the election which was supposed to be held at the end of 2017. Nevertheless, CENI is not seeking to hold the presidential election officially on December 31, 2017, and has not been prepared for the election for the past 504 days. In other words, it is a fallacy that CENI says the election is going to be held in 2019 due to technical problems. CENI has not yet announced the exact date of the election by June 2018 and it says that election is scheduled for December 2018. The international community is not willing to believe that Kabila will not hold the presidential election in June 2018. Ne Muanda Nsemi claims that on behalf of the Congolese, the international community should step up and help Congolese from being the victims of genocide by the Rwandan Tutsi. He repeatedly warns that the DRC will suffer genocide of the Rwandan Tutsi. (*Kongo Dieto* 12/11/2017, no. 3261, 1-4)

Ne Muanda Nsemi, who is a member of the parliament, appealed to the opposition groups in Congo that they had to stand up with all the people and demand Joseph Kabila's resignation. He pointed out that while African countries are undergoing a presidential election in accordance with a democratic process, the DRC is unable to hold elections and that all political parties and people should gather together to resist and to drive Kabila out of power since he belongs to the Tutsi of Rwanda. Nsemi claims that it is possible to correct the shameful history that entrusted the Tutsi origin Joseph Kabila to the DRC's rule. He also asks why would the DRC do so, as Rwanda never selects or accepts a Congolese as president. He also claims that countries around the world do not want DRC's Kabila government to stay in power and the Congolese would be unfortunate if the government stays in power (*Kongo Dieto* 12/11/2017, No. 3262, 1-4).

4.3.2 Urging the national movement for Bakongo

Ne Muanda Nsemi accuses Kabila of looting the wealth of the Kongo central

province, the home of the Bakongo tribe. According to Nsemi, Kabila was a taxi driver in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and he had no money when he entered the DRC. However, Kabila became a rich man by pillaging the wealth of Kongo central province after entering the DRC. Nsemi further claims that Kabila became wealthy by plundering the oil produced in Kongo central province, the port fees of Boma and Matadi, the electricity production of Lufu and Inga dams, and the road usage charges (Nsemi 2017a).

Ne Muanda Nsemi claims that Kabila wants that a war breaks out in eastern DRC region in order not to hold the presidential election. He also claims that Mantenzolo, the vice-president of the BDM, is attacking Nsemi himself and instigating war in the Kongo central province. Weapons for the war are now entering Kongo central province and the war has begun to produce another reason for postponing the election. Ne Muanda Nsemi argues that the DRC government will eventually destroy the Bakongo people. Nsemi argues that at the end of the war in the Kongo central province, all Bakongo people will disappear and that the Kongo central province will be divided. He claims that the western part of the Kongo central province will be an international territory governed by Belgium, France and the United States and the rest of the region will go to Baluba, Baswahili and the Rwandans (Nsemi 2017c).

He also argues that before the Belgian colonial rule, the Bangala and Baluba people were not Congolese and did not have a single untied kingdom or country. He insists that, however, the Bakongo people were the true Congolese and possessed the kingdom of the Congo. In order to break down the ethnic identity of the Bakongo people, Belgium encouraged all other ethnic groups to hate the Bakongo at the time of independence. Ne Muanda Nsemi is reminded that the Bakongo people will eventually suffer genocide. Ne Muanda Nsemi is wary of the idea that the Bakongo people will eventually suffer genocide (Nsemi 2017a).

Ne Muanda Nsemi claims that Kasavubu, who led ABAKO on June 30, brought independence to this country and that Congo had eternal freedom. Swahili origin Patrice Lumumba also claimed that Congo is free forever. However, he argues that now that the Belgian colonial rule is over, Rwandan colonial rule has begun and the Bakongo and the Swahili people who support the Rwandan Tutsi origin Joseph Kabila are traitors (Nsemi 2017d).

Ne Muanda Nsemi claimed that Joseph Kasabubu, who led ABAKO at the time of independence, was a hero in the history of DRC. He also points out that it is wrong to record history according to a particular purpose or interest. He asserted that ABAKO's meeting and protest on January 4, 1959 was the starting point for the independence of the Congo on June 30, 1960. Van Bilsen, a Belgian scholar at the time, insisted that independence of the Belgian Congo should take place after 30 years, but Kasavubu, Vice President Dani Kanza, and all members of the ABAKO asserted independence on January 4, 1959. Also at that time, Lumumba was imprisoned in Kisangani (then

Stanleyville) on charges of embezzlement and was unable to participate in the round table meeting. Kasavubu, however, insisted that Congo politicians should not be excluded from the round table meeting and as a result Lumumba was able to participate. Ne Muanda Nsemi claimed that Kasavubu, who was the representative of ABAKO during the Congolese independence history, was a hero and we need to correct history so that Kasavubu should be remembered as a hero of Congo who resisted the Belgian colonial rule (*Kongo Diets* 20/11/2017, No. 3265, 1-4).

Ne Muanda Nsemi argues that he does not fear man, but he does not know how to speak a lie because he fears God. He argues that what has happened at the Makala prison is not what he caused, but that it was something caused by Kabila. Kabila hopes war will take place everywhere in the DRC to postpone the presidential election, and it is raising war in Kivu, Kasai and Kongo central province (Nsemi 2017d).

Ne Muanda Nsemi argues that the BDK, launched in 1986 during Mobutu's rule, is not merely an organization made for the cultural movement, but a powerful political and religious organization aimed at becoming a political party. BDK explains that it consists of a religious organization called BDM and a political organization called *Bundu dia Kinabi*. Nsemi argues that politics in Africa should not only mean a good life, but a clear vision for the people. He says Congolese politicians believe that politics is an art of lies and such politicians should be denounced. (*Kongo Diets* 10/10/2017, No. 3231, 1-4)

Ne Muanda Nsemi argued that the Kabila government had a false allegation against the BDK. Nsemi argued that BDK, a powerful political and religious organization of the Bakongo people, has been engaged in unarmed and nonviolent movements since its creation at the time of Mobutu's reign. According to him, when members marched or protested, they were not armed at all and did not take things away from others. However, Kabila claims that the National Intelligence Service, which is headed by the National Intelligence Agency, has attacked the BDK and that the BDK has organized a fundamentalist movement. BDK's objective is to encourage all humanity to promote cultural exchange. Therefore, despite the international community's efforts to pull Kabila out of power, everyone has fallen into Kabila's shrewd trick to make a wrong response, and Congo can end up with genocide (*Kongo Diets* 29/10/2017, No. 3255, 3-4).

Ne Muanda Nsemi argues that in the history of Congo, God has always sent messengers to the Bakongo people whenever a new era begins. There were Yata Vita Kimpa and Yaya Mafuta in 1702, Mbuta Bueta Mbongo in 1910, Mbuta Mbianda Ngunga in 1914, Mbuta Kimbangu and Fillipo in 1921. In 1936 there was Mbuta Mpadi Makengo and in 1951 there was Mbuta Toko Simao. The Almighty God sent the great Ne Muanda Nsemi to the Bakongo people, and through him God was trying to prove that all races, including blacks, whites, and peoples, are reconciled and descended from one father. Ne Muanda Nsemi claims that he created the BDK for this, which will carry

out his mission through cultural exchange, strong political and religious influence (*Kongo Diето* 28/10/2017, No. 3257, 1-4).

Ne Muanda Nsemi argues that the Bakongo people are settlers from the north and settled in central Africa. Nsemi claimed that the Bakongo people are a descendant of ancient black Jews (Bena Kongo) and they came to Central Africa intending to become the head and heart of all Bantu people. Nsemi claims that their kingdom is called the Kingdom of the Congo (Kongo dia Ntotela), whose territory has extended from southern Angola to Cameroon and southern Biafra in Nigeria. In this huge empire, the cultures of the three clans were blossoming. During the colonial rule, however, the Bakongo people of Angola were subjected to the culture of Portugal, the Bakongo people of the Congo of Belgium to the Belgian culture, and the Bakongo people of the Congo Brazzaville to the influence of French culture. The people of Bakongo in Equatorial Guinea were influenced by Spanish culture and the people of Bakongo in Cameroon were influenced by French culture. Other Bakongo people in Cameroon and Bakongo people in Nigeria's Biafraba were affected by British culture. As a result, he argues that westerners divide the Bakongo people and made them strangers in Africa (*Kongo Diето* 24/10/2017, No. 3248, 1-4).

4.3.3 Demands for federalism

Ne Muanda Nsemi argued that Western Europe made the Third World people's massive migration to Europe. In the fifteenth century, Europe began slave trade in Africa, discovered America, and invaded red skinned-Indians and depriving them of everything. They also colonized Asia and persecuted Asians. All the wealth of the planet was collected in Europe, and white people lived happier than any other race. Westerners have taken the wealth from the Third World into their territory and have let the Third World fall into a horrendous condition. For this reason, the poverty and misery of the Third World today is desperately making them go to migrate to Europe to make their living here.

He argues that the widespread terrorism in the West shows the divine law of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" and "live by the sword, die by the sword". Europeans have moved many people to Europe for their happiness, but now they are threatening the Westerners themselves. He argued that the best way to prevent third world peoples from leaving for Europe, which they consider paradise, is industrialization that can give them jobs. Poverty is the cause of their departure from their hometowns to Europe (*Kongo Diето* 13/10/2017, No. 3233, 1-4).

Ne Muanda Nsemi points out that many Africans want to leave their native Africa and go to European countries to find a job and a happy life. Nsemi argues that even though Africa has a lot of resources, it can not create many jobs because a responsible government can not be created. Therefore, the people should try to get responsible governments and the DRC should adopt federalism.

Belgium colonized and consolidated hundreds of different ethnic groups into colonies, and in the process of de-colonization, each ethnic group was integrated into a single country so that it could not develop on its own. This was a serious problem. As a result, many Africans illegally migrate to Europe and are depriving Europeans of their jobs. The most persistent solution is that the DRC implements federalism. Federalism must follow the model of the Kongo dia Ntotela. It is the same model as of the USA, Germany and Switzerland (*Kongo Dieto* 21/11/2017, no. 3266, 1-4).

Ne Muanda Nsemi argues that all Congolese can overcome the crisis by not trying to avoid the truth but by actively addressing the problem. Nsemi argues that the Bakongo do not claim 'tribalism' and want to live with other people in the DRC (*Kongo Dieto* 22/11/2017, no. 3267, 1-4).

Ne Muanda Nsemi explains that in Europe, Ireland is confronted with England, Breton is in conflict with Scotland, Flemish is in conflict with Walloon, and Catalan is in conflict with Spain. He argues that as in the case of Europe, divided kingdoms and nations are bound to fall. The DRC, which is larger than Europe and has many ethnic groups with diverse ideas, is facing the same problem. Generally, ethnic groups with their ancestral identity are opposed to other ethnic groups. For this reason, there are many problems in building up national identity in the present Congo. Nsemi points out that unfortunately the Congolese have a tribal identity but do not have a national identity. He argues that the only way to solve this problem is to adopt true federalism and adopt the Kongo Kingdom (Kongo dia Ntotela) of the Bakongo people. These federations are like the federalism in the United States, Switzerland, and Germany, and each state must govern their territories in accordance with their ancestral traditions (*Kongo Dieto* 20/11/2017, No. 3264, 1-4).

5. Conclusion

The DRC has suffered a lot of difficulties in history and it can be said that there is not a unified national consciousness formed. It is not only composed of diverse ethnic groups, but also because a single ethnic group does not have dominant powers, so it has a background where diverse interests can emerge.

The study of Bakongo people's historical consciousness and identity is closely related to the development of the DRC's political and historical background. Considering whether the identity of the Bakongo tribe "disappears" in the political context of the DRC, which has been changing since 2015, or whether it consists of a process of contextualization and re-contextualization is an important research topic in that it can be an example to gauge the flow and development of African history in the 21st century world history.

The Bakongo people have continually contextualized their national identity in line with the historical situation, which can be explained by Baccoong nationalism. Such contextualization has been and continues to be through ABAKO, BDK, and BDM

organizations that are mixed in history, culture, politics, and religion.

The DRC political situation, which is undergoing a catastrophic change over the issue of presidential election since 2015, has an important influence on the activities of Ne Muanda Nsemi, BDK and BDM. In particular, the betrayal of Mantenzolo, vice-president in 2017 and his participation in government ministers, the arrest and detachment of Ne Muanda Nsemi, and the pressure of Kabila's government led to the inevitable political activity of the Bakongo people. Despite this situation, however, Ne Muanda Nsemi and his BDK and BDM are strongly expressing their identity as follows.

First, Ne Muanda Nsemi, BDK, and BDM continue their political activities through resistance to the Kabila government. Arguing that the current president, Kabila, is a Tutsi in Rwanda and is fighting to drive the president out of Kongo central province and the capital Kinshasa. Nsemi warns that the Congolese may also suffer genocide just like the Rwandan Tutsi did. But the root cause of the political pressures should be seen as Killah's intention to extend his regime to the presidential election.

Second, BDK and BDM have clear political objectives and claim to be independent as the Kongo Central Republic. They claim to be a special ethnic group which is Bakongo nationalism.

Third, the Congolese argue that although they have tribal identity, they do not have a national identity, so they should adopt true federalism with a responsible governmental structure.

The Bakongo people historically follow the identity of the Kongo kingdom. The Bakongo people, descendants of the Kongo Kingdom, have a strong awareness of history different from other ethnic groups. As a result of the Berlin Conference in 1884, which divided Africa, the Bakongo people, who were scattered in Angola, the DRC and the Republic of the Congo, want to have a political unity by maintaining their culture and identity, and by unity and unity. Historically, the Bakongo have strengthened their identities through language, culture, and symbols. ABAKO, BDK, and BDM have always pursued political unity, emphasizing the importance of culture to be the basis of national identity.

Ne Muanda Nsemi is the beloved Messiah of the Bakongo people and is the leader of the BDK and the president of the BDM. He argues that it is necessary to realize the continuing revelation and long tradition of spreading the Congo culture and history in terms of religious beliefs and Christian practices based on tradition.

The Bakongo tribe contextualize their identity through unity based on their national, regional, historical, and religious identity, but they can be seen as ethnocentrism or egoism of a local or ethnic group. This situation can be attacked by the government or other ethnic groups, promoting ethnic group conflicts or regional conflicts, and further falling into national conflict or civil war.

So far, it seems that Bakongo people's identity is about more intensely contextualizing the past identity, rather than disappearing or reconstructing in the changing DRC

political situation. The DRC's political situation in 2017 has led to repression of BDK and BDM, and it is moving into a situation that could prove these concerns. As long as political instability persists, the oppression of the Bakongo people will further strengthen and the Bakongo people will be forced to resist the resistance. One way is to select federalism and local autonomy to develop into a unified state while protecting the interests of individual ethnic groups after the democratic and peaceful regime change. But the current situation is very fluid.

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콩고민주공화국의 정치변동과 바콩고 민족정체성의 맥락화 : 무안다 은세미와 BDK, BDM을 중심으로

김광수

<국문요약>

콩고연합 (Bundu dia Kongo: BDK, 이후 BDK로 기술함)은 바콩고인이 메시아로 추앙하고 있는 무안다 은세미(Muanda Nsemi)가 1969년 조직하였으며 정치, 종교, 문화 조직으로 1950년 출현한 바콩고동맹(Alliance des Bakongo: ABAKO, 이후 ABAKO로 기술함)의 정체성을 이어가고 있다. 그는 또한 2008년 정치정당인 마얄라연합(Bundu dia Mayala : BDM, 이후 BDM으로 기술함)을 창당하였으나 DRC 정부로부터 2015년 9월 30일 공식적으로 인가를 받았으며 이후 BDK는 BDM을 통해 합법적으로 DRC의 정치무대에 등장하였다.

2017년 3월 3일 DRC 정부는 콩고센추럴 주(Kongo central province)에서 BDK가 폭력사태를 일으키고 있다는 이유로 BDK의 지도자이며 BDM 총재인 Ne Muanda Nsemi와 핵심 당원을 체포하여 수감하였다. 그리고 2017년 5월 17일 BDK는 수도인 킌사사에 있는 마칼라(Makala) 교도소를 공격하여 Ne Muanda Nsemi 등 50여명의 BDK 조직원을 탈출시켰으며 무안다 은세미는 물론 BDK와 BDM의 미래가 불확실한 상황이 되었다. 이러한 상황이 BDK의 불법적인 활동 때문이었는지, 아니면 거대 야당의 출현을 막고 BDM 같은 군소 정당의 활동을 탄압하면서 정권을 연장할 수 있는 합법적 이유를 만들려고 한 조셉 카빌라 대통령의 의도된 행동인지 현재로는 정확하지 않다.

현재 무안다 은세미와 BDK 및 BDM의 모든 활동이 금지되었으며 바콩고(Bakongo)인의 정치활동 역시 정부의 감시를 받고 있는 상황이다. 앞으로 이러한 상황은 조셉 카빌라 현 정부의 '통치방식(governance)'과 긴밀하게 연관되어 진행될 것으로 보인다.

2017년 DRC의 정치상황은 BDK와 BDM에 대한 탄압으로 이어졌고 이러한 우려를 증명할 수도 있는 상황으로 빠져 들어가고 있다. 정치적 불안정이 지속되는 한 바콩고(Bakongo)인에 대한 탄압은 더욱 강화될 것이며 이에 대한 반발로 바콩고(Bakongo)인은 강력한 저항을 할 수 밖에 없는 상황이다. DRC가 민주주의적이고 평화로운 정권교체 이후 각각의 민족 집단의 이익을 보호하면서 통합된 하나의 국가로 발전하기 위해 연방주의와 지방자치를 선택하는 것도 하나의 방법일 수 있다. 그러나 현재의 상황은 매우 유동적이라고 할 수 있다.

Political Changes in the DRC and the Contextualization of Bakongo People's Identity: Based on Ne Muanda Nsemi, BDK and BDM

Kim, Kwang-Su

The Bundu dia Congo (hereinafter BDK) was established in 1969 by Muanda Nsemi, who is believed to be a Messiah by Bakongo people. BDK's identity is a continuation of Alliance des Bakongo (hereinafter ABAKO) which is the political, religious, and cultural organization that emerged in 1950. Nsemi also formed the political party known as Bundu dia Mayala (BDM) in 2008, but was formally accredited by the DRC government on September 30, 2015. Since then, BDK has been legally banned by the DRC. BDK appeared on stage. BDM was formally accredited by the DRC government on September 30, 2015, after which BDK legally appeared into the political scene of DRC through the BDM.

On March 3, 2017, the DRC government arrested and detained Muanda Nsemi, who is the leader of the BDK, and president of BDM, along with other core members of BDK accusing them for the cause of violence in the Congo Central state. On May 17, 2017, BDK attacked the Makala Prison in the capital city Kinshasa, and 50 BDK members including Muanda Nsemi escaped, which made the future of BDK and BDM as well as Muanda Nsemi to become uncertain. It is difficult to know whether this happened due to the illegal activity of the BDK, or the intended action of President Joseph Kabila to create a legitimate reason in extending his regime by suppressing the emergence of a massive opposition party and as well as small political parties like the BDM.

Currently, all activities of Muanda Nsemi, BDK and BDM have been banned, and the political activities of the Bakongo people are under government surveillance. In the future, this situation is likely to be closely linked to Joseph Kabila's "governance".

The DRC's political situation in 2017 has led to repression of BDK and BDM, and it is moving into a situation that could prove these concerns. As long as political instability persists, the oppression of the Bakongo people will further strengthen and the Bakongo people will be forced to resist the resistance. One way is to select federalism and local autonomy to develop into a unified state while protecting the interests of individual ethnic groups after the democratic and peaceful regime change. But the current situation is very fluid.

<국문핵심어>

네 무안다 은세미, 콩고연합(BDK), 마얌라연합(BDM), 조셉 카빌라, 콩고민주공화국

<영문핵심어(Keywords)>

Ne Muanda Nsemi, Bundu dia Kongo(BDK), Bundu dia Mayala(BDM), Joseph Kabila, Democratic Republic of the Congo