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## Education of the Christian Clergy in the Cameroon Since 1957: Implications for and Problems in Religious Reconstruction and Nation-Building

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Education Of The Christian Clergy In The Cameroon  
Since 1957: Implications For And Problems In Religious  
Reconstruction And Nation-Building.

by

Mbu Walters

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate  
School of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy.

January  
1991

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to my lovely children, Ruth Bessen, Nathan Immeh, Eunice Aret, Edith Tifu and Jude Okon.

© Walters, Mbu. January 1991

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research work of highly priced scholarship has taken me well over five years of hard work, sacrifice and financial strain. I am deeply appreciative to all those who have assisted me in one way or another to accomplish this program of advanced studies, comparative global and international education with particular emphasis on Educational Leadership and Policy Studies.

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And finally, I am deeply indebted to Ms. Sandra Gray who organized and typed my untidy manuscript into a finished readable book.

## PREFACE

The strengths and weaknesses of any educational enterprise (theological or secular) cannot be properly assessed, nor can education's future be rationally planned unless one takes into account the major forces in the world that strongly impinge on education and are already shaping its future. Some of these forces have only domestic roots; others are international in scope and as such have implications for education in many countries.

Philip H. Coombs: The World Crisis In Education  
P. 9.

The validity and substantiations of the above assertions have been fully discussed in this dissertation. Each chapter has a thrust with fresh thought-provoking postulations that are related to the main title and sub-title of this research work, "Education of the Christian Clergy in the Cameroon Since 1957: Implications For and Problems in Religious Reconstruction and Nation-Building."

The purpose of starting the discussion with a historical and geo-ethno-demographic overview of the Cameroon (Chapter One) is three-fold. First, unlike African Traditional Religions which have no historical origin, missionary work and conversion attitude, Christianity is portrayed here as a dynamic force that wreaks changes. Second, the only way to compare and measure the extent of expansion and growth of each Christian missionary denomination is by statistics. This is used as a guide to know how much geographical area that the Christian mission has covered and how many ethnic groups it has incorporated into the Christian faith. Third, ethnography reveals the significant importance of religion. It contains some very important religious elements that

often feature as culture, folklore, oral and written literature, customs and tradition.

As discussed in Chapter Two, neither Christianity nor colonialism was welcome in Africa. This was evident in the frequent clashes between missionaries and traditionalists and between colonialists and Africans. There were also clashes between colonialism and Christianity and between colonial administration and ecclesiastic missions and among the Christian missions themselves.

The role of liberated black slaves like Bishop Samuel Ajai Crowther, and Allen Richard, who worked as Christian Missionaries in Africa, had far-reaching effects. It was perhaps through them that Christianity was accepted as an African religion. Just as Britain and France differed from each other in their colonial motives and policies in Africa, so were the Roman Catholic and the Protestant missions in their missionary motives in Africa. Missionaries, especially Protestants, encountered several discouraging problems in their zealous endeavours to make Africans Christians. They might have been tempted on several occasions to give up as they did in Fernando Po and in Liberia; but in the majority of cases they persisted and endured it to the end.

But higher education for the African clergy was not an immediate top priority of the early Christian Missionaries. This is the main message of Chapter Three. The primary concern of the foreign Christian organizations was evangelization of the

"heathen," creation of history in a "dark continent" and ventilation of ignorance of a black race that was without God. Primary education and catechetical instructions were effective means of enlightening the savage. The major textbooks were the Bible and the catechism. Mushroom schools and churches were planted here and there. Education for the spreading of Christianity was the main reason for European and American missionary adventure overseas, but each denomination had its own submotives for getting involved in running schools.

There was too much excitement and rejoicing in the Cameroon when churches became autonomous. In the Protestant Church, the message of excitement was driven home succinctly by spokesman Jeremiah Chi Kangsen. Kangsen's experiences with the Basel Mission were partly responsible for the push for autonomy. High hopes for reform and revival prevailed but these hopes were soon threatened by acute problems. But, even in the midst of all these seemingly insurmountable problems, strides of progress were made, especially in domestic missionary outreach and education both for the laity and the clergy.

It was hoped that church autonomy and political independence were to make an impact in the religious outlook and political participation, educational planning and cultural life and Africans' orientation to indigenization. All these issues have been discussed in Chapter Four.

The focus of Chapter Five is on the dimensions of implications for and problems brought about by religious autonomy



and education of the indigenous clergy in regard to religious reconstruction and political participation. Autonomy was to give Cameroonians ample opportunities and freedom for educational achievements and spiritual revival so as to effect new and relevant doctrinal and catechetical instructions.

Church unionism among Protestants, ecumenism among religious groups (Christians, Muslims and traditionalists) were to be some of the visible fruits of an established African Christianity. Some of the most important topics considered as the elements of African Christianity are: the concept of the modern African family, the role of traditional religions and parapsychology, materialism and the essence of life, politics and leadership in an African understanding.

Apart from the universal need for education for the African clergy (fight a relentless warfare against atheism) the author discusses in Chapters Six and Seven the reasons why education of the African clergy is an imperative necessity. Among other reasons, the African clergy should be educated to such extent that he becomes an effective missionary to his own people, effect religious reconstruction and become a co-participant in nation building.

The goal of an African's education is emergence of an African Christianity established on the concept of "theocrenthropocracy," a neo-theological view proposed by the author of this dissertation. By definition "theocrenthropocracy" divine-life-process which is sustained by a triune force of God-human-nature operating in harmonious co-existence.

The flood of advanced theological certificates with shallow content of scholarship on the one hand and an overwhelming majority of academic and professional mediocrity on the other are threatening to suffocate Christian work in the Cameroon. The fraud with which educational training is being sought in the church by individual church workers because of the haphazard planning for sponsorship and support by the church; and the quest for academic excellence without personal scrutiny in the realm of spirituality are posing a perilous campaign for educational inflation. All these factors pose serious and pertinent questions about the implications for and problems in religious reconstruction and nation-building. This is the umbrella message of this research work.

## VITA

The author, Mbu Walters, is the son of Yohanes Mbu and Elizabeth Bessen. He was born March 30, 1946 in Befang, Menchum Division in the North-West Province of Cameroon, West Africa. His primary education was obtained in the Native Authority (N.A.) School in his village, Befang, from 1954 to 1960. He went to the Baptist Teacher Training College in Soppo, Buea in 1964 and graduated in 1966 with the TGeach Grade III Certificate and went to Presbyterian Teacher Training College, Batibo in 1969 and graduated in 1971 with the Teacher Grade II certificate. His teacher professional education is equivalent to the American Bachelor of Arts degree.

Walters was a teacher from 1962 to 1973. He entered the Christian Ministry in 1973. He was admitted to the Protestant Theological College Nyasoso, Cameroon in 1973. He graduated successfully in 1977 with a diploma in Theology.

In 1982 he was awarded an international, comprehensive scholarship by the World Alliance of the Reformed Churches (WARC) Geneva to study in the United States of America. He was admitted to McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. He successfully graduated in 1983 with an M.T.S. degree, majoring in Counselling Psychology.

In September 1983, Mbu Walters switched academic lanes. He was admitted to the University of Illinois at Chicago in a Ph.D. program in the Department of History. At the same

time he was admitted to Governors State University at University Park, Illinois in the Intercultural Studies Department. In 1986, he graduated with an M.A. degree in African Studies from the University of Illinois and an M.A. in Political Science and International Relations from Governors State University.

At the University of Illinois at Chicago, Mbu Walters was a teaching assistant under Professor Susan Cole. At Governors State University he was awarded a twelve month fellowship for "Leadership Talents."

Mbu Walters transferred his Ph.D. candidacy from the University of Illinois at Chicago to Clayton University in St. Louis, Missouri in 1986 and graduated in 1988 with a Ph.D. degree in Political Science. He was admitted to Loyola University of Chicago in 1986 in the Department of Educational leadership and Policy Studies, majoring in Comparative Education. He was awarded comprehensive scholarships by the Rotary International, U.S.A. He received part scholarships thrice from his country government, Cameroon.

Mbu Walters was a school lead teacher most of his teaching career. As a Christian minister he was parish pastor, hospital, prison and school chaplain and District Secretary. In the United States he was an Associate Minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church under the Reverend Basil Foley at 65th South Evans in Chicago and an Associate Minister at Trinity Episcopal Church under

Father Henry Stines, at the recommendaiton of Bishop James Montgomery. He was a training specialist in the General Educational Development (G.E.D.) Program with the City colleges, adjunct staff at Northeastern and Governors State Universities and Correctional Officer at Crossroad Community Correctional Center in the employ of the Safer Foundation.

At Loyola University of Chicago, his doctoral dissertation titled "Education of the Christian Clergy In The Cameroon Since 1957: Implications For And Problems In Religious Reconstruction and Nation-Building," although its focus is on the education of the African clergy, is based on comparative education, his area of specialty.

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## CHAPTER I

### A HISTORICAL AND GEO-ETHNO-DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF THE CAMEROON

Cameroon is often called "the African continent in microcosm". It is one of the most diverse and most beautiful countries in a continent whose social intricacies and geographical variations attain a scale matched only by the industrial world's capacity---. There are more language/cultural groups---. In this vast region of every geographic and geological machination the Mind of God has wrought the Western eye sees only "jungle".<sup>1</sup>

Willard R. Johnson.

The focus of this opening chapter is on the historical and geo-ethno-demographical overview of the Cameroon. The purpose is to examine the hypothesis that geo-ethno-demography was one of the major factors responsible for the early distribution of the Christian denominations, Protestants and Roman Catholics, which came to be known as mainline Christian denominations.

A glance at the map of the world locates the African continent at the center of the world; and a careful look at

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1

Willard R. Johnson, An African Experiment in Nation Building: The Bilingual Cameroon Republic Since Reunification (Colorado: Westview Press, 1980), p. xiii.

the African map reveals that Cameroon is conspicuously located in the hinge of the continent. This triangle-shaped country, Cameroon, contains all Africa and has been legendary called "Africa in miniature". Its strategic geographic location, its ethno-cultural-population distribution and the origin of the country's name, "Cameroon" all arouse the curiosity of travellers and leave them with lively and vivid memories and imaginations.

Various factors and circumstances such as climatic, ecological, ethnographic and cultural differences have influenced and shaped the history and the entire life of the Cameroon peoples. Cameroon is full of interesting geographical characteristics. Daily average temperature ranges from about 65 degrees Fahrenheit around the areas where the foothills, especially Mount Cameroon (Mount Fako), begin to between 90 and 95 degrees Fahrenheit to the extreme northern regions of the country. The arid regions of the north contrast with the dense forest sections along the coast. The array of ethnic groups and preponderance of languages (over 200) and dialects (about 3,000 of them) are overwhelmingly bewildering in their complexity.

Unlike most of the northern, central and coastal parts of the African continent which are under the tyranny of the tropics, Cameroon is a country of ever-changing landscape. Other African countries which lie in the tropics

are scorched by the unveiled sun. Living conditions here are generally made unhealthy by the hot, dry, and empty harmattan wind that brings down dust clouds from the Saharan and Kalahari Deserts. These areas are sometimes, during the rainy season, inundated with flood in the deep abyss of torrential and furious rains. Certain geographical factors give a vivid picture of Cameroon. These are tranquil lakes and intrepid rivers, range of highlands and semi-arid regions, the realm of forest and Savannah.

Starting from the coast (the Atlantic Ocean) to the north (Chad Basin), Cameroon is watered by fascinating water-courses. They provide for a convergence of diverse seasonal activities. One sees, for example, dugout canoes and sturdy ferries in perpetual motion. They are either for a means of local transportation or for fishing. People, especially children swim, play and splash one another at the beaches during hot weather. Domestic animals including cattle come down to drink water.

Cameroon's numerous rivers and lakes have their sources in the country's regions in the west and in the Adamaoua (Adamawa) flat-top highlands. The rivers in the south run fast and deep with numerous rapids and waterfalls like the Menchum Falls in Befang in the North West Province. Whereas the lakes are a delight to tourists and the beaches are places of a variety of activities, the rivers are a source of harnessing hydro-electricity. Mount

Cameroon which is 13,350 feet above sea level is the highest mountain in the country. Debunscha is the rainiest place in Africa. Sanaga is the longest river of the country. It and several other rivers traverse the dense forests. These forests siphon off a reasonable amount of water from the rivers.

Along the western section of the country riffs present a vivid history of major geological upheavals that took place and were accompanied by series of volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. Mount Cameroon is still volcanically active. The Bamileke and Bamoun plateaux including a group of bare and rounded mountains between the valleys of the Mbam and the upper reaches of the Cross River as well as the mysterious Mount Koupe poise a scenery that catches a curious glimpse of a traveller.

The Adamaoua highlands which seemingly form a barrier and the Ngaoundere area are fascinatingly magnificent. One enters a new world, Savannah, once one emerges from the forests. The grassland areas offer pasture to the great herds of wild and domestic animals. Scattered among the pastures and forests, brushland and deciduous sections are villages of cattle rearers who are ruled by authoritative and authoritarian traditional leaders.

Semi-arid areas, especially in the north, act as a screen from the rest of the country, making life difficult for the inhabitants. Savannah and the Steppe are

the great kingdom of the wild animals, antelopes, elephants, buffalos and lions; while monkeys, chimpanzees and other forest animals live at liberty in the forests. Dry season time is a nightmare to the Savannah inhabitants including animals. This is time when bushes are burnt by hunters and farmers. Cameroon is rich and interesting in its geographical characteristics. Such a varied geographical and geological setting in the main is responsible for the complex cultural set-up.

Cameroon is a country of a wide variety of cultures. This is a reflection of the bewildering complexity of ethnic groups. There are well over 200 different ethnic groups in a country of almost twelve million people. From the beginning of time the majority of the ethnic groups were scattered nomads who needed leadership to gather them together and create a deep sense of esprit de corps. This spirit of oneness with its collectivism that gives a high social profile of "we-ness" has created cultural communities.

This is unity in diversity and diversity in unity. Each community lives from common goals identified by common developed languages and dialects which warrant one of the following types of government: Oligarchy, this is a rule based on the system of a traditional elite; Monarchy, meaning government by one sole leader called paramount leader; Gerontocracy, otherwise known as a sacred secret

council of king-makers, made up exclusively by old men; Democracy, a type of government comprising a large organized portion of traditional elders, whose title "elders" is based more on their functions than the literal sense of it; and theosociocracy, a type of local government based on a hierarchy of people in power through God's appointed authorities. Such rulers call themselves natural rulers. Such political cultures in poly-ethnic African communities have highly organized political systems. Some exercise regulatory authority and exert material exploitation as a benevolent dictatorship. Sometimes members of a single ethnic group meet in a number of villages. It is no rare event at times to see multiethnic groups who claim a common descent meet in one canton for the celebration of a very important event in their history.

There are numerous ethnic groups in the Cameroon. But relevant to this study, the more popular ones will be discussed. One of the major objectives for selecting these groups is to shed light on the relationship between ethnicity and religion (traditional, Islamic and Christian) in the Cameroon. It is also to provide an understanding of why there are "islands" of religious and Christian denominational concentrations in certain Cameroonian communities. Cameroon is a country of complex diversity with multiethnic groups whose socio-political and religious outlook ranges from strong hierarchical chiefdoms and

fondoms to segmentary weak political communities.

The second criterion for the selection of the ethnic groups is linguistic distribution. Even though there are several ethnic languages and numerous village dialects, the peoples of the Cameroon could be grouped under major linguistic zones. Thirdly, these ethnic groups are also organized on the basis of previous colonial rule. Cameroon has developed under the climate of various colonial cultures, but French and British cultures are most dominant. The fourth and most important objective for selecting these ethnic groups is to provide research variables. The term variables is used to promise the result of being reliable. These results of predictability are the ones that account for the patterns of religious practices being experienced in the Cameroon.

These criteria identified above revolve around two very important assumptions, namely that socio-cultural systems selected for any comparative study must be as different as possible from each other. In this study a designated term for such an assumption is heterogeneity. And in the second place, it is asserted that a comparative study must take into account as its point of departure the empirical removal, that is, holding constant, of all those systematic factors that are irrelevant to the explanation of the studied social behavior. In the context of this study, the term for such an assumption is homogeneity.

Broadly speaking, Cameroon peoples could be grouped under the following categories: Anglophone, which means English-speaking people and Francophone which means French-speaking people, cultures, heterogeneous and homogeneous communities; Bantu-speaking people and Bantoid-speaking ethnic groups; <sup>2</sup> acephalous (an African political system created by slave resettlement in which there is no centralized authority or government) and monocratic societies.

The major distinctively different, yet very important aspects that account for the assumption of ethnic heterogeneity in Cameroon are the traditional socio-cultural patterns, location of ethnic zones, the size of each group, and the socio-politico-religious importance in the larger context of the country's position in and outside of Africa. Meanwhile, those of homogeneity, such as language (English and French as official languages), the idea of unitary government, modern art and culture (tourism) have been forged on politically, but cultural homogeneity in certain parts of Cameroon is as old as the country itself.

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2

Ndiva Kofele-Kale, Tribesmen and Patriots: Political Culture in a Poly-Ethnic African State, Washington D.C., University Press of America, Inc., 1961, p. 94.



A specific example is the Savannah region where ethnic congeries have formed a homogeneity. For lack of an appropriate term, early Europeans called this area, "Grassfield" to classify the clusters of peoples that shared certain common features in their socio-political culture and economic organization.

The Grassfield is made up of the Bambilike, the Chamba, the Tikar and the Widikum ethnic groups whose homogeneity has been influenced by one factor - proximity. They all live in close proximity to one another under the generic name "Bamenda highlands." The main characteristic feature of their political set up is a powerful political system which I call monocracy\* typified by the dominion of chiefdoms and fondoms. This political system is strengthened and kept in tact by effective powerful men's associations called secret societies and system is strengthened and kept in tact by effective powerful men's associations called secret societies and jujucrafts which,

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\*Monocracy is a type of political system in an African traditional society in which it is believed that the ruler (Chief, Fon, King, Emperor) is a natural leader who comes from a royal family. Even though he is not elected or appointed, he is never-the-less recognized, accepted, respected and obeyed by his subjects. The leadership of a monocratic society like Ethiopia is strengthened and kept intact by effective powerful men's and women's associations known as secret societies and jujucrafts. These associations are religious in outlook. They are highly hierarchical and contain checks and balances.

without exception, have a religious aura. These associations are highly hierarchical and stratified with social rank attaining and title holding systems. Some of the most popular ones are Kwifoy, a male association culturally instituted to settle local legal disputes, train the young to be obedient, and check wrong-doing in the society. Obasenjom is a secret society of most ethnic groups in the South-West province. It was imported from Calabar, Nigeria by the Ejagham ethnic group and it spread to Balong ethnic groups. With the exception of Aghem and Kom people in the North-West province whose socio-political system is matrilineal, the Grassfield people share a common kingship system based on patrilineage.

The history and traditions of the origins of the ethnic congeries of the Grassfield peoples can only be curiously speculated rather than factually authenticated. This is so because migratory peoples are usually more interested in the histories of their dynasties, chiefdoms, institutions, offices and laws, but less concerned with the origins of peoples. More speculated than authenticated, for example, is the belief that the Widikum ethnic group, which is made up of the Beba Befang Esimbi, Menemo, the Moghamo, the Ngemba, the Ngie and Ngwaw clans, emigrated over two hundred years ago from the fringes of the Congo and settled first at Widikum and later on moved to a place called Gowin. From these two places groups went in

different directions taking up new names and adopting dialects as outlined above.

It is said that the Tikar ethnic group migrated into the Bamenda highland from the northeast of the country around the Lake Chad region because of the Fulani and Chamba pressure. This happened over some three hundred years ago; but the most recent influx of people into Bamenda was the Chamba. This was a fierce group of horseborne people who invaded Bamenda but were in turn ousted from their original enclaves by a more fierce group -- the Fulani warriors.<sup>3</sup>

Relevant to this study is the religio-polity of the homogeneous communities. It provides a means of classification that ranges from highly centralized authority (Fondom), through atomistic village independency, to oligarchy or aristocracy (chiefdom). In the first classification (fondom), at the top is the Fon who acts as the spiritual, executive, legislative and political leader of the people. He is surrounded and assisted by a Council of Elders. Subalterns or regents are appointed and empowered to act in the Fon's absence. There is an implicit belief in, awe of, and charisma from the so-called natural leader who according to the people represents the gods of

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Ndiva Kofele, Tribesmen and Patriots: Political Culture in a Poly-Ethnic African State, (Washington, D.C., University Press of America, Inc., 1961) p. 102.

the clan. He exerts authority over and exercises strict authoritarian power over the commoners by means of benevolent dictatorship.

In the second classification, there is the clan with its several villages; but each village manages its own affairs without depending on the clan. In the third classification, the focus of the society is upon and respect is to an elite few who form a Council of Elders known as King-makers.

As in most pre-colonial West African kingdoms, the history of ethnicity in Cameroon, and especially in the Grassfield region, has two aspects: (1) the origins of the people and (2) the origins of the ruling dynasties. The first has already been discussed. The conclusion was that the historical origins of the various ethnic congeries in the Grassfield region are by no means certain and therefore no definite conclusion can be made at this point of study. The origins of the ruling dynasties in the various ethnic groups are less shrouded in mystery than the origins of the peoples.

The history of pre-colonial leadership (chieftaincy), a summary of power and greatness in the Cameroon, has three origins: conquest and expansion, self-proclaimed leadership and senior-title-holding. In the first, upon conquering weak communities and annexing them for dominion and rule, the war leader (hero) was crowned

Fon as a reward and in respect for valor, good administration, and leadership. In the second, an individual could, because of his material well-being, wealth and magical skills, step forward and proclaim himself chief. In doing so, he made people believe that he was empowered and appointed by the tribal gods to rule them. In order to boost his status, he married several wives ranging from 200 to 300, to have many children for posterity.

Leadership also came to a person by means of senior-title-holding. This can be achieved through initiation into one of the old and popular secret societies (religious in outlook) or through a display of valor and heroism in traditional practices. Whereas, the leader in the first category is called Fon or paramount Chief, those of the last two categories are called chiefs or sub-chiefs. In all the categories, some of the demonstrative concrete responsibilities of the people used to be material tribute and obligatory giving of daughters into marriage in the palace or to the royal family. This traditional practice, Kofele-Kale calls, the "benevolent dictatorship."<sup>4</sup>

The Fon or paramount Chief was empowered and charged with unarbitrary legislative, judicial, executive, and

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<sup>4</sup>

Ibid., p.123.

religious responsibilities over the people. He could adjudicate on all serious civil and criminal matters, such as land tenure, marital disputes, thievery, incest, murder and other aspects of grave misconduct.

Heterogeneous committees are acephalous, scattered and independent. In other words, the people in these communities live in isolated dotted villages with wattled huts whose structure suggests temporariness. The people in these societies do not confer autocratic powers on their chiefs or fons. The stronger institution in such communities is the institution of the nuclear family. Acephalous societies comprise mostly those of slave descent and exiles from other communities of Cameroon's neighbors. Acephalous societies are found mostly in the coastal areas. They are settlements of native slaves, runaway slaves, or slaves rejected by the white slave dealers during their final examination and selection for shipping to Europe, the Americas, and the Caribbean. These communities are in the creeks. They form a common cultural group called Creole, a term which strictly is a misnomer.

Whereas homogeneous communities are an outcome of "tribalization," acephalous societies are detribalized groups of peoples. They are fragmented by the absence of linguistic homogeneity, have no coherent traditional socio-political organization, are of insignificant size, have no clear geo-historical location and no congenial religious

tradition. It can be concluded that heterogeneous communities have grown outside the setup of the centralized chiefdom or fendom or kingdom. Common features attest to this assumption. Their governments are loosely democratic. The village council administration is weak even though some villages use secret societies and "jujus" to strike terror in the psyche of sparsely populated societies. The traditional leaders have no strong authority over the populous. Some do not have powerful regulatory secret societies or religious cultures.

#### How Missionaries Came To The Natives:

In summary form, ethnicity, religion and traditional ways of transmitting culture in pre-western Africa played an important role in the lives of the people. The history of ethnic migration, cultural heritage and development practices were all related to the act of naming. The names of seasons and events, the names of people and places all had meanings.

The name of a place for example could have four different connotations. It generally stood for the empire, kingdom, fendom or chiefdom which was made up of a loose conglomeration of various peoples knitted together by various methods to acknowledge the authority of the traditional ruler. Second, it stood for the clan or Fendom, a much smaller region which in the course of history had come to be regarded as coterminous with a linguistic

section of an ethnic group as distinct from other ethnic groups within the geographical region. Third, the name of a place could be applied to the headquarters where the palace of the Fodom, the seat of the Fon's government and the focal point of all local political, economic, and socio-religious activities of the people took place.<sup>5</sup>

For an African in Ghana where Asanteheni or in the Cameroon where Fontem are well-known generic persons' names, a name represents the source, substance, strength, the content, the wisdom, the power of the people's culture. Culture is a macrocosm of ethnicity, religion, anthropology, and polity. All these are sacred elements embodied in the name. These elements represent healing and renewal, restoration and sanctification, satisfaction and justice and fulfillment.

A name describes the character, content, nature, glory, wisdom, goodness, power, destiny of a people's unity and togetherness. In short, to an African, a name is a corporate identity of we-ness which represents the balance and an inseparable, indissoluble and indivisible unity of love, authority, freedom, responsibility, wealth, health, elevation, dedication, supremacy, sanity, wisdom, power, spontaneity, structure, divinity, and humanity. This is the historical

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Philip A. Igbafe, Peoples and Kingdoms of West Africa in the Pre-Colonial Period (Tarikh) Vol. 5 No. 1, (London: Longman, Press), 1974, p 1.



manifestation and metaphysical foundation of the importance the African attaches to a name.

In order to make meaning out of individual, collective and corporate contributions to the existence and well-being of the community, certain societal and cultural elements emerged by necessity or expedience. These elements were fused with daily living to give meaning to the humblest gesture of co-existence. Some of them might have been wanting in philosophic depth and spiritual elevation, political relevance and social ethics, but they gave full description to the traditional setting. These societal elements were the crystal ball for explaining the mysteries of life and death, the cultural compass for directing the affairs of the people, an instrument for dealing with the forces of evil and good in the home, in the village, and in the clan.

Although these elements of beliefs did not constitute a structured and logical whole, they made metaphysical sense to the peoples. These belief-elements were established on the anvil of two fundamental concepts: a cyclic concept of evolution that allowed each generation to attain its fullness of being by the ideal development of the family, by an abundance of communal traditional consumer goods; and a simultaneous perception of a basically harmonious cosmic order, together with a disorder which always endangers and threatens the expected "normal"

revelation of existence.

In short, beliefs and practices were related. They referred to the supernatural world. They exerted a considerable influence in the lives of the peoples. They were used to explain the mysteries of the universe and the laws which were believed to have governed its functioning. These beliefs and practices worked as the ethics and norms for the relationships between humans and the world. Mishaps and anomalies, which emerged as life opened up, were through an oral tradition codified in their phenomenal manifestations, their causes and their consequences which could be checked or corrected by appropriate methods and techniques such as magic and sorcery, witchcraft, and healing.<sup>6</sup>

Among others, the belief-elements relevant to this study are ancestral obeisance, magic and sorcery, health, healing, and witchcraft. Like all Africans, ancestors occupied a significant place for the average traditional Cameroonian. The lives, achievements, contributions, and creative works of the departed profoundly influenced the lives of the living. In order to keep this corpus of life alive and hand it on to the next generation, obeisance was necessary. The practice of sacrifices and celebrations,

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Marie-France Perrin Jassy, Basic Community in the African Churches (New York: Orbis Books Press), 1973, p. 25.

dedication of crops and children, visits to the cemetery and shrines were now a ritualistic means of bringing the people together and keeping society and culture intact.

The expression that the ancestors have survived death was another way of succinctly saying that although these people are dead, their exemplary contributions to the well-being of their communities lived on.

Ancestral obeisance was practiced more in the Grassfield and semi-Grassfield (deciduous) regions than in the forest section. One principal reason for this was the homogeneity of the society as a result of a common origin (speculative), a common history, a common leadership, common culture. Although each ethnic group in some areas might have been distinguished from the others by its own ways of obeisance and its own ancestors, all the ethnic groups in the clan were bound together by a common ancestor who must have been a Fon or paramount Chief and Queen.

There were two distinctive groups of ancestors. There was a group made up by those ancestors whose names and deeds were well known to the whole clan or Fondom and the ancestors who died in the distant past. In both instances, ancestors were part of a socio-religious group. Calling upon the name of a war ancestor helped invoke courage in the people in time of inter-ethnic battles. These ancestors were religiously important; hence they were

consulted as oracles by mediums who passed on these ancestors' messages to those who consulted them. Those who died as prominent traditional chiefs and queens formed the rank and file of the ancestors who revealed new medicine-herbs and new forms of healing to native doctors. Folk medicines in the form of seeds and herbs, roots and barks of trees were believed to be the products and gifts of the soil, the decay of the dead and buried members of the Fandom or Kingdom. Certain animals like the lion, the elephant, and the buffalo were associated with certain groups of ancestors. Medicinal plants and their efficacies were associated with these groups of ancestors and animals. Dreadful and major diseases needed quick and effective cure by the medicines that came from the plants that were associated with these ancestors and animals.

Faith in and obedience of the patient to these sources of healing were the first step to receiving holistic health. This is one explanation why Cameroonians, even those who receive western education, have not given up folk medicines. It is still strongly believed that certain inorganic diseases such as "madness" or mental disturbances cannot be treated scientifically. Scientific psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, and counsellors are not yet believed to be a necessity in this context.

The concept of the spirit world (invisible world beyond) led to the belief in the living-dead which in turn

motivated ancestral obeisance. The concept of the living-dead (ancestor) was important as a psychological relief when individuals or groups poured out their hearts' troubles before their invisible seniors. It became an ontological force which built up a sense of immanence. People believed that death had mysteriously erected a barrier (invisible veil) between the departed and the living. They sought through magic and sorcery to understand that mystery and destroy it.

An African magician believes he has been endowed with spiritual power to tap obnoxious and yet vital spiritual powers and principalities. One of the devices magic provides against spiritual forces is the wearing round the necks, wrists, ankles or waists of babies and adults, bracelets and small bags of charms to protect them from evil forces and witchcraft. Sorcerers or witches are regarded as humans who are agents of evil influences.

Magicians detect these agents of evil forces by divination or augury, a device for foretelling the future by magical acts. They can also perform geomancy, the practice of divining by figures on the earth. Most Cameroonians, even though western civilization seems to have ventilated their ignorance, still seek to remove their individual and collective evils and solve their problems in

magic and accusations of sorcery and witchcraft.<sup>7</sup> The more the evil forces governing their present-day world escape their understanding, the greater credence and faith they give to luck. This cultural phenomenon, naming, is less common in acephalous societies but wide-spread socio-phobia is not completely absent.

Certain basic themes of Cameroonian culture have to be identified and emphasized for the purpose of this study. They offer an understanding of the Christian culture in the Cameroon from the era of foreign Christian missions in 1835, through the emergence of independent churches in 1914, to the concept of religious reconstruction (indigenous Christianity) in 1957. The themes may be cataloged in three major categories: events and celebrations, cultural festivals, and coronations and investitures.

The first category concerns marriage, birth, Fon Day, anniversaries and death. Marriage in the Cameroon used to be a community affair, developing in its importance and publicity from the families of the boy and the girl to friends and neighbors of other villages near and far. Well wishers and curious onlookers, invited and uninvited people

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Geoffrey Parrinder, Witchcraft: European and African (London: Faber and Faber 1963,) p. 118.

used to attend the marriage ceremony and celebration with gifts, feasting and jubilation. The suitor and the betrothed would know and touch each other for the first time only on and after the day of wedding. Divorce ( a very rare practice) could only be initiated and effected by the compromise of the parents of both families after a very long and tedious process. From marriage children ensued or were expected to come as a natural process.

The birth of a baby, especially the first baby, was a natural event that called for celebration. Birth celebration was regarded as a special event in the central sex cycle whose focus was puberty. Its celebration was limited to the family circle. Puberty rites were a preparation of the young for an adult life. Death, especially that of an important adult in the society, was a more major physiological or psychological event which became the center for socio-ritualistic celebration. It entailed substantial expenditure by the family of the deceased and much feasting, dancing and at times fighting by the celebrating people. If the rites focusing on puberty had as their objective the preparation of the young for a full life in and initiation into a new positive societal status, death rites certainly were negative for they symbolized the separation of a member of the society from a life of activity and exiled that individual to the land of the living-dead (ancestors).

Another very important event that was a strong force in traditional African life, especially in monocratic societies was Fon Day. It was a day of great gathering of the whole clan, fondon or kingdom of about two to three million people converging at traditional centers and palaces in their respective villages. Friends and relatives, inlaws and distant kin relations from other ethnic groups were invited. King-makers, regents, and sub-chiefs were summoned to the palace of the paramount ruler on the last day of the celebration. In some big kingdoms of about five to six million people under about four or five sub-rulers the celebration of Fon Day, lasted a month.

Fon Day would be compared with Saint Patrick's Day in the lives of the Irish immigrants in the United States. But whereas Saint Patrick's Day accentuates the religious and ethnic identity of an individual Fon Day marked a conglomeration of cultural experiences and events. It was a time for the review of cultural history, revival of cultural life, and rehearsal of cultural heritage.

On this day, at the Fon's request, traditional historians, (respectable elders) recounted geneologies of the Fondon, citing them as far back as to the original founder of the clan. Some of the Fondons were founded by men and others by women. Where the geneology evolved from a woman, the culture of the people was matrilineal and where geneology was traced from a man, the culture was



patriarchal. On this day, too, the importance of totems becomes visible. Totems were symbolical expressions of togetherness, of unity, of a common affinity and of kinship.

Fon Day was a time of reckoning. It was an occasion which necessitated the reconciliation of factionalized villages which once were bound to their centralized leadership. It was a moment of reflection on the deep sense of kinship. The concept of kinship stretched horizontally embracing everybody, every sex, every age group, every village and all the ethnic groups that historically traced a common descent which led to one paramount leader. Its vertical importance became more visible in ritualistic expressions focused on ancestral obeisance and ontological immanence.

On this day the Fon dressed and appeared in his royal apparel and priestly regalia, sat on his traditional kingly stool submerged in the mystical atmosphere of ancestors and gathered kinsmen and surrounded by his bevy of wives, children and grandchildren. On this day, too, the Fon held his royal sceptre in his left hand and royal broom in his right hand. He would wave the broom occasionally as he felt bathed in the effulgence of the divine splendor of his well decorated palace and in the contemplation of a beautiful vision of his fendom.

In most parts of pre-colonial Cameroon, there used to be family, village and ethnic anniversaries. Family anniversaries included marriage and birth. Every year, during the same month and on the same day (not necessarily the same date) of their marriage, husband and wife would sit together and reflect on the unfolding events of their marriage journey, counting more their marriage blessings in children, in good health, peace and general harmony. A childless marriage would cause concern which sometimes obligated the couple to seek traditional counselling from parents.

Birth anniversaries were important events for children. On these days, grand and great grandchildren would gather at their grandparents' places to listen to folk stories and hear how each of them was born and nurtured. Such anniversaries helped record people's ages. The same applied to village and ethnic anniversaries. They helped the aborigines know the history of their origin and how long they have been living together as a people. It should be noted, however, that anniversaries were more observed than celebrated and therefore constituted less punctilious adherence; although the importance did not decrease and their folkloristic backgrounds were not obliterated.

Cultural festivals were events and celebrations that focused on the restoration and maintenance of cultural

heritage and social solidarity. Some of the cultural festivals were celebrations of circumcision, or crop harvest. Their celebrations were punctuated with a series of performances such as wrestling contests according to age group and sex, swimming, running, music and tree climbing. This was the time for cultural and traditional education, preparation for puberty rites and initiation ceremonies.

Another theme of Cameroonian cultural life was coronation. It had to do with crowning of a new Fon or Chief or his regent or Queen when the former one died, went in exile or committed suicide, which by native laws and customs was to propitiate for committing a heinous crime. These themes and many more which developed from an immense depth of space and time were the unity and continuum of cultural growth of Cameroon.

But, this cultural and traditional life in the pre-foreign religious era (Islam and Christianity) before 1835 predestinedly poised Cameroon on the brink of a new religious fusion. The two foreign religions, Islam and Christianity, which now are Cameroonian religions took advantage of and exploited the traditional cultural occasions and practices. These practices were avenues of attraction to and lines of contact between foreign Christian missionaries and the native Cameroonians.

Knowledge of traditional occasions and the purposes they served for the natives facilitated the efforts of foreign Christian missionaries to carry out mass conversions. Various means were used to convert the so-called "heathen tribes and pagan societies" to a high Christian civilization. One of the avenues by which these missionaries came to the natives, the most popular was through invitation by traditional leaders. A chief or fon or king would consult with the inner circle of his kindred elders and discuss the issue of inviting white men whose religion the traditional ruler was told would benefit his Fandom by boosting his person and position; it would give him power over other villages because of education through schools, improved health because of hospitals, easy and good communication because of good roads, and extermination of witchcraft because of the white man's mysteries. This was the content of the hidden agenda of traditional rulers cloaked in a religious invitation.

Dah substantiates this point when he states:

The mission received many requests from chiefs to open schools in their villages. This was very encouraging for the Mission as they saw through the requests an evangelistic dimension. Raaflaub shows that the chiefs had reasons other than those of the Mission: some chiefs needed somebody for reading and writing their letters; others needed teachers with a knowledge of German for business transactions with soldiers or with government officers; still a third reason was one of prestige by which some chiefs needed protection against their neighbour.

The presence of a school increased the dignity and importance of a chief and his village. The primary aim of the demand for schools was therefore general education rather than a demand for the Gospel.<sup>8</sup>

Missionaries were often given land in the outskirts of the village at sites to which various dreadful beliefs were attached. These places usually called evil forests. Two factors (hardly spiritual) usually led to mass conversion. Memoh succinctly refers to the first when he states:

... , the father-image was rather marked. The children (commoners) followed closely parental directives and the extended family ties were very strong. What belonged to one belonged to all, more or less. Each family member learned to bear one another's burden. (In time this would be high-lighted with the spread of the Gospel) The good of all was placed over the good of the individual. Moreover, the Traditional Rulers were unquestioningly obeyed and served. <sup>9</sup>

As it was in the Roman Empire, becoming a Christian was an honor doctrinally. It was a mark of obedience and respect to the royalty and claim of religious ownership of

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Jonas Dah, African Response to Christianity (Cameroon, 1987), pp. 14-15.

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Zachariah M. Memoh Sr. Church and Culture: Journey in Faith: The Story of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. Nyansako-ni-Nku ed. (Yaounde: Buma Kor and Co. Publishers, 1982), pp. 140-141.

that denomination. One sees today in the Cameroon certain areas which are predominantly Roman Catholic, Baptist, or Basel Mission. Missionaries of these Christian organizations were either exclusively invited by the traditional rulers of those areas or those Christian organizations were the first to start evangelization here. Ethnic groups were often associated with the Christian denominations that first came here. Establishing schools and hospitals also resulted in mass conversion. These places were used as evangelistic outreach centers for recruiting Christians. Some Christian Missions like the Roman Catholic Mission insisted on baptizing all those who sought healing in their clinics. Those who resisted Christianity forfeited employment or educational opportunity. In some cases they were also regarded as being subversive to His Royal Highness. Disobedience to the throne was often regarded a serious crime that deserved severe penalty.

Early in the 15th Century, before traditional rulers began to invite Christian Missions to bring Christianity to their villages, the interior of the Cameroon was inaccessible to colonial nations. The invitation to Christian Missionaries opened the interior and became a conduit of colonialism. Thus, personal aggrandizement led to the demand for the white man's religion. Missionary efforts paved the way for colonialism and colonialism

weakened the traditional leadership. Traditional boundaries were altered without considering the people's interests. Original clans and kingdoms, villages and communities were confusedly cut through. Each fragmented area of the country was put under a new and entirely different leadership and system and the other area under traditional leadership. This was the device of the Europeans, especially the British, with its "divide and rule" method of colonialism.

Cameroonians were now ruled by England, Germany and France, including white missionaries invited by traditional rulers or leaders appointed by the colonialists. In fact, traditional leadership lost its power over the people or became weakened. To summarize this point, both the new religion (Christianity) and new leadership (Colonialism) destabilized Cameroon ethnic and rural societies and communities.

In some Cameroonian societies, especially in areas where belief in witchcraft was rife, missionaries were brought to the people by Cameroonian "osus" or social outcastes who were traditional taboos to the society and not allowed to participate in society.<sup>10</sup> Witchcraft exiles or people, frequently suspected or accused of diabolical acts, heard of a white man's religion that was rescuing and protecting the socially oppressed and the outcastes from the

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Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart (New York): Fawcett Crest Press), 1983, p. 146.

traditional ordeals inflicted by sorcerers, magicians and witch-doctors to test the guilt or innocence of the accused.

Suspected or accused witches, mostly women, were usually given some semi-poisonous substances to swallow. The poison oracle decision was always respected by the native law. Detectives led by witch-doctors were organized into groups. They went from house to house or toured villages and clan within the fondom. Large numbers of men and women were arrested for questioning. They were forced to go through traditional ordeals if they were suspected or accused. Some escaped to other fondoms. It was usually these escapees, who by their painful stories told to the missionaries at their conversion and baptism, that aroused missionary enthusiasm to evangelize those areas to root out witchery.

While some missionaries had genuine love and concern for the outcaste most still harbored the European concept of witchcraft which had led to persecution of western Europeans in the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance periods.<sup>11</sup> The attitude of white missionaries, particularly Protestant missionaries, towards African folk medicines was grossly negative. Collaborating with their colonial governments, they staged an onslaught upon

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Geoffrey Parrinder, Witchcraft: European and African. (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p. 9.



traditional medicines. The missionaries and their colonial governments threatened to imprison traditional leaders if they did not order their people to bring their medicines to be publicly burnt. Some of these outrageous acts were carried out by some Basel Mission Missionaries. Native medicines, shrines, and traditional handicrafts were destroyed and burnt in Bakossi and in Balong other selected ones were sold to European museums. Some of the native leaders who refused to carry out orders by the missionaries and the colonial authorities were imprisoned, among them Chief Makia of Balong.

White Missionaries believed they were agents of civilizing missions. Anything that was African was primitive, heathen, pagan, idolatrous and devilish. Native healers, no matter how genuine their healings were, magicians, sorcerers and diviners, were all derogatorily termed "conscious impostors" who were the dupes of their

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12

Werner Keller, The History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, (Cameroon: Presbook Printing Department, 1969), p. 20.

own beliefs and imaginings. According to Radin, a European,

On my travels I have sometimes been present at a seance among the salt-dwellers. These . . . never seem trustworthy to me. . . . they attached more weight to tricks that would astonish the audience, when they jumped about the floor and lisped all sorts of absurdities and lies in their so-called spirit language; . . . all this seemed only amusing and as something that would impress the ignorant. 13

It was difficult to judge whether the white missionary attitude towards African culture and social life was one of deep religious passion or a parochial vision of white supremacy. Whatever one's opinion, these missionaries did not meet native Africans without preconceptions about the nature of the peoples which helped shape the way they carried out their missions to achieve their goals.

In some areas, particularly in the interior, Christian missionaries opened the way and colonial authorities followed; and in some regions colonialism led the way and Christianity, especially the Roman Catholic Missions, followed the flag. Keller gives a glaring example when he states:

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H.R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroon 1884-1914: A Case Study in Modern Imperialism (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), p. 106.

...missionaries were sent...to investigate the possibility of mission work on the west coast of Africa....the British government obtained permission to form a settlement... for the purpose of basing a naval squadron there to control the vessels engaged in the slave trade. ...missionaries arrived there, Captain de Lerena, the representative of Catholic Spain, declared that the security of personal liberty, property and religion should be guaranteed for every inhabitant.<sup>14</sup>

The insatiable European appetite can be seen in the arbitrary partition of Africa in 1884 an ominous development for native rule but momentous for Christian evangelism in Africa. The colonial powers such as Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Belgium were never satisfied with their own colonial portions of Africa. Germany, France and Britain scrambled for a very small west African area, Cameroon, as they did elsewhere on the continent and in Asia. The scramble for Africa was compounded with other internal and external problems in Europe.

All these led to the First and Second World Wars in which conscripted Africans fought in Europe. Some of these African soldiers had heard of the white man's religion

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Werner Keller, The History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon (Cameroon: Presbook Printing Department, 1969), pp. 1-2.

called Christianity. Some might have attended catechetic instruction and were baptized or were about to be baptized. Others might have not been exposed to the new religion before they went to Europe to fight. All in all, in Europe, these Africans and other soldiers were being chaplained in war camps and army barracks by the Christian clergy and chaplains of various denominations. Their Christian raison d'etre was strengthened. When they returned to Africa after the wars, some became contact-points between the missionaries and their people. This was one of the ways Christian missionaries came to the native Africans. They came to the natives through African war veterans.

Just as Greek and Phoenician long-distance merchants were the main carriers of the Hellenistic synthesis into the western Mediterranean, so were the African long-distance merchants the principal carriers of Islam and Christianity into sub-Saharan Africa. This role as bearers of the white man's culture was common to African merchants who were compelled by their business to leave their own societies and go to other regions to exchange their goods for items needed.

As the long-distance trade by barter became lucrative, wealthy African traders organized themselves and their

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Philip Curtin, Steven, F. and others, African History, (Boston: Little Brown and Company Press, 1978), pp. 93-107.

network of commerce beyond their regions. Wherever, they went as traders, they adopted and maintained their own ethnic identities. Some of these merchants were converted to Islam or Christianity and carried their new religion to their homeland.

In Cameroon, long-distance traders were potent exporting agents of Islam in the north ,on one hand, and Christianity along the coast, on the other. The age of long-distance trade was a classic and lucrative period for missionaries to come to the natives through the traders. Keller has elegantly substantiated this point when he says:

In 1868 the German trader Karl Woermann established the first factory at Douala. His first manager, Thormahlen, together with another employee, Jantzen began their own business in Douala in 1875. ...Thormahlen asked Bismark, the German Chancellor, for the appointment of a German Counsul in Douala... Schmidt, one of these agents, was most popular amongst the Africans. Usually the goods obtained were paid later by exchanging ivory, rubber and oil. To the missionaries the Woermann factory was quite helpful. On mercantile boats missionaries got free passages between Douala, Fernando Po, Calabar and Victoria (in Cameroon). 16

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16

Werner Keller, The History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, (Cameroon: Presbook Printing Department, 1969), p. 8.

Missionaries brought Christianity to Cameroon through Cameroonian long-distance traders. They also came to the natives at the invitation of traditional leaders or were led by the socially oppressed or witchcraft suspects. In some cases, they took advantage of their country's government's colonial invasion or used returning world war Cameroonian veterans as contact persons. Wherever these missionaries went, they heard curious stories about other places they had not evangelized. They planned visits on their own to places not previously visited. Keller substantiates this when he states:

The Rev. J. Clark and Dr. Prince paid a first visit to Douala (Cameroon) in 1841 during their tour of investigation. In 1845 Dr. Prince visited Douala again from Fernando Po. This time he was accompanied by Alfred Saker.. .. Alfred Saker came to Douala with Horton Johnson to start mission work. From Douala the English Baptists tried to spread inland...the Rev. J. Pinnock...started work in Abo. At Malimba school work was begun as well. ... Alfred Saker...discovered the beautiful Bay of Amboises on earlier tours to the mainland. As early as March 1891, Autenrieth and Walker from Mangamba tried to advance towards the Bakossi Mountains. In 1889 Dr. Zintgraff, the great explorer advanced into the interior of the Cameroons to explore the country for German trade. On arrival in Bali he was given a friendly welcome by King Galega I. 17

It can be inferred from the foregoing descriptive analysis of the early beginnings of Christianity in the Cameroon that early mainline denominational concentration was determined by two related key factors, namely, the various ways the missionaries came to the natives and the geographic location and ecological situation of this triangle-shaped country. The first premise (missionaries came to the native by various ways) has already been analysed; and now a discussion of the second, denominational concentration.

#### Factors Determining Denominational Concentration

Four main factors were responsible for Christian denominational concentration in the Cameroon. These were the geographical cultural conservatism, education and health, and the seat of colonial authority. From the geographical-geological viewpoint, the coast along the Atlantic Ocean was more accessible to Europeans than was the north. Also, the presence of the ocean and the moisture-producing forests provided for seasonal and periodic recreation. That was why the English Baptists, besides being the first to come, enjoyed working in Fernando Po, Douala and Victoria.

It took a very long time for Christianity to spread further north where Islam, through Nigeria and Chad, had already begun to spread into the Cameroon. But, even though

the spread of Christianity started from the coast, various natural obstacles created religious bottlenecks for the growth and spread of this religion. The swampy-mangrove forests were a mosquito and insect breeding region which was inhospitable for the white missionaries who were frequently attacked by malaria. Further, thick swampy forests and swift deep rivers made travelling hazardous for the missionaries. It was not always easy to meet and preach to many people who, because of the nature of the terrain (forests, swamp, rocks, swift deep rivers), lived in scattered communities.

The next factor had to do with traditional or cultural conservatism. In most parts of Cameroon, especially in the grassland region where chieftaincy was an awe-striking institution and religion was esoterically alive, Christianity (particularly when it came to the people at the request of the chief) was received as a family religion. Everyone in the family, in the village and in the Fondom became a Christian in the denomination that the fon or chief had invited. This was common in more conservative societies where the father's or elder's image (hierarchy) was respected. Roman Catholicism, with its tradition of hierarchy and with its esoteric form (rituals) of religion, predominated in these areas.

Mission schools and hospitals were another agent of mass conversion and denominational concentration. Schools



were to train readers and secretaries for the chiefs and parents. They were to train future leaders of Cameroon, thereby boosting the prestige and the importance of the fondom that produced more intellectual leaders and elites for the country. Schools created opportunities for white collar employment - teachers, messengers, interpreters, secretaries, servants for the missionaries and for the colonial masters. Schools were to enable the African to discover the secret of the white man's power and greatness; therefore the fondom that produced many educated people although black on the outside would be white and wise on the inside. Hospitals were to cater for the people's health, improve their quality of life, and increase their life-span. More than one Christian denomination could enter and evangelize a fondom, but the one that provided more satisfactory practical service to the people in the long run dominated the area. In the ascending order as typical examples, the Baptists, the Basel Mission and the Roman Catholics would operate paripassu in one fondom but would differ in their numerical growth.

The next factor responsible for Christian denominational concentration was the seat of colonial government. Whereas to the Protestants the religious philosophy of stewardship included rural development, to the Roman Catholics it implied concentration in the artificially created society called the city. Colonial

authorities provided the Roman Catholic denomination with opportunities to deal with the complex human problems common to the city life style. Some of these problems were economic caused by congestion and poor conditions of living, and social and spiritual problems caused by social injustice and distrust among people.

The Roman Catholic theology was developed to serve the colonial urban life style. Saint Ignatius's concept of two standards of life, the downward mobility, that is the way of Christ and the upward mobility, that is the way of the world were being implemented in various ways.<sup>18</sup>

Magnificent church buildings and gigantic cathedrals were conspicuously erected at strategic sites in the cities. Imposing statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary, saints and other important Roman Catholic historical figures were built. These statues produced an esoteric appeal to the passersby and curious onlookers. The statues made the Roman Catholic neophytes awe-ridden enthusiasts as they went to receive the rosary, the crucifix, holy water, the prayer and the blessing of the "Father white man," Exorcism was one of the common major functions of the Roman Catholic

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Bernard Fonlon, "Leadership, Union With God", Cameroon Panorama 191, (November 1964), p. 22.

clergy in the Cameroonian colonial cities. In the Cameroon, it was difficult to see the difference between a Roman Catholic priest and European imperialist. They were both the same.

White Christianity had had a big problem in Africa. Its problem had been its inability to convert the African. Even though active Christian evangelism was carried out in various ways through schools, hospitals, agriculture, trades and preaching, the African still remained tied to the corpus of his tradition. Why did Western Christianity fail to convert the African? It was incomplete and ineffective because it had one thing but lacked its dialectical and necessary opposites which could work correlatively and cooperatively to fulfill, enhance and preserve each other's positive elements of culture. This has been the mammoth task of the educated Cameroonian Christian clergy - indigenization of Christianity without negative syncretism and exclusive cultures.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The panoramic description of this many textured country is a portrayal of its strategic location. It contains all Africa in a single triangle as it stands where the western, regions of the African continent meet. Cameroon is a West African country with an area of 183,568 square miles. It is triangle-shaped. It is bordered to the southwest by the Atlantic Ocean. Nigeria borders it on the

northwest. On the northeast Cameroon is bordered by Chad, the Central African Republic and Zaire to the southeast and to the south Cameroon is bordered by Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. The geographic position of Cameroon has been summed up by Eyongetah and Brain thus:

Hemmed in between Chad, Gabon and Nigeria, it (Cameroon) is small country of ... inhabitants, speaking different languages, living in diverse cultural and environmental niches.<sup>19</sup>

As seen on the world map, the continent of Africa is right in the center of other continents. The map of Africa further reveals that Cameroon projects into the heart of the continent and as such comprises a variety of competing climates and also the highest concentrate of wild animals. In its geo-ethno-demographic setting, Cameroon is the most diverse African country. As Ann Debel has rightly pointed out, "...Cameroon has since the beginning of time been a crossing of the ways, a meeting place and a centre of influence."<sup>20</sup>

Geo-ethno-demographically, Cameroon has been panoramically described as a triangle-shaped country that is located in the center of the African continent. The size

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19

T. Eyongetah, and R. Brain, A History of the Cameroon (London: Longman, 1974), p. 1.

20

Anne Debel, Cameroon Today. (Paris: Imprimerie reliure Maison Mame, 1977), p. 42.

is 183,500 square miles with a distance of 700 miles from the south to the north and 450 miles stretching from the east to the west. Topographically it is a country of four natural regions such as the northern plains, the central and southern plateaux, the western highlands and mountains and the coastal plains along the Gulf of Guinea.

The climate of Cameroon is sub-arid and hot in the northern plains area with a seven month dry season. The central plateaux and the western highlands are slightly cooler because they are elevated, have a shorter dry season, shading into the year-round rainfall in the southwest. The coastal lowlands are monotonously warm and humid throughout the year.

The population of Cameroon is more dense in the southwest and around Maroua-Garoua of the Northern Province. There is rapid urbanization. There are about two hundred ethnic groups, twenty-four major languages and numerous dialects. Concerning the health of the people, there used to be a high incidence of diseases because of poor nutrition, uneven distribution of climate and seasons, poor sanitary conditions and general ignorance of the people in the combat of diseases such as parasitic infections, Kwashiorkor, tuberculosis, malaria.

Early Christian missionaries had ample opportunities to bring the Gospel Message to the people of Africa, but conflicting interests brought their efforts to futility.

some of the traditional rulers genuinely yearned for spiritual transformation of their societies. Keller refers to a typical example in the Cameroon when he states:

...a new station at Ndunge (in Cameroon) was built to the east of Nyasoso where the Rev. and Mrs. Wittner were posted in the middle of 1911. Ndunge, near the railway line, was the junction-station of the Mission between the Forest Region and the Grassfields. Paramount Chief Tub was of immense help to the Mission. As a boy he had been sold into slavery by his own father. On the coast he had come into contact with the Christian Church. After his liberation he was very much concerned that his people should also get spiritual freedom. 21

Because most of the traditional leaders had exhibited some mundane motives in their requests for Christianity, white missionaries were sceptical about these rulers' interest and Christian conviction. All African traditional leaders were stereotypically termed the magus of African Christianity.

Edward Forcha Lekunze, son of the chief of Bamumbu and pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, in his doctoral dissertation "Chieftaincy and Christianity in Cameroon: An Historical and Comparative Analysis of the

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21

Werner Keller, The History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon Cameroon: Presbook Printing Department, 1969, p. 32.

Evangelistic Strategy of the Basel Mission", deplored this  
<sup>22</sup>  
 stereotyped white missionary prejudice. He asserts (as  
 summarized by his academic director) "...failure to take  
 seriously the authority and position of native chiefs in  
 their own society led to a missed opportunity by the Swiss-  
 German Basel Mission for a Christian people's movement in  
<sup>23</sup>  
 Cameroon."

Lekunze's assumption is partially commendable in that  
 as an African and prince who was personally and directly  
 affected by the ethnocentric attitude of the early Swiss-  
 German Basel missionaries in the Cameroon, he still  
 vehemently defended his status as a native Cameroonian.

Most of the rejected elements of African culture were  
 later incorporated in Western culture. African artifacts,  
 for example, were condemned in Africa by white imperialists  
 but carried away to their museums in Europe. A typical  
 example is that of the Ethiopian "Glory of the King" or the  
Kebra Nagast. This was a sacred book which contained  
 commentaries on centuries old Ethiopian tradition. The

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Edward Forcha Lekunze, "Chieftaincy and Christianity  
 in Cameroon: An Historical and Comparative Analysis of the  
 Evangelistic Strategy of the Basel Mission," (dissertation)  
 Chicago: Lutheran School of Theology, 1987.

23

Ibid.

Ethiopians treasured the Kebra Nagast for, among other things, the tracing of the origin of the Ethiopian royal house of King Solomon. The book was believed to have been written at the beginning of the 14th Century. This much revered book was carried away to England in 1868 by British scholar, Sir Robert Napier. A.H. Jones and Elizabeth Monroe in their report that the Ethiopian Emperor John IV would not let go his country's soul to the white man. In effect, he wrote in 1872 to Lord Grenville, the British leader urging him to return the book to the Ethiopian King:

There is a book called Kebra Nagast which contains the law of the whole of Ethiopia and the names of the princes and churches and provinces are in the book. I pray you will find out who has this book and send it to me, for in my country my people will not obey my orders without it.<sup>24</sup>

Further, African folk healing, which was condemned as dead superstition has been respected, recognized and incorporated as a branch of the World Council of Churches, the Christian Medical Commission for holistic health and affiliated to the World Health Organization.

But, the other side of the argument raises some pertinent questions about Lekunze's education and theological rationale for this defense. Reading through his

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Jones A.H. and E. Monroe, A History of Ethiopia (New York: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 20.



research work and evaluating the work of the early Basel missionaries in the Cameroon from 1886 to 1957, one questions what that missed opportunity must have been. Educationally, many schools and colleges were opened and many Cameroonians (including this Presbyterian pastor) were trained. Medical work was carried out and the quality of the people's life was improved, the life span increased, and the mortality rate reduced. An attempt was made to exterminate certain obnoxious beliefs like witchcraft and sorcery, magic, and divination.

It is true, as a Christian Church "historian", Lekunze is drawing material for his discourse from various sources of church history; but what really is at the stake of his opinion about the Swiss-German missionaries is an absence of comparative analysis of the early Christian Missionary work of the three main line denominations -- (the Baptists, the Roman Catholics and the Basel Missions). Comparative reflections on their evangelistic works would reveal that neither the Baptists, nor the Roman Catholics, let alone the Basel Missions, trusted the sincerity of traditional rulers' request for Christianity.

There is a flaw in the scholarship of most of the so-called African princes, and this is an absence of objectivity in discussions of chieftaincy and early Christianity in Africa. The tendency is always to advocate neo-Caesaro-papism and Tsarism in Africa. Such an

inadvertent attitude fabricates a complex chain of effects such as political subservience of the Church without spiritual power as it becomes identified with the country's national feeling, inactive religious life that is reduced to symbols, rituals and routine activities. The purpose of educating the African clergy is to obliterate shallowness and enable them to bring about religious reconstruction. A seasoned scholar and a spiritually convinced individual stands up and steps forward boldly and deplors certain ills of the society and reconciles secular cultures with the dynamic transforming light of God's Word. This venture is a counterweight to the ideological anaemia of traditionalism which some African prince-scholars persuasively advocate or support. Parenthetically, a clergy who aspires to the scholastic rank, but fails to renounce his egocentricity lapses into an insurmountable dichotomy of empty intellectualism and defective spirituality.

But, without retrieving the accusation that white Christian missionaries were disseminators of their culture, they were evidently guilty of religious perpetration and cultural insensitivity. Most of this was carried out through their denominational teachings instead of emphasizing the redemptive news contained in the Bible. Exclusive effort was exercised on doctrinal quarrels. The Roman Catholics emphasized seven sacraments, veneration of Saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary, rituals, and the rigid

tradition of hierarchy. The Basel Missions were loosely liberal, holding firm onto no specific doctrine. The Baptists stressed Baptism by immersion as the only way to salvation. Christianity in the Cameroon was fragmently standing on sandy soil.

Some of the Christian Missions, particularly the Roman Catholics, were filially subservient to colonial authorities. They carried the cross and the Bible and followed the flag. Mission schools and hospitals might have been fertile nurseries for spiritual nurturing and growth had Christianity not become a mere routine once a week activity. Most of the native converts, Christian clergymen, teachers, and mission workers were coerced into Christianity to get what they wanted such as jobs, positions and a good quality of life. Their spiritual foundation remained unshaken, their past lives unaffected, and their religious outlook unaltered.

On the other hand, the early Christian missionaries deserve some commendation. Educationally, intellectual giants were produced by the Roman Catholics out of Sasse College in Buea and jointly by the Baptists and the Basel Mission out of Bali College (CPC) in Bamenda. Teachers were produced in mission teacher training colleges. Medically, an onslaught was launched against diseases. There was a prevalence of dedication, selflessness, generosity and deep concern for human life and dignity in Mission hospitals and social service centers. A shining example is the Roman

Catholic center for handicapped children opened in the Cameroon by Cardinal Leger of Montreal in 1963.<sup>24</sup>

It can be summed up in the words of John S. Mbiti that:

Christianity from western Europe and North America has come to Africa, not simply carrying the Gospel of the New Testament, but as a complex phenomenon made up of western culture, politics, science, technology, medicine, schools and new methods of conquering nature. 25

But, despite all these commendable achievements of the early foreign Christian Missions, it is doubtful if they knew the difference between Christianity as a religion of misinterpretation and misapplication and the Gospel as a revolutionary force.

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Bernard Fonlon, An Open Letter to the Bishops of Buea and Bamenda (Buea: Catholic Information Service, 1973), pp. 20-21.

25

John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1970), p. 283.

## CHAPTER II

### A DESCRIPTIVE COMMENTARY ON THE MAJOR CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS

Throughout history, religion has contributed positively and negatively to human life: It has united and divided, freed and enslaved peoples, it has inspired some of the noblest creations of the human spirit, and has ruthlessly destroyed entire civilizations; it has elicited fanatical allegiance and received relentless criticism from representatives of the poor, the wealthy, the illiterate and the learned. ...it has provided comprehensive systems of thought and behavior, which affect everything else in life and which appeal to both mind and emotions. ... philosophical, political, and economic systems have been erected which define themselves in opposition to religion. ...the role of religion in human life has been more central and more pervasive than that of any other form of culture. 1

Chapter One indicated that the unique importance of the Cameroon does not just lie in its being a thematic Third World country, but more in its geographical location. This sparsely populated West African country was known to

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History and Literature of Religion (Evanston, 1984).

the world beyond Africa since ancient times. As revealed by an inscription on a metal plate discovered in a Carthaginian temple, Carthaginian sailors visited Cameroon in about 500 B.C. Among these visitors was a Hanno, the son of Hamilkar. It was discovered on the metal plate that Hanno visited Amba Bay in Limbe when he was on one of his journeys to the west coast of Africa.

There is evidence that the Portuguese seamen and traders established trade links with the natives along the west coast of Africa long before the slave trade and colonialism. In addition to the evidence on the metal plate, one discovers that most of the names of the inhabitants along the west coast of Africa sound Portuguese and the name "Cameroon" is itself evidence of Portuguese presence. When the Portuguese arrived in Cameroon around the 15th Century with the intent of establishing permanent trade links, they saw at the mouth of the Wuri River many red crabs (prawns) called cameroes in Portuguese. They named the river "Rio dos Cameroes" which means river of prawns.

<sup>2</sup> When this small west African country was colonized by Germans, British and French respectively, this generic name suffered distortion. The Germans spelt it Kamerun, the British called it Cameroons and the French

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<sup>2</sup> Werner Keller, The History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, Cameroon: (Presbook Printing Department, 1969), p. 1.

spelt it Cameroun, and today it is called Cameroon. While it is neither German, British, French, or Portuguese in spelling, it still sounds Portuguese.

The topography of Cameroon partly made the penetration of foreign religions (Islam and Christianity) easy because of its geographical features such as highlands, with Mount Cameroon as an example, and lakes facilitated missionary activities.

This chapter provides a descriptive commentary on the main line Christian denominations that came to the Cameroon. These were the Protestants and the Roman Catholics. The Protestants were made up of the Basel Mission out of which the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon emerged, the American Presbyterians which today are affiliated to the PCC, the French Protestants, and the English Baptists. The Roman Catholics were represented by the Jesuits. The dates 1835, the arrival of the English Baptist Missionary Society, and 1884, the arrival of the Basel Mission are historically significant for the beginning of foreign Christian work in the Cameroon; but the beginnings were turbulent. The turbulence was caused by various problems from within and from without with which the various denominations had to grapple.

There were conflicts among the missionaries themselves. Colonial authorities and imperial financiers

were unscrupulously uncompromising and unco-operating. They were too authoritarian and exploitative. The natives, too, in various ways, repelled the new religion, Christianity, and colonial rule. Consequently, the first part of the Christian era in Africa, in general, and in the Cameroon, in particular, was full of crises.

The first phase of the Christian era, 1835-1914, in the Cameroon, as it was elsewhere on the African continent, was tumultuous. In trying to carry out what missionaries called evangelization among the heathen and pagan societies, they encountered resistance from the natives. The natives, after having welcomed the new religion without being aware of its controversial implications, began to realize that the religion was an arm of colonialism or an organization designed to disseminate or impose the white man's culture. European Christianity in Africa also experienced a setback because there was interference and opposition by the Europeans themselves, especially business people. European Christianity as an agent of spreading Western culture failed because it received no active co-operation from the colonial governments.

#### The English Baptist Missionary Society:

Problems and obstacles did not put an end to European Christianity in Africa. In any event, it persisted amid opposition. In a catalog form, five factors of adventure, trade, slavery, colonialism and Christian missions



motivated Europeans and Americans to venture overseas into Africa. 1845 has been verified by Christian Church historians like Keller as the beginning date of foreign Christian Missions in the Cameroon.<sup>3</sup> The pioneer was a protestant missionary, Alfred Saker. He was sent by the English Baptist Missionary Society. He began his African missionary work in the Spanish Island near the Cameroon. This island was discovered in 1471 by the Portuguese, Fernao do Pao and named after him as Fernando Po before it was ceded to Spain in 1782. In 1841 two missionaries, G.K. Prince, a medical doctor and the Reverend John Clark, both missionaries from Jericho, Jamaica in the Caribbean, sailed on board a trading vessel to Fernando Po. These people were missionaries among the freed slaves in Jamaica.

At the urging of some ardent freed slave Christians that the Gospel message should be taken to their ancestral continent, Africa, these freed slaves were sent to survey the possibilities of mission work on the coast of West Africa. It was indeed possible. Some of the Jamaican freed slaves who had been educated by Christian missions, particularly the Baptists, in both religious and secular education which became a sine qua non in their formation, accompanied the white missionaries to Africa. Being moved

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<sup>3</sup>

Ibid., p.2

by deep concern and burning compassion for their ancestral land and gentry, they wished to take the Gospel back to Africa to revive the religious life of the brethren of their pedigree. Keller underscores a very important point when he states:

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Baptist Mission in Jamaica, the freed African slaves, many of whom still remembered the homes from which they came, had the ardent wish to convey the Gospel to the country of their fathers. Therefore the ...missionaries were sent to Fernando Po to investigate the possibility of mission work on the West coast of Africa. 4

The West Indies, as it was called in the era of Slave Trade, and the Caribbean, as this region is called today, has had a unique history of sending Christian missions to the West coast of Africa. As it can be deduced from the forequoted statement, the Caribbean region was the home board of African brothers (freed slaves) returning to Africa as Christian missionaries. Bishop Samuel Ajai Crowther who worked in Nigeria and a host of others all came from the Caribbean.

The quoted statement of Keller contains two points worthy of comment. "...many...still remembered the homes from which they came, (and) had the ardent wish to convey

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Ibid., p. 3.

the Gospel to the country of their fathers." Why? It must be noted that these were not the first nor the second generation African slaves. Some of them might have been children of the second and perhaps third generation slaves.

A historical insight into the Anglo-American and the Latin American slave and race relations and treatments during the period of slavery reveals staggering differences between the former (Anglo-American) and the latter (Latin American) slave dealers in their different concepts of the institution of slavery. Whereas the Anglo-Americans' attitude towards the African slaves was harsh, filled with stringent rules, isolation, arbitrary separation of families, and efforts to dehumanize the Africans, Latin Americans aimed at building up the slave society of various ethnic elements with the result that a unique group resulted from the intermingling of Europeans, Africans and Amerindians.

In a word, Anglo-American slave societies were an earthly hell; but the Latin America's was a crucial paradise. This suggests that in Latin America and the Caribbean miscegenation was extensive with less evidence of bigotry and discrimination than it was in the Anglo-American slave plantations. Puerto Rico and Jamaica were

among these liberal slave societies in Latin  
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 America and in the Caribbean.

Some evidence of this free intermingling was that the slaves were still able to remember their homes of origin after several generations had passed. Slave children grew up with their parents. They listened to their parents as they told ancestral stories. They played cultural games and practised their ancestral religions. This was not the case in the Anglo-American slave societies. These Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean were slaves in status, but free socio-psychologically. Added to this was the slaves' access to educational opportunities and not mere mediocre literacy. Genuine education liberates a whole being. It liberates a person's outlook on life. Genuine education also activates deep concern and passion for helping other people to improve upon their own quality of life. These Jamaican missionaries who became missionaries to Africa were not mere paternalistic philanthropists who set out to serve humanity for humanity's sake, but compatior cum passus sum.

Afro-Caribbean freed slaves were not only enthusiastic about introducing Christianity to their ancestral land, Africa, they were also engaged in recruiting missionaries

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Robert Brent Toplin ed., Slavery and Race Relations in Latin America (Greenwood Press, 1976), p. 3.

to Africa. A bright example of recruiting missionaries was the Reverend Joseph Merrick. Like Cardinal Leger of Montreal, Canada, who resigned his seat and went to the Cameroon and built a unique center for the handicapped children. Joseph Merrick left his large parish at Jerricho, Jamaica with many pastoral administrative amenities and went to England to evangelize and recruit for missionary work in Africa.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. Merrick's mission was successful in that Alfred Saker, Dr. and Mrs. Prince and Mr. Alexander Christian Fuller and Mr. and Mrs. Clarke left England and accompanied Merrick and his wife in July 1843 to Fernando Po, West Africa. More freed persons from Jamaica volunteered and went to West Africa, some as missionary clergy and others as Christian settlers. Archival records indicate that there were 42 missionaries including children and wives. Alfred Saker became leader of the English Baptist Missionary Society in active Christian Mission work in Africa. The English Baptists in addition to preaching and teaching the word of God and healing the sick engaged in training young Africans in tent-making (trade education) ministry. A group of ardent and philanthropic Christians in England supplied Sakar in Fernando Po with a printing press in 1848.

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Bernard Fonlon, An Open Letter to the Bishops of Buea and Bamenda (Buea: Catholic Information Service, 1973), p. 20.

It should be recalled that this West African Island, Fernando Po, was discovered by the Portuguese sailor, Fernao do Pao after whom it was named and that it was later ceded to Spain and its name changed to Santa Isabel. The British Government obtained permission in 1827 from the Spanish Government to form a settlement for a naval squadron; but no sooner had agreement been made than problems developed between the Spanish Government and the British, particularly the English Baptist Missionary Society. December 25, 1845 was ominous to the Protestant mission in Fernando Po in that the Spanish Consul-General arrived in the Island as the Spanish emissary. The Spanish Government had instructed him to ask the Protestant mission to leave the Island, unless the Church refrained from preaching the Gospel. The Consul, however, because of his personal impression of the good work of the Protestant missionaries here, handled the matter discreetly. Instead of making them leave immediately, the Church organization was given one year to leave. Furthermore, the Consul asked the Baptist Church to allow one missionary and two teachers to remain at Clarence, Fernando Po to continue with mission work indefinitely.

But, again, the Baptist Mission was threatened in 1856 by a Spanish bishop and several priests. They claimed that they were instructed by the Spanish Government to expell the Protestant missionaries from Fernando Po. The order was

ineffective since it was not backed by evident authority from the Spanish Government. The real Baptist expulsion took place on May 22, 1858, two years after the Roman Catholic priests had returned to Spain to obtain official authority to expell the Protestant mission. Don Carlos Chacon, a Spanish squadron Commander and Governor General, arrived in Clarence Cove, Fernando Po, accompanied by six Jesuit priests. They banned Protestantism in Fernando Po with the explanation that Roman Catholicism was the exclusive religion to be practiced. The Protestant last public church worship was on May 27th and after this day worship was carried out secretly in small groups. To be adamant on the issue, Carlos Chacon declared the position of the Spanish Government, saying:

Don Carlos Chacon, Knight of the Military Order of San Hermengildo, Captain of Frigate in the Spanish Navy, Commander of Her Catholic Majesty's Squadron in the Islands of Fernando Po, Annobon, and Corisco, Governor General of all the said Islands, etc, makes known to all,

1. The religion of this colony is that of the Roman Catholic Church as the only in the Kingdom of Spain, with the exclusion of any other; and no other religious profession to be tolerated or allowed, but that made by the missionaries of the aforesaid Catholic religion.

2. Those who profess any other religion which be not the Catholic should confine their worship within their own private houses or families and limit it to the members thereof.
3. Mr. Lynslager is appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the colony until the resolution of Her Majesty The Queen of Spain.
4. All the other bye-laws and regulations for the good government and order of this colony which are not contrary to those enacted this day will remain in full rigour until further orderings.

Given under my hand and seal, on board of Her Majesty's vessel BALBOA, this twenty-seventh day of May, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-eight.

Yours,

7

Carlos Chacon

The Spanish Roman Catholic-English Protestant controversies in Fernando Po foreshadowed Roman Catholic-Protestant ecclesiastical loggerheads in the Cameroon. Since the tides of Protestant missionary work in Fernando Po were ebbing, the missionaries Joseph Merrick and Alfred Sakar in particular, soon began to look for different

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Werner Keller, The History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon., p.3.



missionary fields to till and sow the seed of the Gospel. Merrick accompanied in England a trader to Bimbia, Cameroon. After his arrival in Bimbia, he met with King William, a person of great influence. William was not very keen in receiving Merrick because he was afraid of the Portuguese slave-dealers who were in Cameroon.

Merrick withdrew and promised to return. He returned to the Cameroon in 1844 and opened the first Baptist Mission station in Bimbia. At first it seemed a good place, but it was soon discovered to be a very unhealthy location for settlement. Most of the missionaries here were always sick. Some died. Furthermore, the people of Bimbia, especially the Isubu ethnic groups resisted the new religion -- Christianity.

Merrick did not give up. He devised other means to evangelize the people of Bimbia. He learnt the Isubu language in order to tell the Gospel stories to the people in their own language. He condescended to the people's level by living with them in their huts and ramshackle houses. He started a school hoping that through education the people's ignorance might be ventilated. The first people who responded and became Christians were Mrs.

Cooper, Clara and her son, Richard and later, Richard Kofele Njuma Ngomba became the first Cameroonian teacher from the Isubu ethnic group.

The Reverend Joseph Merrick had perceived and planned full-scale missionary work among the Isubu people. Through his appeal in Europe for philanthropic assistance to the Cameroon, Christian friends in Scotland and Norfolk, a printing press was donated for Christian work in Bimbia. It arrived at Fernando Po harbor on February 18, 1849. This was the first printing press in Cameroon. Merrick started to use the printing press immediately. He started first with the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the first Book of the Bible, Genesis and Bible stories, all in the Isubu language. He also started training Cameroonians in practical work, thus, introducing the idea of industrial mission in the Cameroon and it has come to stay. But, very unfortunately, the Reverend Joseph Merrick's missionary work was cut short by an unexpected event. He was seriously taken sick and consequently forced by this mishap to leave Africa for Britain. He left on October 22, 1849, but died on board the ship.

Joseph Merrick's death was a great loss to the English Baptist Missionary Society. This did not, however, stop mission work. The Bimbia mission work was taken over and continued by Mr. and Mrs. Newbegin. But, it seemed this missionary society was either cursed by the Spanish

Government in Fernando Po or Bimbia was the white man's grave. Newbegin did not work for one year when he succeeded Merrick. He, too, died suddenly in 1850.

Newbegin was succeeded by Joseph Jackson Fuller. But even though Fuller was known as one of the most famous missionaries in the Cameroon, Protestant mission work at Bimbia still declined. Two factors were responsible for this decline of Christian work here. The climate of Bimbia was very unhealthy for the missionaries. The natives also fled the place, because they were threatened by the obsessive belief in and fear of witchcraft. Saker, who was the leader of this missionary team, transferred Mr. and Mrs. Fuller to Douala. He took the printing press with him. The native teacher was asked to remain at Bimbia and continue with school work. By 1870 the last English Baptist Christians resettled at Victoria, now Limbe, when it was founded by Saker in 1858.

Saker's missionary work in Douala was promising. He lived with King Akwa of Douala. He studied the Douala language just as Merrick did among the Isubu people. His aim was to translate the Gospel and to prepare school books in the Douala language. He had also aimed to train the young men of Douala as artisans; but King Akwa and the natives were not interested in learning any trade. A school was built at Bell-town. A magnificent Church, Bethel was built and a school was also built at Akwatown. Saker

baptized the first convert on November 8, 1848, after solemnizing his marriage three months before.

The most praise-worthy aspect of Saker's mission and ecclesiastic work lies in the fact that even though he was not a trained theologian, he succeeded more than any single missionary in Africa. This talented British missionary was born on July 21, 1814, in Kent, England. He was the son of a millwright and engineer. The family's lack of money deterred his education and so he dropped out of school at the age of ten. The shortest and cheapest route to education available to him was to take up his father's trade. He self-tutored by reading several books.

Saker's extraordinary spiritual conviction and administrative shrewdness, astounding ingenuity and anthropological understanding of life, and ability to adapt cross-culturally pose the question whether a people needs special, particularly theological education, in order to effect religious reconstruction? There are no and yes answers to this question. The answer would be no if one took Alfred Saker as an example; but this instance is certainly in the minority. Such people are not only few, but they are rare. It is more evident to say yes, otherwise, theological and secular education is an unnecessary luxury. Biblically, according to Acts 17:11-12, enlightening the mind ventilates religious ignorance, provides for a religious insight, and ascertains spiritual confidence. Acts 17:11-12.

Saker's stay and work in Africa was of such good report that it attracted attention in Europe. In his last ecclesiastical furlough, he received many applications in Europe from people who wanted to go to Africa as missionaries. After carefully screening several of them and after serious prayerful consideration, he selected Reverend Grenfell. Grenfell was considered to be of congenial spirit and zeal, of youthful vim and vigor. Saker believed that Grenfell could succeed him since his (Saker's) health had terribly deteriorated. He (Saker) died on March 13th 1880. Meanwhile, prior to his death, he, in his last public address to the delegates of the board of the Home Churches in Glasgow, expressed deep concern for the African in these words:

If the African is a brother, should we not give him some of our bread and a draught of our water? Oh, that I had another life to go out there. The field is white there and the multitudes are in darkness still. 8

The English Baptist Missionary Society with its network of missionaries from the West Indies, Europe and Africa was instrumental in transplanting Christianity from Europe and America via Fernando Po to the Cameroon. It was not a religion with a dominant Christocentric Message, but a Christianity of a complex phenomenon comprising visible

elements of Western culture such as politics, science and medicine, technology and communications. The pioneer champion was Alfred Saker. One European, David Livingstone, a young Scottish doctor, explorer and missionary, who worked in Africa and concentrated in East Africa talked very commendably of Saker thus:

Take it all in all, specially having regard to its many sided character, the work of Alfred Saker at Cameroons and Victoria is, in my judgement, the most remarkable on the African coast. 9

Although the first phase of the mission work of the English Baptist Missionary Society on the West African coast was tumultuous, its forty-two years of active Christian work did bear much secular and ecclesiastical dividends; because of one major factor, namely that Saker and his team were actively engaged in educating the Africans in various ways and providing them with opportunities to enjoy worship and fellowship which are the twin fundamental elements of real Christian living. But, as 1845 was a date of nightmares to this church organization in Fernando Po, so was the date 1884 fateful to it in the Cameroon; for the annexation of the Cameroon by Germany meant the ousting of British, and so it was.

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Ibid., p. 8.

The Basel Mission:

Whether the coming of the English Baptists to the Cameroon was by design or default, only destiny could say with certainty. Some historians maintain that this church organization represented by Alfred Saker moved to the Cameroon de facto of its expulsion from Fernando Po. The church organization became a shepherd in the hope of ra'ah and to rule the Christian exiles here. These exiles were considered migrant workers from the Cameroon to Fernando Po. They returned to their country, Cameroon, after their religious organization, the Baptist Church, was banned in Fernando Po.

On the other extreme are historians like Keller who post-prophecy that whether the Baptist Church was defunct in Fernando Po or not, it was to eventually expand to the Cameroon and beyond to the entire west coast of Africa. This group of historians persuasively substantiate their stand with three points. They argue that since Fernando Po is only twenty miles away from the Cameroon, it could be considered as the island's closest neighbor as compared to England which is thousands of miles away. They maintain that whether Joseph Merrick, Saker and their team mates transferred their mission work to the Cameroon or not, Baptistism was to be transplanted in the Cameroon by the Cameroonians, themselves, who were migrant workers in Fernando Po. Finally, the evangelistic vision of this

church organization was towards the whole of West Africa and not just towards Fernando Po. Whatever the case, as in psalms 122:8, this missionary church was inspired and filled with the holy ghost to venture abroad limitlessly to provide spiritual pasture to the sheep (Christians) and to allow them to graze unscared as the shepherds kept vigil in a healthy atmosphere of personal companionship.

The English Baptist Missionary Society was the "infant child," born in the 18th Century of Puritanism in Great Britain into the family of Pietism on the continent of Europe. These were religious organizations which were composed of devout Protestants. Many Puritans from Great Britain and Pietists from Europe grouped themselves together and called themselves "Pilgrim Fathers" who were in search of religious freedom. The British colonies America was the new haven, the "Promised Land" they envisioned.

Just as the British Evangelical revival (the Baptist Missionary Society) emerged from Puritanism in the eighteenth century, so the Basel Mission emerged from Pietism in Germany fifteen years after. But, whereas, the English Baptist Missionary society owed its traditional allegiance to Puritanism, which claimed patronage by making regulations for the denomination, the Basel Mission was not ecclesiastically controlled except by the state which



controlled it as though it was a secular organization. For example, this church organization was subservient in its attitude. The Government of the southern German state of Wurttemberg in 1743 issued the Pietist Rescript, guaranteeing Pietists immunity from persecution only if they remained within the confines of the secular government prescriptions. Because this Pietistic movement had become a semi-state religious group, the government assisted it by collecting from all taxable citizens, whether they were Christians or not, a portion of their incomes as a church contribution (tax). This money was used for the administration of the Protestant Church, known as the Basel Mission church organization.

That was one of the reasons why the Protestant Church in Germany, particularly in Wurttemberg, grew large and influential. Sub-groups emerged from this group of Pietists. There was, for example, the German Society for the Promotion of Christianity formed in Basel in 1780. Its primary objective was to publish Christian literature. It was formed by a group of devout Christians. These German groups of revivalists made contacts with the British Baptist Missionary Society to build up a network of the Christian faith. From this German Pietistic movement emerged the Basel Mission in 1815 with its headquarters in Basel. Its first president was the Reverend Nicolaus Von Brunn and its first director was C.G. Blumhardt.

The first intention of the Pietists was to educate their missionaries before sending them abroad. A college was opened to train missionaries. Students were admitted in 1816. The first students graduated after four years of studies. Some began missionary work in the United States and southern Russia where there were many German emigrants. On an ecumenical basis and to give a world vision of Christian unity, the English Church Missionary Society began in the early part of the 19th Century to recruit missionaries from other Protestant church organizations, particularly from Germany, for mission work in Africa. Some of the famous early missionaries were Samuel Gobat, the missionary to Ethiopia. Gobat did good in this part of Africa and became the second Anglican Bishop of the Jerusalem Church. J. L. Krapf and his colleague, J. Rebmann, worked in East Africa for many years. It is believed that they were the first Europeans to see the snow cover the highest mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro, in East Africa. This claim is geographically unverifiable, especially as the continent of Africa is in the tropics. J.G. Pfander specialized in evangelization among the Muslims in Africa. It is not historically evident if his interest and concern to convert Muslims to Christians was successful. W.S. Koelle and J.F. Schon worked in Sierra Leone as missionaries of the Church Missionary Society. They concentrated on the study of African cultures. No

specific area of concentration is mentioned but it could be conjectured that they were interested in the West African linguistics for Paul Jenkins mentions that:

Koelle collected one of the first vocabularies of Cameroonian languages from the freed slaves of Cameroonian origins he met in Sierra Leone. 10

It could be said with certainty that the Basel mission introduced to the idea of evangelization by the English Missionary Church Society before it (the BM) began to plan its own missionary work. It is also important to note that whereas the former was a church organization with parishes and an ecclesiastical administrative setting permanently located in its local society to shepherd indigenous people, the latter (the Basel Mission) was an evangelical society. Its primary concern was to spread the Word of God in various ways.

The Basel Mission made several attempts to evangelize the Russian Empire, but failed. Its fifteen years of missionary work in Russia was futile. Its missionaries were finally expelled from Russia by the Russian Tsar. This last "straw" made the church shake off the dust from its feet and go somewhere else. At this time, attention was turned to money concentrated on India, China, and West Africa. The

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Nyansako-ni-Nku, ed. The Pioneers: A Century Picture Book (Yaounde: Buma Kor and Co., Publishers, 1986), p. 14.

official beginning date of the Basel Mission's missionary work in India is 1834. A full scale missionary work was undertaken in southern India. The regions of missionary concentration included the Indian states of Karnataka and Kerala. Two main Indian languages such as Kannada and Malayalam were used for preaching and teaching. By 1913, there were already 196 missionaries of the Basel Mission in India working in parishes, industries, and schools. This information is incomplete because it leaves many questions unanswered. It is, for example, not clear if this number included the wives and children of the missionaries. It also is not clear if this number was made up of the ordained clergy and the laity; and finally, it is not clear whether this was the number of resident missionaries at the time of census or an overall picture of the Basel Mission, including those who had served here and left.

The presence of the Basel Mission in India was significant, especially its industrial mission. Industrial activities served two purposes. It was a practical demonstration by the Church that God also cares for the material welfare of believers, and it also redefined the status of and rehabilitated the Indian castes who had lost their occupations by becoming Christians. From a non-spiritual perspective, the success or failure of a Christian Mission could be measured statistically and in a material sense this could, at times, be misleading for

this is not synonymous to spiritual conviction and growth.

China was another missionary field of the Basel Mission in Asia. A mission station was opened in Hong Kong and in today's Guangdong province where evangelistic attention was paid to the conversion of Asian peasants, especially the Hakka speaking people. This church organization faced opposition to its mission work in China. The opposition came from two main directions. Secondly, Asia was already dominated by other religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, each with an enormous and advanced literature and teaching.<sup>11</sup>

Another important continent for the Basel Mission's Christian work was Africa, specifically Ghana and the Cameroon. Africa in the mind of the white man was proverbially a dark continent void of a history that could attract attention and command international respect. The stereotyped stories were derogatory ones that conjured up humorous images about the continent such as those about jungle and savage life in which Africans were projected as sub-humans. Africans were imagined to be sub-humans lived and ate with monkeys and as people who were submerged in beliefs known in Europe as animism, witchcraft, and superstitions.

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11

Huston Smith, The Religions of Man (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1965), pp. 14, 90, 160.

As a motivation, the missionaries were not going to Africa to share with the Africans their exposure to and experience in the Christian testimony and its life style; but to bring out a heathen race from darkness and transform it into the Western life patterns. They were pre-occupied with ideas such as "white supremacy", "the white man's burden", and "civilizing missions". For three reasons, this was not the Basel Mission's concept about the Asian continent: India and China. Germans have often believed that Asians are of Aryan (Germanic) origins and evidently, therefore, they are of a brotherhood. The Basel Missionaries believed they were taking Christianity to a people of their own descent. This idea was defective in that it precluded Christianity from its dynamics and universality. This belief would presuppose Christianity as a cultural religion to the Asians. Secondly, the Basel missionaries hoped and trusted that Christianity was an effective tool to obliterate the hostile religious factions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism, which Asiatic peoples were entangled in and deprived of the benefits of a more civilizing religion. And thirdly, the missionaries did not consider it appropriate to take rudimentary education to the Indians and the Chinese. For although different in the ways of civilization, they believed Asians were already

a sophisticated people. They were steeped in Confucian classics encouraged by the philosophical Qianlong Emperor who ruled China from 1736 to 1796 A.D.<sup>12</sup>

European opinion about and underestimation of Africa was erroneously sanctimonious. The Basel Mission, in particular, soon realized the folly of its distorted missionary vision when its attempt to bring Aryan Christianity to Liberia failed in the 1820s.

Two things could be conjectured as the main causes of the Basel Missionary failure in Liberia. First, the Germans had cultural superiority complex. Egocentrically, they were deluded into believing that they were of Aryan descent, a superior race and were commissioned ethnologically to spread it by the use of Christian missions. When they entered Africa, they staged an onslaught on African culture and traditional practices with the intent to exterminate them. There were unanticipated effects of this. First, Africans, especially traditionalists, resisted Christianity and remained active in the corpus of their cultural life. Secondly, some decided to be "lip-service" Christians while they secretly remained traditionalists or chose to live without religion.

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12

Doak A. Barnett and Ralph N. Clough ed., Modernizing China: Post-Mao Reform and Development (London: Westview Press, 1986), p. 9.

Early on, most of the Basel Mission's missionaries sent to Asia, India, China were highly educated people theologically, secularly and technologically. The explanation was that Asian society was sophisticated because of the controversial teachings of opposing religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism which stressed attention to metaphysics and philosophy, mysticism and the sciences. There is no convincing evidence that Asia was converted by this material approach of the missions.

White missionary attitude towards African traditional ways of life stirred up resentment in the Africans and provoked unpalatable controversies even among the different Christian missionaries themselves. This state of affairs raised several pertinent theological questions. On what theological rationale were the Christian missionaries standing as they condemned African culture? Were African ways of living condemnable because they conflicted with western culture? Were the missionaries just being mean? How strong and genuine was the missionary explanation that the African was not yet truly converted from his pagan life? Did the missionaries deplore African cultural life because it destroyed the African spiritually? Or, were the missionaries suffering from ignorance, puffed up with their own cultural pride, and deluded in their holier than thou concept of Christianity?



Evidently, overriding cultural arrogance was a Euro-phobia. It became an obstacle to Christian missions in Africa and exposed white Christianity to ridicule. Such an ethno-weakness was one of the potent causes of the Basel mission's failure in Liberia in the 1820s; but there was another not less important factor that hindered the Basel Mission from carrying out missionary work in Liberia.

It was an unfortunate coincidence that the Basel Mission entered Liberia at the time when there was a strong wave of a new sect of Christianity from America called the religion of returning brothers. Liberia became a slave resettlement following the abolition of slavery in the early 19th Century. Most of the liberated slaves were Christian fanatics with a slave plantation type of Christian worship. These blacks had developed and practised a unique form of Christianity called the Negro Spiritual. It was neither white nor African in outlook even though it contained some elements of African religions. The blaze of this new Christianity was fanned on by Allen Richard's newly formed African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Born in 1760 into a first generation slave family on a southern plantation, Allen Richard grew up partly immersed in the paradigm of African traditional religions and partly initiated into Anglo-American Christianity. Thus, when Calvinism predominated the north and emphasized Bible reading and early education as a preparation for salvation,

Methodism in the south favored gathering of wealth and cultural distinctiveness.

Allen grew up in this southern plantation culture and became a secessionist, generally following the practices of white racism. He and other black Americans were members of Saint George Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia in Pennsylvania which was discriminatory. Whites sat in front and blacks sat in the balcony. On one historical Sunday morning church service, Allen and Absolam Jones were kneeling in prayer in the section which whites termed the "wrong" section of the church for blacks. They were ordered to move to the "right" section.

The black worshippers were outraged. They left the church and formed in 1787 their own church known as A.M.E. Church, African Methodist Episcopal Church. It was recognized officially in 1816.<sup>13</sup>

But was the emergence of the African Methodist Episcopal Church by design or by default? Was it predestined to emerge by this process? To attempt answers to these questions is to lay a heavy weight on speculation it can be surmised from the reason for secession and the aim of its emergence that this church organization was a

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Carl F. Kaestle, Pillars of the Republic: Common School and American Society, 1780-1860 (New York: Hill and Wang Press, 1985), p. 3.

practical protest against historical discriminatory practices and white racism in America. As such, Afro-Americans wanted to establish their own goals, policies and remedies to the spiritual, socio-cultural needs of black people in America, Africa, the Islands of the Caribbean Sea.

The aim was to inculcate in the black people a sense of commitment towards liberating all blacks from the systematic oppression of white racism around the world, wherever black people live and suffer. Priority was given to education not only for the daily reading of and meditating on the Word of God, but also to ventilate black ignorance and raise black self-esteem on the platform of universal recognition and acceptance.

Allen's first land of missionary vision was Africa and specifically Liberia, where liberated slaves from America were rehabilitated. He led a team of missionaries to Liberia in 1820 and an evangelical crusade to other black communities around the world thereafter. The form of worship and evangelical approach, contact and socializing with the people were familiar and cordial. The religious tone and rhythm were experiential. The message, "New Life for All" was succinctly clear and concomitant to the Liberian cultural life. This produced far-reaching results. There was, for example, mass conversion and family religious initiation rites.

The Liberian community was experiencing a new religious phenomenon. The Basel Mission had just arrived in Liberia in the heat of this religious awakening. The missionaries had wished and hoped to take advantage of the new religious emphasis. They made several spasmodic attempts to attract attention, but failed because their evangelical approach was chauvinistic. The Christian teaching was full of internecine controversy. Did these Africans reject the message or the messengers or both?

The missionaries shook off the dust of cultural arrogance from their feet and left in 1828 to Ghana, formerly called the Gold Coast.

Christian missionary venture in Ghana was of its own peculiar phase of missiological history. Paul Jenkins, archivist of the Basel Mission House unequivocally explains:

The history of the Ghana Mission is one of stubborn determination on the one side and tragedy on the other. ...parties of missionaries were almost completely wiped out by illness. It was only in the 1840's that a new generation of missionaries and their wives (supported by a group of black Christian ex-slaves, especially brought over from the West Indies) could consolidate the

work. If you want to describe the work of the Basel Mission in Ghana before 1914 you need two sentences:

- They worked to build up a Christian village culture among the farmers of Southern Ghana.
- They also concentrated on building up Church life and education in the vernacular languages. 14

An earlier question in this chapter was whether the Liberians rejected the version of Christianity brought to them by the Basel Mission or they rejected the chauvinistic attitude of the messengers bearing the Message? From the above information by the archivist Jenkins, the answer is clear that Africans had been receptive to the Gospel Message so long as those bringing it have not put on a "holier than thou" attitude. The rule of a new "species" of Africans (ex-slaves from the West Indies) in neutralizing this point of white chauvinism in the Christian missionary venture in Africa is praise-worthy. The Basel mission's involvement in village culture and development in education and native linguistics in a Christian context with far-reaching effects points to the content of the Christian ethics which has been quoted by Hans Haselbarth

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Marcia M. Mathews Richard Allen (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1963), p. 35.

from Adrian Hastings thus:

A Christian vocation involves total commitment, a commitment to the seeking of Christ who is identical with the world in need: it involves the human solidarity which is at once service to others and a sharing in community; it involves recognizing that the world as it is today, or as it was in the time of Christ or at any intervening time, is so falsely shaped that it calls for radical dissociation and a revolutionary change. 15

Haselbarth continues to reiterate Hastings' position by adding that:

Conversion is a revolutionary change because it affects the social, political and economic dimension of man. Never before was there more wealth and poverty side by side, more bitterness, more war and domination of the haves over the have-nots. In such circumstances the Christian will gladly co-operate with those who demand their involvement to change and build a new order. 16

Two major factors marked a big difference between the Basel Mission's work in Liberia and the Mission's evangelical success in Ghana. In the former mission field, Christianity was presented as a Western European chauvinistic cultural movement to which neophytes could be initiated only if they forshook all of their cultural ways of living and adopted Western culture. This type of religion was fraught with unfamiliarities and became cause for resentment by the Africans.

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Nyansako-ni-Nku ed., The Pioneers: A Century Picture Book, p. 14.

16

Ibid. p. 152.

In the latter missionary field (Ghana), this mean attitude was avoided, especially by incorporating black missionaries (ex-slaves from the West Indies) into the missionary program. Whereas in Liberia, Christianity was presented as a religion of much talking but with little doing, in Ghana it was introduced as a revolutionary force in which the Christ-reality met the realities of the Ghanaian world. In other words, Christianity was presented to the Ghanaians as a religion of practical day to day living theology. Ghanaians were taught modern ways of farming and new crops, such as cocoa were introduced to and increase the productivity of their economy.

Furthermore, this missionary society nationalized itself in Ghana and championed secular education from primary, through secondary, to teacher training schools, and a junior theological seminary. The missionaries utilized Ghanaian major ethnic vernacular languages. Missionaries J.G. Christaller and J. Zimmermann were in the forefront of this missionary enterprise.

They built up vernacular dictionaries of the Twi and Ga-Adangme languages which are still extensively used today in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. It should be recalled that the Basel mission entered the Gold Coast, now Ghana in 1828 and handed over ecclesiastical and secular responsibilities to indigenous Ghanaians in 1926 after 88 years of foreign missionary work. A new name, the "Presbyterian Church of Ghana," was adopted.

After Ghana, came Cameroon as the next West African country for the expansion of the Basel Mission's work. The main difference between the first two, Liberia and Ghana and Cameroon was that whereas the former were mission fields founded on the initiative, plan and determination of the Evangelical Missionary Society, the Basel Mission's adventure in the Cameroon was as a response to requests. Upon colonizing the Cameroon beginning in 1884, the German Government wanted German Christian Missions to evangelize German colonies. Unfortunately most German Christian Missions did not share this wish. In a conference organized by the German Missionary Societies in Bremen, Germany in October 1885, a request was made to the Basel Mission to begin Christian missionary work in the Cameroon. The Basel Mission's leadership was not excited by the request, especially as it came from a secular government. Dah has rightly located three reasons for such indifference. First, it was doubtful if the Home Board was going to unanimously



accept the invitation, especially as the hysteria raised by a high death rate of missionaries in the Gold Coast had not yet subsided. Furthermore, there was no guaranteed reason that the London Baptist Missionary Society which was already in the Cameroon since 1845 could be willing to hand over mission work to the Basel Mission. And finally, having emerged from a pietistic tradition, the Basel Mission suspected the motives of secular organization such as the German Empire's government overseas. The Basel Mission leadership asked for time to investigate into, examine, and study the intricate implications of the request.

Much time was invested in the study of the relationships between church and state, society and government. History played an important role to both parties. Negative memories of the causes of the French Revolution kept on waving a yellow flag to the Colman regime and to the Basel Mission. In effect, under the auspices of the Basel Mission in the Gold Coast, now Ghana, led by Ochler and Bohner and the German government, whose chancellor was Otto Von Bismark, attempts were made to formulate rules and regulations to guide both parties and guarantee autonomy to both sides. There were some safeguarding clauses. The German government was not to meddle in the ecclesiastical and secular administrative work of

the church, including its missionary outreach (expansion), parish structuring, and church involvement in both secular and Christian education. The Basel Mission was to take over the congregations, schools, and property of the London Baptist Missionary Society.

The Basel Mission Home Board was informed of the decision that she was to take over the Christian work of the London Baptist Missionary Society. On December 23, 1886, the Basel Mission dispatched missionaries Gottlieb Munz and his wife as leaders of the team because Munz had already been a Missionary for the Gold Coast. Also accompanying Munz were Christian Dilger, Johannes Bizer and Friedrich Becher. The Germans landed at Bonaku in Douala, Cameroon. Friedrich Becher died suddenly on December 27, 1886. His sudden death four days after the team's arrival in the Cameroon might have reminded the Basel Mission of its nightmare in the Gold Coast! But, they persevered in their mission. The Home Board encouraged the missionaries and hoisted two signs of a different Christian presence in the Cameroon: Mission trading center was opened and a mission hospital built at Bonaku, Douala.

No sooner had the Basel Mission begun to work in the Cameroons than it began to experience disturbing ecclesiastical and dogmatic, political and economic, social and cultural problems. Some of these problems came as a result of the Basel Mission's tactless approach to problems,

others as the church's deep concern for social justice, action to fight for the ignorant, the helpless, and the weak, and other problems whether from within or without came quite unexpected.

Having been intimidated and discouraged by abrupt and radical changes by a different religious organization, they yearned for a return to congregational autonomy, a pattern of church administration used by the English Baptist Missionary Society. But because the Basel Mission had insisted on conservative ecclesiastical and administrative uniformity, its evangelical influence began to decline as evident in the losing of converts, congregations and parishes, beginning with Bethel congregaton at Douala in 1888.

Unlike the English Baptist missionaries who used the English language in the Cameroon as a medium of preaching and teaching, the Basel Mission was interested in the use of indigenous dialects as a vehicle for preaching the Good News and teaching the natives. It was believed that since such a strategy had worked well in the Gold Coast, it was going to work, too, in the Cameroon. In the coastal region Douala was introduced and adopted as an official church language. In the Grassfield, Mungaka (Bali) was adopted.

Unfortunately, the idea was not welcome. Instead, it stirred up widespread bitter opposition and provoked accrimonious talks. Opposition ran rife for a number of reasons, namely that a knowledge of a particular ethnic

language was not useful for employment by the colonial imperialists. It also boosted the cultural ego of certain ethnic groups. And more, opposition was particularly high against Doula as the language of the cruel slave dealer. To drive the opposition succinctly and successful home, the natives wrote a letter to the Basel Mission Home Board complaining thus:

We, your humble petitioners be respectfully to forward to you our complaint respecting the sort of teaching given to our children in the Douala language. It is quite against reason that our children should be educated in a barbarous tongue instead of a civilized one either German or English. We have reasons for protesting against this and two of our principal reasons are that the children could never obtain employment under the German government or under any civilized person, or persons whatever when they are grown up, because they could never understand what to do. Also the Douala language is not our native tongue.

We have spoken to the mission out here about this matter, but excuse has been made that it should not be altered without your committee's sanction.

We now write begging you most earnestly to furnish us with a civilized teaching and we shall be very thankful. 18

The Basel Mission Home Board remained adamant and refused to grant the people their request. Their refusal also engendered a negative reaction from the petitioners.

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Nyansako-ni-Nku ed., The Pioneers: A Century Picture Book, p. 25.

Not unexpected, the English Baptist congregation at Victoria, now Limbe, on June 11th, 1889 handed over the following frantic nostalgia for Baptistism:

The church does not agree that anything is taken out of the hand of Mr. Wilson by whom the church will be conducted and continued exactly according to the laws and mood of the Baptist-Mission, from which the church will not move one inch. 19

The secessionist English Baptist Church at Victoria and Bethel in Douala jointly posed a bond of moratorium on any outside aid and carried on church and school work without any help from the outside. The Basel missionaries were opposed because they disregarded the people's passionate desire for traditional African practices and collaborated with the German colonial government against these practices. Keller Werner, one of the missionaries, confirms this observation when he states:

On the whole the Gospel could not advance as easily as had been thought at first. The ... opposed the mission work as much as they could.

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19

Werner Keller, The History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon p. 14.

...the congregations in the Bakosi were attacked from many sides. One of the great enemies of the Christian Church was....  
 ...proclaimed openly that he would not rest until the Gospel was exterminated in the Bakosi. In many places the Christians were forced to drink juju medicine.

... an extraordinary thing happened at Nyasoso. Under the influence of the Gospel, the Etung people brought all their juju objects to Nyasoso for "exhibition". Afterwards a large crowd walked to the Mango River into which they threw all their masks, magic wands, drums, skulls, etc....  
 ...the Mpako people also burnt their juju objects.

The ashes were collected and buried in the grave. On the tomb they placed a cross on which was written: "The grave of the secret societies. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will free from you. This is the end of the secret societies. Everything passes away, the Word of God only remains. 23rd December.... 20

Further instances of animosity were the imprisonment of Chief Makia of Balong who was known as a great sorcerer, and the sending of soldiers by the German government to discipline the Bakweri people.  
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Like the Basel Missionaries in Indonesia, where the Indonesian pastor could only prepare candidates for baptism but left administration of the rite for the occasional visit of the white missionary, the attitude of the Basel

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Ibid., p. 14.

21

Ibid., pp. 14, 60-62

Missionaries towards indigenous Christians and even those who were was negative.<sup>22</sup> They were intentionally slow to recognize the ministerial gifts of the African ordained priests and accept them as equals. They accused the London Baptist Missionaries of giving the Africans too much ecclesiastical freedom.

Other problems arose from the people's dissatisfaction with the method of baptism the Basel Mission had introduced. The people argued that they were taught and baptized by the method of immersion by the English Baptist Missionaries. Baptism by sprinkling they denounced as a strange Christian rite. Cameroon, they maintained, was a country of seas, ocean and rivers, including streams, deep enough for immersion. They questioned the spiritual and theological significance of baptism by sprinkling. They also doubted the scriptural evidence of infant baptism and claimed it was unfair to baptize infants who religiously knew nothing, especially as they personally were not mature enough to confess with their mouths. The Basel Missionaries maintained that it was hair-splitting to magnify dogmatic differences for Christianity was less interested in the administrative side of the faith than in the faith itself.

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Nyansako-ni-Nku, ed. The Pioneers: A Century Picture Book, p. 26.

It is worth noting that although the European missionaries and Africans overlapped in their reactions to the Christian presence in their respective societies, both emerged from a similar religious experience -- primitive and ethnic, local and family or individual worship of personal gods and their spirits. Differences were bound to arise in the early history of Christianity in Africa.

The death of Christian missionaries in missionary fields, either as martyrs or otherwise, opposition to Christianity by non-Christians, and the clashes between Christians and non-Christians concerning life patterns all remind believers of the four classes of experience of the CROSS in which a Christian martyr, organization and the whole Christendom vicariously suffer. The experience of the CROSS can be expressed thusly: I must suffer, I want to suffer, I can suffer and I may suffer for, because of Jesus Christ. This experience of the CROSS was provoked in the Basel Mission Missionaries in the Cameroon by attention-needing circumstances, most of which related to social justice. Some of the aspects of social justice included land tenure and human relationships. The latter aspect led to the definition of people's positions to artificially stratify the society with an aim of exploiting the less fortunate whose social status emanated from the above life prescriptions.



Land tenure was a serious issue of concern for the missionaries. Until the colonial period, the value of land in Africa was limitedly low. Land was not extensively and intensively exploited. Extensive tracks of grassland and thick virgin forests were usually left fallow indefinitely. Small portions of land were usually concentrated on for basic agricultural activities and living space. Before the colonial era, three principles governed local land tenure in Africa. Individuals could hold land title as private property. A piece of land could be regarded as a family property that could be inherited; more extensive tracks of land were regarded as community property whose custodian was the chief, king or emperor.

The chief's custodianship over land as a communal (state) property had two historical origins. Meanwhile, private or family land occupancy was acquired through nomadic life or migration in search of space and settlement by individuals or groups or families; or sometimes people acquired land titles through the process of transferred property from one party to the other. Land which was acquired through ethnic feuds and wars automatically became a public property under the control of the public property committee with the chief or king as the chairperson of the commission.

Another origin of land becoming a public property can be traced from the history of traditional rehabilitation of captured ethnic war prisoners who technically became slaves. They were resettled on empty tracks of land and exploited after forming a society of their own. This was a new and special or unique society created in which there was no natural leader. No one was elected by the people themselves, except the war landlord, the victor-chief who imposed submission on all matters. Such societies have been referred to in African studies as "an Acephalous" states. These "slaves" labored and extracted the resources of these tracks of virgin land. They were called the king's vineyard laborers because 82% of their produce went to the king as an imposed benevolence or tribute. The collected tributes, mostly in kind (material), were redistributed by the king proportionately to the need of his subjects and subordinates.

Parenthetically, in Africa, land was not priced high as a lucrative commodity to amass wealth but was that on which people depended for subsistence. Shifting agriculture enabled farmers to conserve soil fertility as they left many acres of land fallow for many years. Also, certain land had religious significance in that certain places were designated for public cemeteries, shrines, and for public traditional religious activities, religious ceremonies, theaters, rites of passage, cultural heritage

festivities, and other kinds of cultural celebrations. Land was used to resettle individuals, families, and ethnic groups. People migrated to new settlements but would occasionally revisit their previous locations to perform traditional ceremonies such as religious rites of marriage, birth and circumcision, and to pour libations to the living-dead (ancestors). Revisiting abandoned homes yearly was done to maintain the ancestral link.

The missionaries, who were more involved with the natives than was the colonial government, knew the importance of land to the natives. The missionaries were convinced that displacing the natives and depriving them of their land rights and ownership meant hardship, distortion of their culture, and destruction of their existence. There was an urgent need, therefore, to support the natives against injustice. The missionaries succeeded to a large extent by securing a position in the land commission which was formed by the colonial authorities. They opposed in the commission some of the decisions that jeopardized the natives' land occupancy.

Certain factors may have motivated the missionaries attitudes on land matters in the Cameroon. Their fight was practical evidence of rivalry between church and state on matters of authority. Whose authority should be supreme over the people, Caesar's or God's? The missionaries were indirectly fighting for land for themselves as is evident

in the massive free land acquisition by the various Christian organizations for schools, hospitals, social service centers, living quarters, church buildings and offices, farm institutes and playgrounds. The missionaries expressed genuine concern for the helpless, ignorant, and unrepresented people. This last point was substantiated by the missionaries' fight against local slavery and other socially evil practices and institutions in Africa.

Certain practices in pre-colonial African societies were bizarre, cruel and inhumane. These savage institutions seemed to have constituted a very prominent part of traditional settings; and the institution of that all embracing term "slavery" was one. There had existed three categories of slavery in Africa.

Feuding villages and ethnic communities quarrelled with one another, scrambled and fought for land. Defeated assailants paid tributes yearly to their victors who became landlords. Captured war prisoners were located on tracks of land that were public property. These captured war prisoners became free in the long run but remained on the victor's land and formed an entire society of their own called "acephalous" societies. They were adopted into the victor's society with limited liabilities. They could inter-marry and inherit certain important responsibilities

functions of their foster lords. So, one category of slaves in Africa was that of cultural adoptees.

Some people became slaves by their own doings. Those who crimes such as murder or royal adultery were either sold to other communities as slaves or were exchanged with those communities for similar criminals. These criminals waited for the decision on their fate when the king died. They were buried alive with the king in the belief that they were to accompany and continue to serve him in the land of the living-dead. This category of slaves could be appropriately termed royal death retinue. The third category of slaves was made up of those slaves who were bought by individual aristocrats, wealthy merchants, and long distance traders. They were used as though they were beasts of burden to carry goods for sale. Colonial authorities encouraged this lucrative type of slavery (enterprise) for this was important for them, especially as the advent of Industrial Revolution in England in the 17th Century, created a desperate need for raw material. These slaves were used to carry raw material (cola nuts, palm oil, cotton, etc.) from the exterior and interior of Africa to the coast for sale to white merchants. This category of slaves constituted an immense profit-making and commercial arrangement for the African and European traders.

It was the last two categories of African slaves, the royal death retinue and aristocrat-grooms that attracted

the attention and concerned the Christian missionaries because of the great tyranny these institutions exerted and the misery and death they caused. The missionaries were determined to exterminate the practices.

The missionaries were further infuriated by the obnoxious unwritten labor for law of the private colonial farmers. Private white farmers recruited and employed Africans to work the whole week on their plantations for very little pay which sometimes was in kind (material pay such as food, liquor). For the Missionaries this was a grave socio-economic injustice. It affected missionary work, especially in regard to church attendance on Sunday and doctrine classes weekdays. The labor force practice was detrimental to the natives in that it affected their health. It caused nervous breakdowns because it left no time for relaxation and lack of personal affairs.

Protestant missionaries, although widely and deeply divided among themselves had aimed to convert the Cameroon to Protestantism. Besides fighting among themselves, they had other forces to wrestle with such as Islam and traditional religions. Unfortunately, their strategies and methods were cruel, brutalizing and resistance-attracting. Another potent force Protestantism was to deal with was Roman Catholicism.

### Roman Catholicism In The Cameroon

There have been differences between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in the Cameroon. Peculiar to the former has been the extreme foreignness of the liturgical Latin, which the majority of the Roman Catholic Christians did not understand. There exists coherence between the cathedral and the congregation, between the parish and the priest, between the communion celebration and community sanctification. There are also sacraments which are central to the Catholic faith. These distinctive features of Roman Catholicism produced an interesting ecclesiastical warfare in the Christian history between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants in the Cameroon.

When the Roman Catholic mission entered the Cameroon is not definite; but conjectural events suggest 1885 as the beginning date. This date is significant in several respects. In 1885, the English Baptist Mission declared officially that the organization was going to leave the Cameroon. Also, in 1885 the English Baptist Mission announced that it was going to hand over its Christian work in the Cameroon to the German Missionary Society -- Basel Mission. Keller reports that "A Roman Catholic Mission with

its headquarters in Paris applied to the Foreign Office in Berlin for permission to work in the Cameroon." <sup>23</sup>

It is important to note that the Roman Catholic Mission's application was rejected because one of its religious communities, the Jesuits, was suspected politically, in Germany and its indicated interest to work in the Cameroon was prohibited. It is unclear why Basel Mission writers such as Werner Keller say little about the Roman Catholics in the Cameroon, except to mention in passing some statistics about Catholic schools and make negative comments about their missionary work. For example, according to Protestant information, Catholics participated in education in the Cameroon but do not indicate the extent or their effort. The interpretation of authors such as Keller and Dah on the history of the Christian Missions in the Cameroon is that the Roman Catholics acquired their converts by stealth. For example, Dah, a Minister of the Protestant Church, says:

It was necessary to have another station...to care for the young converts, as the Roman Catholic Mission tried to recruit their members from among those young Christians rather than from among those heathen. <sup>24</sup>

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23

Stephen Neill, A History of Christian Missions (England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1971) , p. 515.

24

Keller, The History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, p. 10



The presence and effects of Roman Catholicism in the Cameroon cannot be discussed in isolation from the other religious denominations. A comparative discussion helps assess the efforts of each religious group -- Islam and Christianity -- according to the determinant impact each has made upon African traditional and cultural life.

It has been more evident to talk of the Roman Catholic community than to even imagine a Protestant, specifically the Presbyterian or the Baptist society, in the Cameroon. There is one explanation for this. From the onset, Roman Catholic missionaries followed a singular goal -- to diffuse, establish and maintain Roman Catholicism ecclesiastically, dogmatically, administratively and spiritually everywhere in the world. However, Protestant authors have often yielded to the ecstatic wind of what they call "progressive" evangelism.

Certain features characteristically distinguish differences between the religious denominations. Some of them are coherence, contextualization, spirituality and motivation. One of the enviable visible marks of coherence in the Roman Catholic Church is not necessarily present because of responsibility to the Pope in Rome, but through mutual co-operation between the priest and the bishop, between the catechist and the priest, and between the elders and the congregation. Whereas Protestants disagreed sharply on the form and on the question of to whom Baptism

should be administered, no such conflict occurred among the Roman Catholic religious communities such as the Jesuits, the Franciscans, and the Dominicans. As seen in the various strategies each applied -- the Roman Catholics and the Protestants, the Basel Mission and the Baptists -- they approached differently the task of evangelizing the "heathen."

Another point of interest lies in the question of contextualized Christianity. Opinion varied from Christian mission to Christian mission about the sophisticated and contingent nature of the African cultural practices. What was really the problem could be located in the technical predicate of the early Christian Missions' relationship to African culture. To the Basel Mission, African cultural practices were evil and deserved annihilation. Indifference or condemnation of traditional religions was the strategy the Baptists practiced. The Roman Catholics adopted the strategy of co-option. They utilized the African ways of concretizing religion such as using or wearing bags of medicine around their arms or legs. The Catholics introduced the use of holy water and the rosary as a tactful way of replacing those cultural practices with Christian symbols. But the Basel Missionaries were busy forcing the natives to drown or burn their jujus, fetishes, talismans, explaining that these things were of the devil.

But even though these things were taken away from the natives, they still did not undergo true conversion, especially as they had nothing concretely to hold onto as a religious alternative. By the same token, the use of holy water to replace pots of charms, the use of the Bible under the pillow to replace consecrated pillows, and counselling advice of the priest to replace the traditional medicine man did not make the Roman Catholic converts genuine Christians either. In both cases, the African returned to his traditional religions. The long run effect of the Roman Catholic and Protestant Christianities on the African convert was negative syncretism rather than positive spirituality. What was responsible for this religious dichotomy? It seems evident that neither the Protestant nor the Roman Catholic missionaries plain-sailed in their respective "boat" of overseas evangelism. Thirdly, the three mainline denominations in the Cameroon are identifiable by their peculiar marks of denominationalism. The Roman Catholics, with their high sense of spirituality, are noted for the prevalence of syncretism and rituals which express Christian mysticism. Presbyterians are more involved in the social Gospel, but lean heavily on apologetic theology. The Baptists are known for their ecstatic spirituality with a heavy emphasis on sectarian dogmatism.

Regretably, these religious bodies minimize mysticism as the bed-rock of religion. For the writer, the true test of authentic Christianity that is supposed to be vibrantly alive lies in mysticism. This claim, in the context of theology, Anselm of Canterbury defines as fides quaerens intellectum, or faith searching for understanding.<sup>25</sup> Mysticism has three characteristics in its nature: it is religious when a person is in total love with the supernatural world searching spiritually for the transcendental; it is ethical when a person consciously seeks and maintains virtues; and, it is intellectual when reading and meditating on the scriptures widens and deepens spirituality.

### Conclusions

Chapter Two is concerned with the story of Christianity in an African society in which there have been constant conflicts among the foreign missionary societies such as the Protestants and the Roman Catholics, on the one hand, and the natives on the other. The new religion, Christianity, meant different things to these people. The story of Christianity in the Cameroon began around the 18th Century, an era when the African continent was invaded by

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Nyansako-ni-Nku ed., The Pioneers: A Century Picture Book, p. 26.

colonialism. This has been a religious history but a history whose comprehensibility could only be possible within the spectrum of political history.

The central point has been that the beginning of Christianity in the Cameroon, as it was elsewhere, was turbulent due to various odds from within and from without the mainline denominations themselves. On the other hand, the natives felt that Christianity was imposed on them by calculated devices which perpetrated African traditional ways of living. This religious adventure could rightly be termed, "the troubled crusade."

Certain salient points have been discussed. Prominent among them are the relationships between the various religious bodies and the colonial governments and the natives; the missions' methods and strategies in the propagation of the Christian religion, and the African responses to the new religion.

Some conclusions are necessary for this chapter. They center mostly around the triune activities of Jesus and what these mean in the Christian faith. Certain Christian organizations, particularly the Pentecostals and the Evangelicals, have oft referred to Jesus' healing of the sick, feeding of the hungry and teaching of the ignorant as inevitable prerequisites for salvation. They maintain that more souls are being won over for salvation by this triune theology. It is not scripturally evident that Jesus held

this opinion. On the contrary, he used them as parenthesis rather than thesis of the Kingdom. The primary task of his mission was to preach the Message of salvation and present Himself as the Way, the Truth and the Life.

He once remarked that people thronged around him not because they desperately wanted to be saved spiritually, but because they were attracted by what he did and not by what he was. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled," in Jn. 6:26. This point can be substantively illustrated by the fact that as the value of a car is judged from the engine more than from the tires and body of the car, so also does the spiritual worth of human life lies in the soul more than in the body and mind. It is true that God is concerned about the health and the wisdom of the mind and body. But, of what good is a healthy body and an alert mind when the soul is not saved?

The goal and success of a Christian mission is measured more genuinely, in divine spiritual conviction and maturation, unity in love, religious solemnity and mystical outlook of the worshipping community that has been established therein than it was based on observed observances or in published numerical growth, intellectual (education), and economic development. All these are expedience rather than necessary to sustain the spiritual energy and the growing enthusiasm of the converts.

Enlightenment is necessary and important to know and understand, to differentiate and separate the unspiritual from spiritual. Education is the key.

### CHAPTER III

#### EDUCATION OF THE CLERGY BEFORE 1957

When...Missionaries entered this country (Cameroon)...they brought with them a theological bag with obvious pietistic taint that stressed...the urgency of the proclamation of the Kingdom of God.... ..evangelization and education tended to be synonymous. Formal theological training was started quite early in the ...Mission Church. ...Teacher Training... opened...in which teachers and catechists were trained together. ...from those graduates of Teacher Training..., the Catechist Training... that...Mission Church obtained its first ordained ministers. 1

One of the inescapable serious tasks that the early Christian Missionaries took up immediately and urgently in the Cameroon was to bring to the people education for a radical self-awareness. It took the form of physical training, seen in local farming and handicraft, (the missionary work of Alfred Saker in Victoria), mental training, or literacy, and ethics or moral codes of conduct, ecclesiastically termed doctrine or catechetics.

These missionaries believed that education was the important handmaid of preaching for the transmission of the

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Nyansako-ni-Nku ed., Journey In Faith: Yaounde: (Buma Kor and Co. Publishers, 1982), pp. 25-29.



Christian faith and for establishing the platform of knowledge and understanding. Reading, especially of the Bible, was to enlighten the believer and literature distribution was a means of evangelization. Education was to bring about intellectual integrity, ethical uprightness and spiritual wisdom; but, these Christian Missions differed from one another in terms of their motivation for educational participation.

To the Baptists, for example, education meant the ability to spontaneously and purposefully quote or recite Bible passages. To the Basel mission, education was to obliterate illiteracy and produce a cadre of good leadership known as the "spiritual priesthood of secular leadership." To the Roman Catholics, education was to make out of the Cameroonians loyal Catholic intellectuals, leaders, and educated African priests.

Thus, wherever the missionaries went, the tendency was to create a local church or an educational structure or both. Schooling was multi-instructional, including music, crafts and cultural activities. The focus of schooling could be either practice or theory or both. Instruction ranged from verbal recitation through practical to technical education. Doctrinal or catechetical classes were conducted for those preparing for Baptism, Confirmation or readmission from other denominations. The term school also meant a permanent formal institution that provided

vernacular, technical, practical (craft), or literary education.

The first school in the Cameroon was a vernacular school opened at Bimbia in 1884 by Joseph Merrick, a missionary of the English Baptist Missionary Society. He and his wife lived among the Isubu people and opened a school to learn the Isubu language. They used it to teach and preach the word of God to the Isubu people in their own native dialect. More schools were opened, and they followed the typical model described above. One was located at Bell-Town and one at Akwa cities in Douala, now a commercial capital city on the coast of the Cameroon.

It has to be noted that there were two categories of missionary stations, appropriately called today headquarters, or cathedrals where the bishop, and administrative activities were carried out. Main schools were established at these stations to accommodate an urban population. There were out stations or out-posts where the catechists resided and organized feeder-schools to the main schools in the main stations.

This chapter which examines the origins of the education of the Christian clergy in the Cameroon can be appropriately called education during the foreign Christian Missionary Era. Its primary focus is on the motives of the various missionary organizations and the strategies and methods each applied. The scope and effects of the entire

educational program in the Cameroon conducted by the missionary organizations is also examined.

The following tables of statistics provide an approximation of the educational development and progress in the Cameroon during the missionary era. The information is authentic but not comprehensive due to inefficiency in keeping official records, unprofessionalism, poor care of official records and inadequate storage. Furthermore, in some areas figures were exaggerated in the lower section of schools to keep the school from being closed because of low enrollment. At the same time, especially in fees paying sections of the school only figures of potential fee-paying students were maintained.

Teachers who admitted children and allowed them to participate in lectures up to a certain time without paying fees forfeited a portion of their salaries commensurate to what the children would have paid as their fees.

This policy by the Christian missions was not a pleasant one; but there was no other means of maintaining enrollment and keeping the school financially solvent. In the British sector, the Government subsidized education, paid teachers through their respective missions, and prepared the school curriculum, except for the religious studies syllabus. This last item, religious studies, gave the missionary organizations an opportunity to plan their evangelical strategies to propagate Western Christianity through schools.

At first reading, the entries in the Table (see Appendix A) suggest the misleading conclusion that the Basel Mission was more successful in educational participation in the Cameroon between 1835 and 1914 than all other agencies. It was followed by the Roman Catholic mission. It could also be concluded that the colonial government was the least concerned and involved in national education. But a more accurate interpretation is developed when the educational activities of the respective agencies are averaged as shown in the line graph. The reading in the line graph suggests an opposite conclusion. Although the government had very few schools and few students, it was more concerned and successful in educational participation than all other agencies.

Another growing agency as shown on the line graph was the American Baptist Mission, followed by the Roman Catholic Mission. The London Missionary Society is not shown on the line graph. This is not an oversight, but a deliberate omission for the following reasons: The beginning of education in the Cameroon could be attributed to the London Missionary Society led by Alfred Saker. But during this time, consideration was not given to practical education such as handicraft and agriculture. At this time too, no formal classes were organized to cover a planned school year. It can be concluded that the meaning of education at this time was narrowly confined to reading and writing, to formally organized classes, and to linear learning.

It is important to use the information in Table 1 and the line graph to surmise reasons for dichotomies. Before conjecturing reasons for qualitative educational decline although there are misleading quantitative indications and vice versa with the early educational agencies in the Cameroon, observational explanation is necessary for the line graph in Table 2. The figures on the left hand side running vertically from 4 to 319 show the approximate numbers of schools each educational agency operated. Along the horizontal or base line (bottom) are the different educational agencies, Government School (GS), American Baptist Mission (ABM), the American Presbyterian Mission

(APM), the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) and the Basel Mission (BM). This order is determined by the number of schools and total enrollment, beginning from the least to the largest. This is referred to as quantitative education.

The five educational organizations (agencies) are marked out by five vertical lines. Each line shows how far an agency rose quantitatively by the number of schools it ran. Slanting upward or downward lines show the number of students and average enrollment per agency. The actual position of an educational authority is reflected by the average figures. The arrows are purposed to mark graph interpretations easier for the reader. According to the indications, the Government school which quantitatively in the number of school students is the least, qualitatively enrollment-wise has the highest encouraging average enrollment per school while the Basel Mission which quantitatively in the number of schools and students is the highest is qualitatively the lowest in enrollment per school. The American Baptist Mission had a balanced enrollment while the rest, the American Presbyterian Mission and the Roman Catholic Mission had a discouraging average enrollment per school.

On the whole, this line graph reveals two interesting and important characteristics of early education in the Cameroon. In other words, two conclusions can be drawn from this line graph, namely that: generally speaking, the

educational success and progress of a society cannot be genuinely judged from quantitative indications alone. Both quantitative and qualitative indications must be taken into account. The second conclusion is that judging quantitatively and qualitatively combined; although the Basel mission and the Roman Catholic mission had more schools and students than the rest of the agencies, they qualitatively fell below average; while the opposite was true with the government and the American Baptist Mission. This conclusion repudiates Ekiti's misguided assertion, "By the time the first World War broke out the Basel Mission alone was handling more than half the education of children in the ...Cameroon."<sup>2</sup>

Even though the Basel Mission had more schools than all the agencies, on the average, this missionary organization had the lowest per school enrollment and perhaps the lowest quality of Christian education. If education was a vehicle for the propagation of Christianity, low quality education therefore led to low quality evangelism. Low quality evangelism meant low quality spirituality and low quality spirituality led to inferior Christianity. This low quality spirituality which was sometimes known in the PCC as spiritual dryness was one

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Nyansako-ni-Nku, ed., Journey In Faith: The Story of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, p. 78.

of the regrettable causes of the proliferation of sects in the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon.

Keller, Cheng and Ekiti have failed to indicate the number of teachers in the 319 Basel Mission schools between 1835 and 1914.<sup>3</sup> If they had included this information, this would help determining statistically how many children there were per class per teacher. This missing information would have addressed the question of enrollment, expansion, and concern about the level of school. Every educational agency followed certain educational laws and regulations regarding the opening of schools and enrollment per class per teacher. Certain levels of the primary school were unassisted and therefore financially unaided or subsidized by the government. This did not mean that such schools or classes or levels were unknown or unrecognized by the Government. Those unapproved schools were operated under the cover of a religious name, religious school, or Bible secular education agencies trained their catechists or evangelists. Some of these schools, as in the case of the Baptists, were called vernacular schools. This state of affairs made determining the actual enrollment per class per teacher complicatedly

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Werner Keller, The History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, Cameroon, pp. 23-24.



difficult. In some areas, due to very low enrollment, one teacher was in charge of more than one class. If Keller, Cheng and especially Ekiti, who as the education secretary and had all enrollment information, supplied this information as a parenthesis or citation in their writing, it would have made it easy to determine whether a mission school was understaffed or overstaffed.

Incomplete information about early education in the Cameroon makes accurate and reliable interpretation of data difficult. This does not, however, rule out the allegation that there were causes for discrepancies among the education agencies. Among others, differences were brought about by the motives, the methods, and the management time, of means and of the strategies the educational agency had available.

Some of the Christian missions used education or the opening of schools as a means to disseminate Christianity rather than use the schools as media to preach the Word of God or propagate Christian teaching. This was typical of the Basel Mission which saw its work as a call to fulfill their evangelical responsibilities. The number of schools and their geographical distribution, without necessarily counting on the rise of enrollment and continuing life of the schools, were an indication to the Home-Board of its active and growing missionary work abroad. Such information, together with the purposefully but not always

accurate photographs of Cameroonian (African) villages and peoples, were used in Europe to solicit funds for missionary work in a "hostile primitive continent". It would hardly be surprising to hear a foreign Christian Missionary writing to his Missionary Home-Board thus:

The gospel has a prodigious task before it in Africa. It finds nothing (no culture) in the heathen systems into which to engraft itself.. .. To subvert and supplant is its mission. 4

The feeling of cultural superiority has been part of the white man's culture, no matter whether he was an imperialist planter and trader or merchant, a colonial administrator or politician, classroom teacher or pulpit preacher and street missionary. In school and during doctrine classes or catechetics, school children and converts, religious initiates and Christians were taught openly and gradually indoctrinated into believing and into hating their cultures. In schools, carving juju objects or anything that was in the traditional setting regarded as religiously sacred and music which reflected or portrayed traditional life were eliminated from the curriculum and schedule. One example of the disdain of the African culture

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Jonas Dah, African Response to Christianity, (Cameroon, 1987), pp. 1, 46.

is revealed by a statement in the 1892 annual report of a Basel missionary which follows:

We celebrated at the beginning of December in the area of Wouri a conquest and triumph because Chief Ngale from Bodinman gave up his attachment to the Losango and Jengu secret societies. 5

According to the Basel Mission, schools were powerful agents through which European culture could easily be transmitted and that of Africa quickly dissolved and obliterated. Planting of mushroom schools here and there even with low enrollment gave the Home-Board assurance that an onslaught was being launched upon the cohort of the Devil.

There were other general factors that contributed to the low school enrollment in Christian Mission schools in the Cameroon. Some of these were the grave shortage of teachers, especially trained teachers, and the unaesthetic appearance of the school environment, particularly the village schools. Parenthetically, 79 years (1835-1914) of missionary work in the Cameroon seem sufficient enough to build and upgrade education, train teachers, and improve the general program of education; but higher education was not a priority of missionary education. Fonlon pinpoints the reason for this myopic and unprofessional conception when he vehemently observes:

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Ibid., pp. 2, 46.

There are those who would strive to convince you that since it is in Africa, what...seminary (school) should produce is a cure de campagne, a sort of rural parish priest; and they will quote the venerable St. John Vianney to support a thesis, which would lead to mediocrity. I say that there is no place for shallowness in...Africa. 6

There was a serious undermining of the essential part of their commission and mission. They overlooked the underlying principle of Christian missions, that the soul needs the Word of God and the mind needs the alphabet (education).

Much of the earlier era of Christianity was preoccupied by the struggle for adjustment to colonial rule and to the subjective study and understanding of the African. Relentless warfare was launched against traditional practices and colonial interference with what the missionaries regarded as the "Lord's Vineyard." Little value was attached to higher education. The Roman Catholic Christians learnt the English language faster and better than the Basel Mission Christians; because, while the former preached and taught catechetics in a widely spoken language (English) which was destined to be the official language of the country, the latter mission wasted precious time learning and imposing on the people ethnic dialects (Douala in the coast and Mungaka in the Grassfield) as the media of spreading Christianity.

The choice of the Basel missionary organization sparked resistance and controversy and affected her entire missionary program adversely in the Cameroon in the areas of education and ecclesiology then and in the years to come. The Protestant missions, the Baptists and the Basel Mission, insisted on vernacular education with the conviction that they were doing the right thing in bringing the Gospel to the people in their own dialects. There has been a resurgence of this idea in the Cameroon recently when groups of Bible translators, most of them from the United States, have been travelling and staying in villages learning the peoples' dialects for the translation of the Bible (New Testament) into the native tongues. This movement has its merits and demerits and is as controversial as it was in the era of the colonial Christian missions.

Another cause for varying growth and development among the educational agencies in the Cameroon was located in the Roman Catholic mission motives for participation in secular education. Free participation in secular education was seen as a timely opportunity to stamp the seal of Catholicism on and claim individual converts and geographical territories in the country. The seal of Roman Catholicism was being stamped upon converts in various ways. Christianity was presented as a mystical religion, whose mysteries were enshrined in a mystery language,

Latin, and hidden in the ritualistic artifacts such as church buildings, the crucifix, the rosary, the graven image of Holy Maria, and magical holy water.

Unlike the Basel Mission which violently attacked and sought to destroy traditional practices, the Roman Catholic mission gradually and tactfully replaced them. For example, bags of medicine and talismans worn round the neck, arms and ankles and pots of medicine buried in houses for protection against evil forces were replaced with the Roman Catholic rosary, crucifix, and holy water. Becoming a Christian in a Roman Catholic school was not an option or spiritual conviction, but an obligatory requirement for admission.

Differences also arose because of denominational rivalry. Each denomination tried to attract converts from other denominations. This was typical of the Roman Catholic and the Basel Missions in their habit of reconversion of converts, theologically known as "sheep-stealing" from other denominations.

Again, differences arose from denominational attempts to vanquish and replace African traditional religions and Islam which were regarded as originating in primitive societies. For the writer, the goal was not to install Christianity, but denominationalism, not to inculcate a sense of spirituality, but to ingrain religiosity.

Differences in educational pursuits in the Cameroon during the colonial missionary period were also created by

the Roman Catholic and the Basel Mission which believed that secular education produced an incomplete person unless accompanied by Bible studies or religious knowledge; hence, a pass in the religious knowledge examination was required as a verification of the student's religious confession and specific religious adherence. The Basel Mission was reinforcing Martin Luther's belief in universal literacy that included Bible reading.

Colonial governments might have regarded the Christian missions as committed private and voluntary agencies that were imbued with religious zeal. The church organizations were, therefore, different from the private colonial business financiers like Adolf Woermann who explored and exploited the natural resources and people of the colonies.

This sense of trust led to mutual concern and constructive engagement between church and state. The government subsidized education, paid teachers' salaries (grants-in-aid), planned and implemented the curriculum of formal education, set (except religious knowledge examination) and supervised teachers' examinations; but, most of the voluntary religious agencies, (particularly of the Basel Mission which was inadvertently carried away by the idea of vernacular education and the Roman Catholic Mission which was preoccupied with the conviction of Catholic spirituality) were more concerned with achieving their denominational goals. The Roman Catholic Mission used education for the making of loyal Catholics and Roman

Catholic Cameroonian priests. The Basel Mission believed that education, especially vernacular education, was a useful vehicle for rapid evangelization.

And finally, differences in educational progress and expansion were caused by very limited resources -- finances and personnel-- and natural obstacles like deep and swift flowing rivers, thick forests, mountains and scattered and isolated local populations. These factors obstructed missions, especially that of the Baptists; thus giving this Christian organization a derogatory name "retarded Mission."

The first phase of colonial education in the Cameroon was brought to an end by the outbreak of the First World War in which Germany was defeated and her overseas colonial adventure terminated. It is important to note that the defeat of Germany was psychological as well as military and diplomatic. At this time of history, she was most in the limelight of her military prowess due to her well purposed and well-structured educational system.

The defeat of Germany in the quest for colonies was two-fold: She had no interest in colonies overseas, especially as she was preoccupied with domestic problems, such as convincing conservative German Kaisers to see the need for a united Germany and how to slow down the erratic spirit of youth who agitated for overnight changes. Unlike Britain with a colonial policy of divide and rule for the purpose of extracting resources from the colonies and



leaving them underdeveloped; and unlike France whose policy was an extension of French citizenship overseas by cultural assimilation, Germany had no defined policy for colonization. She had entered in international politics by sheer imitation. She became easily discouraged and overwhelmed by the losses she suffered in her overseas adventures.

It can be concluded that each colonial agency was motivated by a hidden agenda to participate in education overseas. The colonial government did so for complete political control. Business financiers were concerned with apprenticeship for commercial monopoly and religious organizations used education as a vehicle for proselytization. The outburst of the First World War was a harsh interlude to a different phase of education in the Cameroon which focused on universal formal secular colonial education.

In a summary form, the first phase the Christian missionary work in the Cameroon (1835-1922) as it was elsewhere in Africa was fraught with trials and errors, progress and problems. It was generally turbulent. This state of affairs affected the education of the country adversely and made formal education haphazard. Two factors were at work. The missionaries and the natives were in a traditional cultural zone, each trying to adjust to or change each other's "strange" life. Africans were to adjust to a new religion, Christianity that was structured and

consciously systematized, active only once a week, on Sunday. White missionaries treated African traditional religions with contempt. They regarded traditional religions as an obstacle in the way of a "genuine and superior" religion, Christianity.

Colonialism was another disturbing factor to both the natives and the missionaries. Colonial authorities were authoritarian and imperial and business financiers were exploitative. The First World War broke out as a harsh interlude and put an end to German occupation and colonization of Cameroon. The outbreak of the war brought confusion and crisis in education in the Cameroon up to and including today. During and after the war, missionary education was managed by unprofessional, unprepared natives who inherited the schools as though they were (schools) bequeathed as a legacy by a master who suddenly died leaving no will.

#### Second Phase of Colonial Education:

The trigger of the First World War powder magazine was first released by Britain who through the London Baptist Missionary Society was the first to occupy the southwestern part of the Cameroon. Britain attacked and laid siege to the German naval base at Douala on December 4, 1914 when Germany was least aware of it. And almost at the same time, France attacked the Germans from the East. The origin of Anglo-French antagonism to Germany was religious as well as political. For example, upon entering the

Cameroon before the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, Germany removed an English Church organization, the London Baptist Missionary Society, and rejected a request by a French Roman Catholic Missionary Society to work in the Cameroon. Cheng is correct when he states:

The 1914 War came as a shock to the work of the Basel Mission. All German missionaries were interned. School work suffered a breakdown and secret societies revived. 7

At the outbreak of the war, all German nationals including missionaries were interned by the British, except those non-German nationals. The few missionaries who remained continued with church work in education. The work scale was reduced significantly. There were very few teachers, catechists and white missionaries to expand and extend the work. Many schools were closed and there was no hope or plan to reopen them, especially in the rural areas. The missionaries were somewhat discouraged by the shrinking church work, response to Christianity, and spirit of cooperation from the German colonial Government. They were discouraged since their projects were shattered by the war. They were forced to begin their efforts again. The newly initiated converts, especially those in the areas where church work had come to a hopeless stop, returned to their traditional lives and faded away from Christian life.

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Elias Cheng, "The Growth and Development of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, (1886-1976)", M.A. Thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, California: June, 1976, p. 23.

Christian work was being monitored by the secular government as though it was a secular organization. There was general restriction and control of the missionaries, especially Protestants and their movements.

During the German colonial years in the Cameroon, a greater concentration took place in a very small area of the country, the south-western portion; while the other portion of Cameroon was occupied by France. The defeat of Germany led to the intervention of the League of Nations which was charged with deciding on what could be done with the German colony. This small section of the Cameroon was given several colonial descriptive names, protectorate trusteeship, mandated territory and was attached to the British colony of Nigeria for efficient administration. This new political arrangement was called the Southern Cameroon. The educational system went from German to British and French respectively; but the religious activities of the various Christian organization remained unaffected. The German language was replaced by the English and French languages.

The second phase of the white presence in the Cameroon was to the Christian missions one of deep reflection and regret, correctional and reconstructional. Certain points can be identified for this period from 1914-1946. Between 1914 and 1922, by the order of the League of Nations, the United Kingdom administered the south-western part which

was occupied by British troops. This was entrusted to Britain as a mandated territory. The German business financiers had upon occupying this section of the country established vast acres of plantations along the coast at Victoria, now Limbe, and Kumba. These plantations contributed to the economy of this sector but hampered the ecclesiastical and educational activities of the missions. Church attendance on Sunday was usually very low because plantation workers, most of them Christians, often worked on Sundays. School enrollment and attendance was always low because many children cared for their younger brothers and sisters while their parents worked.

Between 1922 and 1946, Cameroon was introduced to two different colonial cultures, French and British. Seven-eighths of it was French and the remaining one-eighth British. The British sector which was predominantly Basel Mission was attached to Nigeria. It religiously and politically became an insignificant part of a whole. The survival of Baselism depended on the hard work of the Basel Mission Missionaries and Christians against Islam and Christian organizations in Nigeria such as the Church Missionary Society, the Anglicans, and a host of others with which the Basel Mission was to compete. Politically at this period, the Cameroon had no voice, no representative in Nigerian colonial politics. More than this, political seats available for Africans in the Nigerian House of Representatives were in other considerations more

qualified. But, decentralization of politics in Nigeria at this period was a blessing to the Cameroon: (Southern Cameroon) in that Nigeria was sub-divided into regions and the Cameroon became a significant part of one of them which was known as Eastern region. She had the opportunity to be heard, recognized, and consulted on certain important issues. She thus became a significant contributor politically and economically.

But the transfer of Cameroon's colonial allegiance and subserviance from Germany to Britain and Cam-Nigerian alliance were a mixed blessing. Beginning first with the positive aspects, it was realized that whereas the early Christian Missions in the Cameroon concentrated on developing the mind and the physical environment of their Christians and parishes, the Christian organizations in Nigeria, especially the Anglicans and the Church Missionary Society, were more concerned with the spiritual life of their Christians. One of the Christian virtues they emphasized and demonstrated was the spirit of generosity and cheerful giving. When Cameroon became an adopted colonial dependent to Britain, Cameroon's doors were open for Nigerians to immigrate. Nigerian Catholic Christians joined their Cameroon Catholic brethren while the Nigerian Protestants temporarily became Basel Mission or Baptist Christians. Their memberships did not only increase the Christian population in the Cameroon but their generosity

encouraged the generous giving among the Cameroonian Christians, thereby boosting the financial resources of those denominations.

One of the discouraging characteristics of German colonial government was the tendency to provide rudimentary education to the colonies. Cameroon was fortunate to be a quasi colony of the British who valued and enjoyed bookish education as a means for earning higher social status, for prestige, honor and respect and as a vehicle for political achievement. The colonies were being indoctrinated with this concept. The British educational system had that outlook and induced her colonies to aspire for higher education. British institutes for both higher and lower learning in Africa were patterned to satisfy and certify these aspects. The institute of learning at Ibandan for example, was founded on February 2, 1948. The curriculum was comprehensive and included religious studies for moral upbuilding and theological studies for ecclesiastical purpose. This was intended to help inspire and encourage, provide and allow for free expression of African culture through art and literature, public speaking and oral expression. The outcome was African poets and artists, designers and sculptors, historians and writers, political scientists and political leaders. These are reflected today

in genuine African intellectuals such as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Peter Efange and Eric Dikoko Quan, and a host of others.<sup>8</sup>

To meet the intellectual challenge and utilize such an educational atmosphere for the effective propagation of the Gospel Message, it was incumbent upon the Christian clergy to be both saint and scholar. The opening of the doors of Nigeria to the Cameroon and Cameroon's to Nigeria led to a free flow and spreading of Nigerian ideas and ways of life as perceived and seen in Nigerian fashions, secular and religious music, mostly of African tone and lyric, which very much affected Cameroonian Christianity. But Nigeria was least affected by the Cameroon's culture. One major reason for this was the fact that there were more Nigerians coming into the Cameroon than Cameroonians migrating into Nigeria. Places in the Cameroon affected most were Victoria, now Limbe, Tiko, Jumba, Mamfe, and Bamenda. The influx of aliens from diverse ethnic groups was a task for the Christian Churches in the Cameroon. It created the need to include in the curriculum subjects such as and counseling across cultures.

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Bernard Fonlon, The Genuine Intellectual (Yaounde: Buma Kor Publishing House, 1978), p 4.



So far, discussion has centered on the positive aspects of Camnigerian colonial integration; that it was educationally and religiously, socially and culturally, politically and economically beneficial to Cameroon. But there were also unpleasant aspects in this alliance. The attachment of Cameroon to Nigeria colonially exposed her (Cameroon) to a new and challenging religious experience, the threat to Christianity from Islam. In the Cameroon, Islam was merely perceived and not experienced as a threat to Christianity since it (Islam) was predominant in the north where Christianity had not yet reached.

This previously unfelt religious enemy came to the surface and appeared to be a major element in determining the Christian militancy in a contemporary world of dynamic religious rivalries. Moslem-Christian antagonism was an old and familiar problem to the Christian churches in Nigeria. Islam had made the penetraiton of Christianity to the north difficult. Moslems also regarded colonial secular education as a Christian device for gaining converts to Christianity. This was a surprising experience to the Christian organizations in Cameroon. This anomalous state of affairs created concern for the future of African societies and perhaps the eventual demise of the effectiveness of Christianity.

Another negative aspect of the Cam-Nigerian alliance was the topography of the Nigerian-Cameroon land. Generally speaking, Nigeria is a plain. The hilly areas are less stark, the valleys more fertile and favorable for the cultivation of yams, the vegetation averagely luxuriant. But about three-fifths of the whole land of Nigeria is desert-like. The main land has not been suitable for diversified agriculture except for yams which unfortunately are not a perennial crop. The growing population of Nigeria signalled problems of land tenure, food scarcity and high cost of living. The Cameroon-Nigerian colonial alliance was a great blessing and relief for Nigeria but a curse and burden upon Cameroon. There was an influx of educated and uneducated Nigerians into the Cameroon. This affected land tenure, food production and distribution and employment opportunities.

Although the inflow of Nigerians helped increase church attendance, revenue, and revival. On the whole, it was not a pleasant situation. This was compounded by the unfriendly attitude of Nigerians, especially the Ibos. This sector of the Cameroon, Southern Cameroon as it was called, experienced two types of colonialism, colonialism under Britain and domestic colonialism under Nigerians (Ibos). Ibos who migrated from Nigeria into the Cameroon were more

a threat to the Cameroonians than was the white colonial master. Edwin Ardener remarked on this in 1960 when he wrote:

He (the Ibo), thus Nigerian) has not behaved differently in the Cameroons from elsewhere. He has been his normal self-industrious ...argumentative and with a flair for trade. However, by one of those... clashes of sentiment that occur occasionally ...these qualities are interpreted by Cameroonians as conceit, brashness, untrustworthiness...It must ...be faced that the attitude to Nigeria of the villager and illiterate labourer, not excluding a high proportion of literates is coloured, if not determined, by his attitude to the Ibo. 9

Anti-Ibo attitudes in the Southern Cameroons became rife and were an important political fact that was associated with anti-Nigerian feeling. When one of the Southern Cameroonians, John Ngu Foncha was campaigning for prime ministership he promised secession from Nigeria before 1960:

Secession from the Federation of Nigeria will place the Southern Cameroons in a position to negotiate terms for reunification with the government of... Kamerun.... The building up of a Cameroons nation once again is a matter which is our concern...; it will be accomplished by independence...rather than dependent ones under British or French. 10

British colonial expansion from Nigeria to the Cameroon encouraged an influx of Nigerians, especially the

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T. Eyongetah, and R. Brain, A History of the Cameroon (London: Longman, 1974), p. 142.

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Daily Times, (8 March, 1955), p. 5.

Ibos as traders along the coastal towns of Victoria, Tiko, Kumba, Mamfe and also Bamenda in the grassland. Pidgin English which became the common language of the Cam-nigerian peoples for communication, trade and missionary work until today is a legacy of a small Creole group, descendants of the original two hundred loyal families who are believed to have followed or accompanied to Victoria, Alfred Saker, missionary of the English Baptist. These creoles were manumitted slaves who were brought from Freetown, Sierra Leone or were the runaway or liberated slaves by the British enroute to the New World. The creoles intermarried with the native Cameroonians of Isubu, Isuwu, the Wovea and other peoples. Through such intermarriage, the creoles lost their distinctiveness and created the Cos'-pidgeon, a sort of lingua franca of this sector of the Cameroon.

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Although Britain might have succeeded in making Cameroon a part of Nigeria colonially, Britain failed to create feelings of common national identity. The reason for the failure was partly because Cameroonians felt they were treated as insignificant and inferior, illiterate and backward passive observers. The Cameroonian political representatives: the Reverend Jermiah Chi Kangsen and

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Ndiva Kofele-kale, Tribesmen and Patriots: Polical Culture in a Poly-Ethnic African State (Washington D.C., University Press of America, Inc., 1961), p. 83.

Soloman Tandeng Muna of the Basel Mission Church, Sam Ndi, Dr. E.M.L. Endeley, N.N. Mbile, S.A. George, John Ndze, Foju, Abel Ngala, J.N. Foncha of the Roman Catholic Mission, Motomby Woleta, R.N. Charley and V.T. Lainjo who represented the Southern Cameroons people in the Eastern House of Assembly at Enugu, Nigeria were like naturalized aliens in Nigerian politics who happened to be Nigerian "citizens" not by birth, but by adoption.<sup>12</sup>

The same ascendancy was exercised over the Cameroonian Christian Church organizations which had joined membership and association with the Nigerian National Council of Churches. A few Cameroonian Roman Catholic priests were trained in Enugu, Nigeria. Very few Basel Mission pastors trained in Umoahia in Nigeria and an irregular insignificant number of the Baptist pastors were trained in Obumoso. It is important to note that even though the number of Cameroonian clergy trained in Nigeria was insignificant in comparison to the Nigerian Christian clergy, the average number of trained Cameroonian Christian clergy at this time was by far higher than ever before the First World War and even before the change of colonial rule. After all, even though colonially, Cameroon was part

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Debates in the Southern Cameroon House of Assembly, First Session, Vol 1, 1954.

of Nigeria, in the real sense of socio-ethnic-cultural belonging the Cameroonians were foreign students who were in the minority. Also, in terms of population, Nigeria was and still is more populated than this small sector of the Cameroon. The number of students coming from here and from Nigeria had to be commensurate with the population of the respective countries.

Meanwhile, as Cameroonians and Christian missions in the Southern Cameroon were being affected by the wind of change and muted by the imposed choice of cultural orientation under a new colonial master and an African neighbor, the Cameroonians and the Christian missions (the Roman Catholics and the Protestants) on the other side of the Mungo River, the French sector were disturbed by any external change. The Roman Catholics regarded the Cameroon as the Roman Catholic home. The transfer of Southern Cameroon to Britain and its attachment to Nigeria created notable opportunities for the Roman Catholics in the Cameroon. According to Cheng, the beginning date of the Roman Catholic Mission in the Cameroon and specifically in the French sector is 1900; and that the period between 1900

and 1914 was crucial in the Roman Catholic educational and ecclesiastical establishments. Substantiating this, Cheng explains that:

... Bonaberi made the greatest progress. (under the Paris Mission) In 1914 statistically, there were 4,385 Christians. On January 1st 1914 there were 93 schools with 6,600 pupils. Revival of church life was carried out by choir groups at Aboland and Wuri. Spiritual revival led to the avoidance of immoral songs. The District Court sanctioned compulsory school attendance and the villagers were urged to keep the Lord's day (Sunday) holy by going to church..., the work of spreading the gospel and education expanded as follows:

By 1887 communicants numbered 164 and in 1913 communicants numbered 9,571.

In 1887 there were 238 school children and in 1913 there were 22,818. 13

Cheng's explanation of the second phase of foreign missionary work in the Cameroon 1914-1953 (that is starting with the First World War and ending with the so-called "Eastern Crisis") is informative; but there are some misgivings of his assessment of the Roman Catholic work in the Cameroon during the European colonial rule. He attributes the whole educational, ecclesiastical, and spiritual success of the Christian religion in the Cameroon at this period solely to the Roman Catholics.

First, since the Protestants, particularly the English Baptist Missionary Society (Alfred Saker's teams) were in Douala from 1835 to the time of the First World War, it is substantively convincing to say that they (the Protestants) had prepared the Cameroon for the sowing of the spiritual seed of Christianity. The hushed period of the world war merely kept the fields fallow. The Roman Catholic Mission's success could therefore be explained only in this context. Secondly, the information which Cheng gives is equivocal. The 1887 and 1913 school statistics and the Christian population raise questions in regard to clarity and authenticity. Were these 1887 communicants (164) and school children (238) and 1913 communicants (9,571) and school children of the Roman Catholic Mission or Protestants or both? It is not explicit. In the third place, the increase in school attendance was brought about by compulsion from the colonial government rather than by religious and spiritual conviction, revival and impact of the Roman Catholic presence. The second phase of foreign Christian Missions in the Cameroon came to a close through reconciliatory attitudes of both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant clergy. Cheng alludes to this when he states:

The Paris Mission wanted the work in East Cameroon to be handed back to the Basel Mission, but... this couldn't work. The congregations... were handed to the American Presbyterians... by the Paris Mission. The propagation of the gospel in... Cameroon was



intensified by the visits of indigenous pastors and Paris missionaries. In May 1923 the Basel Mission was allowed to send 3 Swiss missionaries under the oversight of the Paris Mission. 14

Such a religious conspiracy for reconciliation was initiated and urged on more by the African indigenous clergy than by the white missionaries.

### Third Phase of Colonial Education

The first phase of foreign Christian Missions in the Cameroon spanned from 1835 to 1914. It was ecclesiastically chaotic and educationally haphazard. There were conflicts between the missionaries and the natives in matters of religious influence and cultural control. Secular education was state controlled. It was utilized by the Christian Missions in various ways to achieve their ulterior and unchristian motives. The First World War (1914) put an end to the period and marked the beginning of the second phase. This phase was a turning point in the political and religious revolutions in Cameroon. This period could be divided thusly: Part I. 1914-1922, a small section of Cameroon was given to Britain as a trusteeship

and attached to Nigeria for easy colonial administration. It was now called Southern Cameroon. Part II. 1922-1946, Cameroon was insignificantly submerged in Nigerian politics. Part III. 1946-1954, Cameroon became a significant part of the Eastern Regional House of Assembly. A new political party the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons was formed. There was an increased need for higher education for the African indigenes and the Christian clergy; but education at this time was still for a selected few, especially in the secular studies. Christianity in the I and II phases (1835-1950) was the religion of the colonial rulers and of a relatively insignificant number of the Africans, especially as it raised for the African traditional rulers a big question of institutional authenticity and recognition, cultural influence and authority.

It could be concluded that the trying and very few encouraging moments of the first and second phases of the foreign Christian Missionary work in the Cameroon were chastening for the missionaries rather than destroying the seeds of the Gospel Message brought from Europe and the United States to be sown and nurtured in the fertile soil of Africa. The third phase of the foreign Christian Missions, which spanned from 1950 and apparently accentuated from 1954 to 1957, was spectacular. Its accent was on religious reconstruction and contextualization,

autonomy and nation-building.

Early on, the one major obstacle - cultural intolerance - created a chasm between the colonial missions and the native Africans. Each party was so trapped in the confines of its culture that mutual co-existence was difficult. Forced daily contact and activities by the colonialists, especially the French and the Portuguese imperialists upon the native Africans were, in the minds of the colonialists that African societies were extended European communities, La France d'Outre Mer. The fraternal attitude of the missionaries might have westernized and changed the general outlook of the Africans; but in reality and spiritually, the impact of European Christianity was very small and superficial. The majority of the people remained staunch in the corpus of their traditional practices.

Some of the African seminarians, catechists and mission trained teachers were being utilized by African shadow governments for nation building. For example, coming from the Paris Mission in Francophone sector, Andre-Marie Mbida, a former Roman Catholic seminarian was in May 1957<sup>15</sup> elected the first African prime minister. He was not, however, nominated and appointed by the Catholic missionaries nor by the colonial authorities; but by his

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Andrian Hastings, A History of African Christianity 1950-1975 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 91.

people who saw leadership potential in him and felt that it was about time for indigenous leadership.

As African demand for independence became widespread and imminent, native Christians, too, began to express concern and need for indigenous Church leadership training. The Roman Catholic theological education was up-graded to seven years. The Roman Catholic Mission instituted more stringent rules than the Protestants for the ordination of their priests. In effect, there were often more drop-out candidates for the former church organization than among the latter. Sasse College in Buea was opened in 1939 to serve a dual purpose for the Roman Catholics. It was to prepare Cameroonians for secular leadership with a religious conviction that was based on Roman Catholic teaching. It was a nursery for the preparation of Cameroonians for the priesthood. The production of Cameroonian priests in the Roman Catholic Church was deliberately made scarce, but those who successfully went through the training and education possessed a sound educational background, deep spiritual conviction, but the shallow and weak background in homilies (preaching).<sup>16</sup>

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Bernard Fonlon, An Open Letter to the Bishops of Buea and Bamenda (Buea: Catholic Information Service, 1973), p. 9.

The duration for theological training in the Protestant church was three or four years which compared to the Roman Catholic was more or less a period for less intensive theological training with weak spiritual discipline. But unlike the Roman Catholics who gave more time to philosophy, Protestants were steeped in the sacred scriptures, substantiated by the sermons they preach from public pulpits.

Indigenous expectations for education led to an increased demand for higher education as the need for religious reconstruction and nation-building became apparent. The goal of indigenous higher education was Africanization of politics and religion. But, even though higher education of the Christian clergy was undertaken, the Catholic bishop's Cathedral of Holy Maria's diocese and the Protestant moderator's synod office were empty of educated and experienced indigenous clergy. The Basel Mission handed church work over to the native Cameroonians in 1957 with no Cameroonian educated up to a degree level.

Whether by design or default, it was realized that the Christian missions by giving more attention to teacher training which was a government responsibility and by abandoning catechist training weakened the Church's position in the secular world. Worse still, the inadequate education of catechists and higher training for teachers and their freedom to serve or refuse to serve led to a

loose alliance between church and state that resulted in declining Christian membership.

Black ecclesiastical progress caused white apprehension. White missionaries feared that black leadership would replace them. This was a presupposition that foreign missionary influence and work in Africa was ominously about to end. This suspicion erupted into a conflict in 1953 between white missionary, Henri Martin, and black clergy man, Josue Muishe, in Bamoun in the Francophone province of the Cameroon. This conflict was popularly known as L'Affaire de Bamoun. Muishe was accused of insubordination and involvement in local politics. This controversy was ended by church autonomy in March 1957 for the Evangelical Church of Cameroon.

#### Why Fight For Autonomy?

The third phase of the white presence in Africa was a crucial period to both whites and the blacks. Its events contributed to the elimination of colonialism and to independence for Africans. In the secular and religious domains, African novelists and artists were highly articulate prophets of colonial doom and the standard

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Andrian Hastings, A History of African Christianity 1950-1975. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 116.

bearers of African rebirth. They incarnated the cultural and political aspirations and the religious reconstruction and contextualization of the entire continent. Nationalism and Africanization were two catch words on the lips of every African black. Amos Tutuola's Palm Wine Drinkard was intended to teach two main things. The setting of this novel, published in 1953, is Nigeria, a West African country and a former British colony. The umbrella thesis of the book is that with Britain, as a specific example of colonial agent, colonialism had negative as well as positive effects. The book highlights certain points namely that the negative and positive aspects of colonialism attracted responses from the colonized.

Specifically, according to Tutuola, the main defaults of colonialism are distortion and destruction of cultures of the colonized and a change of the colonized's life from a simple and cheap economic and social living pattern to a sophisticated and expensive one. The colonized respond to colonialism by either resistance or accommodation to colonialism. The curses of modern civilization are isolation and individualism; but the blessings are modern science, technology and education.

Cyprian Ekwensi's People of the City is broadly of a West African background with specific reference to the Gold Coast and Nigeria. In this novel, there are three main

citations: (1) Western civilization creates evils such as crimes, stress and immoral cities; (2) it provides for negative education seen in youth's disrespect of parents and elders and (3) parenthetically and paradoxically, amid the nature of the decadent city life religion has its own rule to play.

The Cameroonian, Mongo Beti's Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba translated in English as "The Poor Christ of Bomba," is enigmatic. It is an affront to the early Christian foreign religious or missionary credibility. Bomba is one of the predominant Christian (Roman Catholic) communities in the Cameroon. The locus is corporate for the Christian missionary societies in Africa where the Christian missions had their footholds and became easy conduits for colonial authorities to penetrate the interior of Africa.

Beti has two reasons for using the Roman Catholic mission as a representative Christian mission. First, it is the Christian mission whose inner life he knows very well since he has been a Roman Catholic Christian from childhood to adult. Second, this is the only foreign Christian organization in Africa whose dogmatic and ecclesiastic life is so different from all others that it raises suspicion and speculation.

This novel is intended to reveal two things about foreign Christian missions. First, Christian missions, like white colonial organizations, saw in the African an image of the savage and regarded themselves as justifiably



carrying out civilizing missions to the savages. This feeling of superiority led to the concept of white supremacy, an epitome of attitudes, ideologies and policies which were generally associated with the rise in the 18th Century of forms of European dominance over what they called non-white peoples. The task of the civilizing missions was the tearing off the old skin of Africans (the savage) and giving them a new name. It was no easy task. "This is no job for weak nerves  
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but once the whole idea filled----with enthusiasm".

Secondly, Beti is saying that Africans' conviction, borne out of experience, is that neither colonialists nor missionaries could be trusted. They were one and the same person with different but camouflaging names and attitudes. The enigmatic title literally means poor or helpless Christ whose name is misused or used to achieve one's ulterior motives. The book sounds anti-Catholic. It refers to the Cameroonian Roman Catholic girls who upon deciding to marry the Christian way are persuaded to marry the Roman Catholic way. They are kept in the sixa, the Roman Catholic fattening homes for four months. Here the girls do manual

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Mongo Beti, Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba (The Poor Christ of Bomba) London: Heineman, 1971, p. 2.

labor for ten hours every day. They are "defenseless creatures---prey to the first predator that comes along."<sup>19</sup>

But why were the Africans so concerned about and persistent in their demand for political independence and church autonomy? Cheng has quoted Ecclesiastes 3:1<sup>20</sup> as an all embracing answer to this question. To a philosopher, it is an enigma. A social psychologist would rank it as profound, thought provoking and theologically intricate; but phenomenologically, Africans' yearning and fight for colonial independence and religious autonomy transcended the Ecclesiastes. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." The application of Ecclesiastes concept of time is that time is a great healer but Africans scorned it as a monstrous killer.

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Ibid., p. 203.

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Elias Cheng, "The Growth and Development of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, (1886-1976)", M.A. Thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, California: June, 1976, p. 88.

Africans' grievances were several and serious; consequently some indigenous secular and religious leaders like Nnamdi Azikiwe, Kimbango and others stepped forward as symbols of defiant charismatic prophets of liberation. Their dissatisfaction was founded on the allegation that secular and religious colonialists had conspired to distort and destroy African culture and traditional authorities. Hastings has suggested another reason for African resistance of the white man's presence in Africa when he states:

...Christianity was the religion of a relatively small minority of Africans in one or other of its many forms the continent's dominant religion at the level of the government and of political life. ... Christian conversion...undoubtedly created a deep question of institutional authenticity for any king in Africa, just because it could cut so deeply into the mythical and even institutional under-girding of his office and authority. It bit into the cultural context of political institution just as it did into marital institution. 21

The western idea of separation of church and state, of an artificially built-up wall between secular and sacred, ran counter to the African concept and practice of non-barrierness. The only way of re-rooting the distorted African ancient concept and practice of inclusiveness of monarchism and priesthood, without agnostic exception, was to part company with western Christianity and establish an African Christianity. There was a persistent search for an

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Andrian Hastings, A History of African Christianity, (1950-1975), p. 18.

authentic African religious identity. There was a need to replace the concept of theocracy with "theocreanthropocracy". The former meant a system of government (as in Iran) in which it is believed by the religious believers of that society that the laws of the state are the laws of God. The latter means a system of government which believes that God, man, and the whole creation are so dynamically and intimately linked that they co-exist in a harmonious order seen in the socio-cultural, politico-economic and religious activities which make separateness impossible. Paul coincidentally reiterated this African concept of God-man-nature when he in Romans 8:22 says:

...the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now ...waiting for the adoption to wit, the redemption.... 22

Further, there existed a chasm between the native Africans and white imperialists in pursuit of educational opportunities. Even white missionaries discriminated in the existing educational opportunities against Africans for they (whites) believed that there were two types of priests - - superior and inferior. There were prestigious, well equipped, and well-staffed mission and private learning institutes which were attended only by the children of white missionaries to maintain the white status quo. The schools were staffed with highly qualified white teachers.

Leadership in the church just as it was in secular circles was overwhelmingly white. Blacks or Africans were in minority except among themselves. Black Christians had no representation in matters of disagreement between them and white missionaries.

There were other compelling reasons for churches in the Cameroon to yearn for autonomy. Foreignness in worship, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, engendered an urge for indigenous liturgical and theological reforms. But at the bottom of every motive for church independence was the fact that Africans have never accepted foreign rule.

#### Conclusions

The central theme of this chapter has been that colonial authorities and Christian missions used education as a means to effecting socio-cultural and politic-economic revolution in the Cameroon. It has been the story of Christianity in an African society in which there have been constant conflicts among zealously guarded great foreign missionary societies-- the Roman Catholics and the Protestants on the one hand and the natives and colonial authorities on the other. To the latter, the natives, the new religion, Christianity, meant different things.

The story began around the 18th Century, an epoch when the African continent was invaded by imperialism and colonialism. This has been a religious history, but a history whose comprehensiveness could only be possible within the spectrum of socio-political history. The focus

is on the education of the Christian clergy in each of the Christian denominations that were in the Cameroon before 1957.

It was evident that Christian missionary education, both secular and theological, and especially Protestant education was focused on the production of intellectual giants and spiritual dwarfs. The church stressed intellectual over spiritual development. Even though these were unintended consequences, they affected African Christianity adversely and were partly responsible for the emergence of the African independent churches.

In this chapter, the missionary activities were examined from 1835 to 1957. This long period has been broken down into three phases. Phase one from 1835 through 1914 was a long, desolate, and discouraging spiritually, educationally, and socio-culturally to the Christian missions in the Cameroon. It was the worst epoch in the politico-cultural history of Africa in that, like the period of the trans-continental slave trade which affected individual families directly and the entire continent by depopulating it, the period of colonial Christianity affected the African people culturally. On the other hand, colonial Christianity also suffered badly. Many missionaries died. Most of them were humiliated. The Basel Mission, for example, was rejected and driven out in

Liberia. The Christian missionaries fought among themselves. Missionary plans, strategies, methods and projects for evangelization were shattered by wars, particularly the First World War, which ended German colonial adventure in Africa. African societies and communities were divided, culture distorted, social life confused, and the economy disoriented.

Most of the problems of and resistance to the Christian missions, especially the Protestant missions, in Africa were provoked and aggravated more by colonial authorities and Christian missionaries themselves than the so-called "savages and infidels." Colonialists, especially the aggressive and cruel German imperialists, wanted to transform Africans overnight through force. Christian missionaries wanted to effect conversion through human might and worldly wisdom.

Some Protestant parish pastors and schools managers used to scare away and brutalize the natives. There was the typical case of Joeph Kudi Kumo, a native of Esimbi in Menchum Division and a Basel Mission teacher and headmaster of Benabenge Basel Mission school. The Basel Mission school areas of Bafut, Ndop and Wum were managed by one manager who lived in Bafut. Teachers received their salaries and school supplies from Bafut. At the beginning of every school term and at every month's end, the head teachers went to Bafut for requisitions and salaries. Kudi Kumo left

Benabenge for Bafut, a long tedious journey of hard trekking through thick forests, high mountains, swift deep rivers and grassy foot paths. He forgot to take along with him his fee log book. The schools' manager, a white missionary, refused to pay the headmaster unless he returned to Benabenge and brought the log with him. The headmaster pleaded and insisted that his staff should be paid. The school manager-pastor became upset and started beating the teacher. This almost seven foot tall and about two hundred and seventy pound dark and gracefully built young man was badly provoked. He beat the manager-pastor. The teacher was dismissed.

Furthermore, Christian mission schools managers regarded remote and non-motorable areas as places for disciplinary punishment for insubordination, disrespect and bad character. Sending, for example, a teacher to Frukankang, Esimbi and Kaka (even if it was to serve a great need) was regarded as punishment. This state of things made the teaching career with the Christian missions unpleasant. The situation was worsened by low pay and delayed teachers' salaries.

Teaching with the mission was no longer a blessed calling, but a belittling curse. This was one of the factors which contributed to the church's loss of raison d'etre for participating in secular education. The other factors were extreme secularism seen in the mundane



atmosphere and moral tone of mission schools which were not different from public schools, the students' behavior and use of leisure and extra-curricular activities. See, unlike Sasse, the Roman Catholic boys secondary school, and Okoyong, the girls secondary school made provision on the school time table for group and individual organized and prayerful life and spirituality. In contrast, the Cameroon Protestant College at Bali for boys and the Saker girls secondary school featured on routine Christianity.

If the clergy is uneducated, or is theologically under-educated or inappropriately educated, such this can have repercussions on the church. The authority of the clergy over the laity can be weakened. The laity has often been to measure the worth and authority of the clergy in terms of the level of education and training. It is important to note that, in as much as this may be expedient it is not a determinant of a calling to the ministry. The level of one's spiritual attainment cannot and should not be confused with mental development; nor is it necessarily true that being a clergyman makes a person a spiritual giant. But, he ought to be so by implication of his theological training.

From an ecclesiastical viewpoint, the mediocre education of the clergy can lead to the emergence of a laity that claims authority and exerts influence on the church as if it were a secular organization. The emergence

of the Christian laity in the Cameroon can be traced from the First World War. After the war, the foreign missionaries, particularly the Protestant ones had been ousted. The few indigenous under-educated catechists left were unfit for urban ministry and outreach evangelism. The problem of uneducated catechists and became an opportunity for some educated lay persons to assume ecclesiastical responsibilities. It could also be interpreted as an attempt to form a rival ministry, the laity.

It is important to note that this anomalous state of affairs -- uneducation or under-education of the Christian clergy -- was perpetrated from the beginning by the early Protestant Christian missionaries who had no convincingly motivated theological reasons for engaging in theological and secular education. Ekiti alludes to this criticism when he states:

While the Basel Mission readily saw her commitment in ...Education, the same unfortunately could not be said of Secondary Education. She had to be pushed into this area of Education by Government persuasion and foresight of the Basel Mission Missionary Rev. E. Peyer in Buea. That is why the first Basel Mission College now Cameroon Protestant College Bali, could only open in 1949, eleven years after the first Roman Catholic Mission Secondary School, St. Joseph's College Sasse, had been operating. 23

Regretably, Christian missions had blundered in their participation in national education and nation-building.

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23

Nyansako-ni-Nku ed., Journey in Faith: The Story of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (Yaounde: Buma Kor and Co. Publishers, 1982), p. 83.

Instead of establishing learning institutions as cells to inspire spiritual workers, the institutions produced secular citizens. But, it is too general, too negative and unevident, however, to conclude that because the Basel Mission blundered in its educational role in the Cameroon, it had no clearly defined goals for missionary ventures abroad.

Such an organization had no regular budgeted income. It was supported by philanthropic groups and individuals who measured and saw missionary work in terms of visible and concrete successes rather than faith. Education, let alone education of the clergy, was seen as an investment (a thing they tried to avoid) and not as the fruit of evangelization. The number of schools and school children therein would indicate the extent of the Basel mission missionary success.

Another discrepancy arose from the fact that not being a church with a standing history, tradition and liturgy, its activities were not only haphazard but there was, unlike the Roman Catholic Mission an absence of uniformity. This was compounded by the fact that the Protestant missions (as it was characteristic of them) spent time, money and energy opinated theological arguments whose end results led to confusion and mulifarious sectarian teachings. Certain factors account for unity and uniformity in the Roman Catholic Church. There is, for example, a

sense of post-Tridentine theology and spirituality seen in the Catholic ritualistic liturgy and organizational centralization. In order to ensure the Roman Catholic position in a rapidly changing society or world, large new seminaries were opened in the Catholic headquarters, Rome, to train and educate Roman Catholic Church leaders all over the world in the Catholic way and tradition.<sup>24</sup>

Even though, with a strategy to make the priesthood and education of the clergy necessary to make services in the Christian ministry attractive, spirituality in mission schools in the Cameroon was deteriorating. Mission schools, which were believed to be a dynamic arm of evangelism especially for the Protestants, began to lose importance. In other words, as the demand for formal secular education increased, the value of vernacular education and the necessity for catechist training began to wane. In government or mission schools religious education was no longer the top priority for establishing them as the early Christian missionaries had persuasively preached. This is how and when the Christian organizations, especially the Protestants, began to lose their educational raison d'etre.

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<sup>24</sup>

Andrian Hastings, A History of African Christianity  
p. 56.

## CHAPTER IV

### AN OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION OF THE CLERGY , 1957

....., Heads of Religious bodies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen! It has happened! And glory be to God. A great history has been made today in the Federal Republic of Cameroon. And a new milestone has been made in the history of the Presbyterian Church of West Cameroon. You have all seen what has happened. The Basel mission has transferred to the church which it built up for so many years. What does this mean? For us it means several things. 1

What was so significant about this date, April 1968? Why was it of importance to the peoples of the Cameroon, in general, and to the Basel Mission Cameroonian Christians that such an event of handing over of ecclesiastic responsibilities should invoke an aura of excitement? Was the accent of this day on ecclesiastical independence or Christian autonomy? Was it going to make any difference to the Basel Mission Christian Missionary organization and a church, the Presbyterian Church, in Cameroon? This chapter will address these questions. These questions emanate from the thesis that the native Christian churches in the Cameroon are more concerned about the education of their clergy than foreign missionaries.

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Jeremiah Chi Kangsen, "Integration Ceremony, Mankon Stadium," Bamenda, 4-28-68.

The Basel Mission was unfortunate in that one of her most committed and willing pioneer and experienced Christian ministers, Jeremiah Kangsen, was, at the same time, the most outspoken critic, potent and relentless advocate of church autonomy.

An intimate glimpse into the early life of Jeremiah Chi Kangsen reveals him as a person of a humble and austere beginnings, born into a local royal family which followed primitive religious rites and teachings. Parental support kept him warm, bright and happy; and it established a solid foundation on which his later life was built. Each stage of Kangsen's life verged on a conscious reflection on the past which linked together the present in a rational unity with continuous preparation for the future.

Kangsen entered the employ of the Basel Mission in 1927 first as a pupil and then advanced step by step as pupil, as catechist, as teacher, as pastor, as Synod Clerk and as Moderator of the Church. He died in 1988 as a retired Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. He has been among those Africans who worked to secure freedom from imperialistic Christianity to develop church autonomy for effective religious reconstruction and nation building in Africa. The following substantiates the assumption. Skepticism about the sincere intention of the Basel Mission's missionary work in the Cameroon was sown in Kangsen by Edwin Staut, Basel mission missionary and Kangsen's seminary staff colleague and principal. Staut

underrated Kangsen's capability and Africans' readiness for higher theological studies. While a teacher at the catechist Training Institute at Nyasoso, Kangsen applied to the Basel Mission for a scholarship for pastoral studies at Akropong in the Gold Coast, now Ghana; but Staut doubted and questioned Kangsen's application. The denial of the scholarship distressed Kangsen. Another injury was inflicted upon Kangsen by another Basel Mission missionary, Fritz Raafflaub who rejected Kangsen's application to the Basel Mission to enroll for the examination for the Teacher Higher Elementary grade.

Again, another Basel Mission missionary, George Tischhauser rejected Kangsen's application for a scholarship and study leave in the Gold Coast. He tried to discourage Kangsen by saying that Kangsen's education in the Gold Coast would be very expensive. To extinguish Kangsen's ambition completely, Tischhauser provocatively suggested that Kangsen's parents, who were living in grinding poverty, could pay for his studies in the Gold Coast. This to Kangsen was an affront and insult.

Kangsen experienced many humiliating disappointments during his early employment with the Basel Mission. He was again shocked by the un-Christian attitude of Frederick Buertschi, a Basel Mission principal in the Catechist Training institute. Some staff of the institute used to assist in postal transactions at the postal agency and received some pay; but when the Post Master in Kumba, by a

letter, invited Kangsen to come and collect requisitions and assist at the postal agency, the principal refused to grant Kangsen permission to go to Kumba, explaining that the position was too lucrative and tempting. He feared that Kangsen might give up his ecclesiastical commitment and enter the secular world. It was difficult for Kangsen to escape these bad memories. They constantly reminded him of the white man's opinion about and attitude towards the black race.

As most patriotic Africans who had always resisted the domineering authority of an outsider, particularly the whites, Jeremiah Chi Kangsen had yearned for and eagerly looked forward to that day when Uhuro should be declared to the peoples of Africa, in general, and the Cameroon, in particular. At the very back of his mind, deep down in the archives of his soul lurked elusive silent but scaring memories of personal hurts and general atrocities perpetrated by the German colonial demagogues and Christian miscreants. He had concern for the political and religious saga of distorted African societies. He felt it was time that indigenous African leaders began political and religious reconstruction. Like George Orwell in Animal Farm Kangsen was saying:

Folks of Africa, folks of Cameroon,  
 Folks of every Land and Tribe,  
 Heed our ancestral Tears of joy,  
 Verging to Bliss and Peace is time.



Freedom at last will surely come,  
Demagogues and Demigods will all go,  
Politics and Religions will wed in Christ  
And all Africa will be free indeed.\*

He demonstrated his position on several ecclesiastical and political occasions. He tells a story that in the Catechists Training Institute at Nyasoso the whole staff, including Kangsen himself, was one evening invited for supper by the Basel Mission Inspector and Secretary. In that social evening as they sat chatting and telling stories, the Basel Mission Secretary found himself telling stories to the African tutors about church work in Borneo, now Kalimantan, in Indonesia on how the Dajaks did church work together with missionaries and shared buildings. Kangsen was very attentive to the stories and when the time for questions came, he asked: "What would happen to the church if Nigeria became independent and the missionaries left the country?" Behind Kangsen's question hid three very

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\*This poem was composed by the author of this dissertation as though it was original work of Kangsen, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. It is in the tone, rhyme and pattern of that in the "Animal Farm" by George Orwell. It is an imputation. It is intended to be an ovation to Church independence to all Africa. It is succinct and straight in its message - All Africa will be free and independent religiously and politically.

important things about the future of the foreign missionary church in Africa and the political future of the continent. Kangsen was indirectly asking the Basel mission representative whether the native Kalimantanans were prepared ecclesiastically, academically, and politically enough to take over church work and continue it efficiently or would the people be left to wallow in their illiteracy and mediocrity. By Nigeria becoming independent, what might happen to the church? Kangsen indirectly meant that the position of the Basel mission in the Cameroon was precarious as the missionaries were not preparing the indigenous population academically and theologically to continue church work if the country became independent. Thirdly, Kangsen was waving a yellow flag to the missionaries that they were soon to leave the country and Church work was to be carried on by the natives themselves.

Kangsen's question stirred up bad feelings among his Cameroonian colleagues who preferred to remain tied to the Basel mission rather than strive for church autonomy; but the Basel mission Secretary saw much wisdom and maturity in Kangsen's question, explanation and seriousness. There was the immediate effect of that short but powerful dialogue. When the Catechist Training Institute was in 1950 turned into a theological seminary, its standards were raised and the duration of study increased. Most of the former Cameroonian tutors in the Catechist Training Institute,

because of their mediocre education, were sent back to local parishes. Kangsen was retained as senior tutor in the Theological Seminary in Nyasoso.

He renewed his effort to formulate and adapt a theology that could be acceptable to bring about religious reconstruction and nation building and provide solutions to some common African problems. Kangsen's own theology was based on his higher theological studies in the Gold Coast (Ghana) and the "Youth for Christ" theology. This theology was motivated by the fact that, because the Basel Missionaries had not mobilized the youth, the Basel mission local churches were void of young people. There were danger warning the church of developing juvenile problems.

Another occasion on which Kangsen demonstrated his ecclesiastical and political position was when his counsel was sought concerning the autonomy of the local church over management of church finances. An arduous event had begun to smoulder in late 1948 into a serious problem that could affect Christianity adversely in the northwestern part of the country. This financial problem stemmed from the foreign missionary's covetous attitude towards finances.

It was alleged that funds collected from the Christians of the local congregations in the Bamenda area under the stewardship of a Basel Mission representative were inadequately and unjudiciously managed. This was a serious complaint brought to the church by a Cameroonian

Basel Mission catechist. Not numbed with fear, the catechist vehemently suggested that the treasury be transferred to the indigenous Christians themselves so that they might know whether the finances were sufficient or not for proper support of church work. This was the people's cry for church autonomy. But the Basel Mission authorities were insensitive, indignant and overbearing like imperialists. They refused. It is doubtful if the Basel Mission accepted the plan whether there were indigenous pastors educated enough to handle church finances.

This matter caused considerable unrest in the church in the Grassfield. There was a great deal of correspondence between the catechist and the Basel Mission authorities. Jeremiah Chi Kangsen was consulted by the Basel Mission authorities because they considered him the most enlightened Cameroonian trained pastor. Kangsen embraced the problem relentlessly as an opportunity to push forward the conviction that church autonomy, although not an end in itself, was a means to an end which was a matter for the indigenous people to decide; whether they were able to manage their own spiritual and administrative affairs without outside influence. This was another occasion of the beginning of the fight for church autonomy and the catalyst for this was money.

Cameroonians felt ready for selfhood. They believed that autonomy was an ideology that abhorred greed, but

called for an upright spiritual attitude. Their qualities of strength and maturity in the struggle for church autonomy and political independence were humility and integrity, pragmatism and dynamism. Kangsen was among those early African Christian clergy who saw red tape and corruption in the political arena due to absence of the true spirit of patriotism in the laity in the fight for political independence. He felt that there was much the western world could learn from those who belonged to what was termed the pre-technological societies. The conviction was that church autonomy alone could not free Cameroon, but it was to quicken effort and plans for political reconstruction for an attainable traditional African statecraft.

He accepted the call into politics and relegated active ecclesiastic routine in the background and became a modern day Moses to lead his people out of ecclesiastical and political bondage. He was in 1951 elected to active political responsibility. In parliament, Kangsen lived up to his Christian conscience, evident in his parliamentary maiden address in the Eastern House of Assembly:

We fought for our Cameroon in which men and women of all tribes and races and creed would be free to work, free to speak, free to live and move within the framework of law. We shall be impartial in discharging our duties, we shall pay due regard to whosoever regard is due (applause). We shall respect our natural rulers (applause). 2

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Debates in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly  
First Session, Vol. 1, 1954.

Kangsen later on left the political stage and returned home satisfied. The Basel Mission church authorities suspected him as a dangerous secular man whose Christian conviction was consumed by the destructive worm of politics. He was quickly awarded a scholarship, not at his request, to return to school and read out politics and read in theology. This offer did indeed coincide with his ever burning zeal for studies. Kangsen was involved in secular politics, but this did not kill his ambition for theological studies. He knew that as clergy-politician he needed higher and advanced education. This was the general craving for the African clergy-politician around the 1960s. He accepted the award and went to school. His education earned him ecclesiastical and secular recognition and respect. This might have been one reason for excitement on the occasion of church autonomy.

At last, the long awaited day came and Kangsen stood up and stepped forward on the public podium and became the people's spokesman. His speech made profound sense to everybody in the audience, politician, head of institutions, woman and man, child and Christian, clergy and laity. Just as there was need for political independence for Africa, there was need for church autonomy in the Cameroon. This autonomy was necessary and urgent because there was a strange dichotomy between the concept and conviction of Western Christianity and African

religious life. For whereas, as one of the western missionaries has confessed it himself saying:

Our task as missionaries is not to establish an institution, but to teach a way of life ... not ...individual life, but corporate life in Christ. 3

To the African, the authenticity, the worth, the genuineness of practicable and workable religion lies inclusively in the individual and corporate community of worshippers. Corporate religion without the individual identity or the other way round excludes personal and community involvement and full participation. A church in the African sense is a community of believers individually convicted and converted by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. It is not a club of missionaries whose sole purpose is to teach their culture rather than propagate the Gospel.

A church is not just an imposing edifice purposed to attract and entice curious religious onlookers, nor is it a human institution. A church is not a tradition established after and according to the whims and wishes of men. It is the communion of saints, an indissoluble, indispensable,  
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Stephen Neill, A History of Christian Missions (London, England: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1971), p. 534.

incorruptible God's Kingdom on earth. It is a cohort of sinners, a fellowship of Jesus Christ's followers, who come together in truth and faith to seek and sit in the presence and power to receive help and healing, blessing and the benediction. A church is a metaphysical divine institution whose head is Jesus, the Christ, the Lord and the Savior. The early colonial Christian missionaries did not understand this concept.

This public excitement and jubilation was the climax, the summary of all the victories won and successes gained in ad hoc and standing committees, church and general assembly deliberations, by Africans. Africans regarded Western Christianity as strange religion of the white man which stringently required them to renounce their own traditional religions, cultural practices and reject themselves as a race that was lacking in the rudiments of what was called modern civilization. Religious freedom, ecclesiastical autonomy, and secular administration and polity were, in principle, promised by the Basel Mission Evangelical Missionary Society to its Cameroonian converts on November 13, 1957 at about 11 p.m. in a solemn church service at Bali in the Bamenda area. This day is of historical significance in the life of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. It is celebrated every year as a major church anniversary to commemorate the church's journey in faith as a mission field before it became a church.



The seventy year period of the so-called religious adventures across frontiers for spiritual revival and revitalization, revolution and evangelism was a sufficient period for effective missionary work among peoples who already had a sense of and worshipped God. To foreign missionaries who know nothing about African beliefs, African spirituality is undermined. This conception hindered the missionaries from making a religious resurgence and spiritual reawakening among Africans. The main cause of failure was egocentric and ethnocentric feelings and attitudes.

Foreign missionaries undermined the central point of all religions, including Christianity. The central point of religion is that all religions concern mankind and, in their origin, all religions have been local and ethnic in character. Each religion, Buddhism or Hinduism, Islam or Christianity, Judaism or African Traditional Religions has its noble utterances as expressions which are more of social solidarity than of religious faith. Christian missionaries failed to utilize these essentials for the evangelization of Africa. Instead, they worked maliciously to destroy these elements of religion and faith.

The African sense of the immanence is different from the western concept of the Almighty. To the African, God is a supreme maker and Father and Ruler over all persons and all nature, over all races and nations. In the African

sense, a genuine spirit of patriotism is of a co-operating and co-ordinating nature, that unites people for the sake of communality.

The inescapable task of the western missionaries was to help the Africans see the "theocreanthropocratic" essence of the God which they preached. That is, the God they preached that has joined together Nature and Humanity, the church and the world (cosmos) piety and polity, the sacred and the secular, evangelism and ethics, the spirit of withdrawal and the spirit of involvement, conservation and innovation, worship and work, reflection and action, preaching and practising, the indicative and the imperative, the holy and the human, the individual and the community, the spirit and the society, person and the group. They were to show how all these must be indivisibly, and inseparably linked in the life and hope of the person who evangelizes and the person who is evangelized.

On the other hand, regrettably, either by design or default, coincidence or concomitance, the Christian era in Africa began with the age of imperialism and colonialism. This state of affairs consequently attracted negative responses from the natives because, corroboratively, the missionaries abused the Africans. Cameroonians' demand for political freedom and religious autonomy was not a theoretical but a practical and real transfer of power and politics, of responsibility and assets to the indigenous

people themselves. Unlike political independence which was granted to the people abruptly, church autonomy in the Cameroon was to gradual. In the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, autonomy began in the form of orientation. That is, Cameroonians were introduced to certain responsibilities. They were guided and supervised by white representatives from Basel. The activities were grouped as follows: departments, institutions, districts, parishes and local congregations. Visibly, the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon was divided in two main parts: the clergy and the laity.

The expertise and experiences, the resources and resourcefulness, the talents and the training, the education and the industries of the laity were to be enlisted and used for religious reconstruction and nation-building. The pastor was to act as chief administrator, spiritual advisor - counsellor, teacher and pastor. He needed education almost like or more than a lay Christian in order to do his work effectively. Certain institutions and departments such as homemaking centers, youth centers, hospitals and health centers, printing presses, treasuries, education departments, and women's organizations were secular and social in outlook because they were comprised mostly of lay people who were entrusted with social services. The departments for literature and communication and lay training and evangelism were charged with the

ecclesiastical, evangelical, and spiritual life of the church. These were glorious plans which needed practical application that called for substantive church autonomy. There was need for the theological understanding of the meaning of church and autonomy as opposed to politics and independence.

### Substantive Church Autonomy

Substantive church autonomy to an African meant, first of all, the theological and ecclesiastical understanding, clear and precise definition of the term "church" as the divine creation and metaphysical perception of the body of Jesus Christ. This is seen in its diverse yet non-contradictory function of evangelical activities, prophetic voice, priestly position of the ordained and pastoral care and counseling. Some of these functions include lay and theological training for evangelical field work.

The Roman Catholics, and specifically the Jesuits, were aware of this from the beginning of their missionary activities in Africa and in other parts of the world.

Drawing from the histories, memoirs and biographies of some of the Roman Catholic scholars and saints, like Saint Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo, Thomas Aquinas, Francis of Assisi who founded the Friar Movement in 1209, Ignatious of Loyola and other Catholic men and women, the Roman Catholics felt a great need for thorough education. This was for the deep spirituality of the Catholic clergy and the clerics. Primary schools, secondary schools and junior

seminaries, nunaries and monasteries were opened. These twin aspects were included and emphasized in the Roman Catholic school curriculum from primary through university education. The Protestants, particularly the Presbyterians, partially understood it only after several years of shadow church autonomy. Protestant churches launched an appeal to young Cameroonians to accept God's invitation into the Christian ministry of the Divine Word and Sacraments (pastoral training).

Young Cameroonians are today called by God to be servants of His Gospel in this country of Cameroon. Jesus Christ the Lord uses the witness and service of the Presbyterian Church in ...Cameroon to show forth his rule.

...At this hour the responsibilities of this calling are great and exacting, for today's minister of the Word must proclaim and teach the living Word of God and serve Jesus Christ in a young developing nation among people who aspire to a better life of security and well-being and grope for things to give meaning to their lives. To do this service effectively, the minister of the Word is to be both deeply committed to Jesus Christ the Lord of Church and World, and to be trained in his vocation! 4

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Presbyterian Church in Cameroon; Theological College Nyasoso, "Cameroon Needs Pastors", 1966.

Before Elangwe's prophetic voice, the Basel Mission had already opened a Catechist Training Institute at Nyasoso. It became a theological seminary, and admission standards were raised. The Baptists opened a Bible School at Ndu around that same time with the Basel Mission and admitted men with low educational qualifications.

The Church as a unique institution is set aside in the world to deplore and denounce evil, corruption, and malpractices in high and low places. To render this service effectively, her ministers and workers must be well informed about current issues. Education of the clergy is not an optional thing, but a top priority of the church.

The Roman Catholics displayed this prophetic attack on Cameroon politics in 1970 and found themselves in difficulty during the political regime of Amadou Ahidjo. One of the Roman Catholic priests, Bishop Ndongmou, faced political torture and legal ordeals for challenging the politics of the nation. He went in self-exile and since then, he has not returned. The women's wing, the Christian Women Fellowship (CWF) of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, led by educated pastors' wives as group leaders, donated food and fuel, clothing and psychological consolation to the prisoners. This was a practical concrete protest against the government's poor treatment of the inmates. They appealed for prison reforms. This was a gratifying aspect of participation in nation-building by a religious organization.

It is a reminder that there was nothing as secular and sacred in the Old Testament, nor was there any watertight demarcation between secular and sacred, if such a phenomenon existed. This assertion is substantive in the priestly position and functions. A priest was both a spiritual shepherd and political leader. He performed ritualistic rites of cleansing, purification and blessing of crops and live-stock and people and society on cultural occasions after religious formalities and worship in the sanctuary. As a political leader, he consulted with his Elders, his advisory council of the inner core, to either declare war or ratify peace.

The idea of separate domains of sacred and secular, religion and politics, holy and profane is a strange modern phenomenon. In the Cameroon, Jeremiah Chi Kangsen, a Protestant pastor and Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, tried to use his theological education and understanding to restore the lost Old Testament phenomenon of "theocreatanthropocracy." As he became pastor-chief (traditional ruler) of Aghem in 1977, this sparked acrimonious discussions inside and outside Christian church circles.

To many, this was a shocking incident which meant loss of purpose and prestige by the individual, the denomination to which that individual belonged, and an insult to the entire Christian faith. Many expressed consternation over

the crowning of Kangsen as a traditional ruler, because he had violated the will of God who had chosen him as an ecclesiastical leader.

Accordingly, controversy culminated in acrimonious discussion in a general Synod at Kumba Church Center in 1978. Kangsen was called upon to explain the matter and so he explained it:

Dear Friends,

Some of you have no doubt heard ...that I have been made a traditional Chief (ruler). ...it is a fact. To some of you this is very sad news indeed, for this may look like a sellout of the Christian faith in our tribe...considering my position in the ...church....

I want to give you the fact of the matter in order to clear the misunderstanding. . .my relationship with my tribe has been very interesting .... In 1942 the people of Aghem requested the Basel Mission to release me to go and open the Basel Mission ...school at Wum. ...In 1951 the Wum community once again appealed to the Basel Mission to release me to represent them in politics - House of Assembly at Enugu. ..., so it will be seen that the Wum community has all along had confidence in me and have from time to time asked for my services.

On 13th April, 1977, my elder brother of the same mother, a chief of Su-Aghem, the most thickly populated quarter of Wum village, died. ..., the elders of the village sent for me and I went and met them. After I had taken my seat, one of them told me that the whole village had decided that I should succeed my dead brother and become their chief. ...all they wanted was to have me direct the affairs of their community as I do in the church.



...they thought I would accept the nomination and be their chief because they also are God's people and deserve a good leader as the Christians have. ... They believed it could be a good thing... ...if chieftaincy was run in a Christian manner for the glory of God and for the good of all in the community. 5

Pastor-Moderator-Chief Kangsen's explanation could be termed explicit. It may be through such a dual function that the concepts of sacred and secular, the holy and the profane, religion and politics could be reconciled and artificial demarcation obliterated and "theocreathropocracy" installed in the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon had he not died ten years after. On the other hand, it could equally be possible that through him many in his tribe would become Christians not by conversion by the Holy Ghost, but because of the political position and influence of their own son who had become ecclesiastically and politically great.

There might have been no contradiction in what Kangsen did for it was Biblical, but he overlooked two very important things. These were Church history as a whole and the history of the Christian missionaries in Africa and African chieftaincy in particular. The early missionaries sensed that African traditional rulers wanted to explore and exploit Christianity to their ulterior ends and so they

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Nyo Wakai, and Mbu Walters, The Willing Servant: An Authobiography of Jeremiah Chi, Kangsen (Bamenda: 1982) p. 79.

(missionaries) avoided the sale of cheap grace. They insisted on Christianity by the Holy Ghost conversion through personal encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pastoral Care and Counselling is an obligatory task of the minister. Those who possess this quality should regard it as a divine gift to be developed through special education as a specialty. It is both Old and New Testament ministry. Jesus was the first New Testament Counselor. He counselled the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. He counselled Nicodemus. He counselled Mary and her sister Martha, the bereaved, whose brother, Lazarus, died and was raised from the grave. He counselled the lady caught in adultery and brought before him. He counselled and cared for individuals and crowds. Any religious organization that tries to exercise these functions and values ritualistically is indeed carrying out what Christians call the will of God here on earth. Such was the church autonomy the Christian denominations sought to achieve in the Cameroon. No sooner was this achieved than ecclesiastical and spiritual, social and political problems began to threaten Christianity in the Cameroon.

#### Progress Amid Problems

After the takeover of the Christian movement in the Cameroon by the natives themselves, there were strong indications that the total change of the Christian denominations from foreign missionaries to the Cameroonians

themselves was going to be visible in all perspectives. Foreign Christian missions could still be looked upon by the indigenous churches as fraternal Christian organizations that spent many years in a small country of Africa sowing seeds of evangelistic dedication, dynamism and Christ-like zeal and love. It was because of the passion for the spiritual, educational and physical needs of the people that they came.

And now that the Bible, the dictionary and medical work were handed over to the Cameroonians, themselves, much could be expected by ways of devotion, honest and conscientious stewardship to a more daily spiritual life and educated mind. This was to be evidently visible in the development and growth of the church. Unfortunately, the era opened with problems. There were the problems of trained personnel, finances, witness of the church, ecumenical conviction, youth and women's activities. There were problems from within and from without indigenous churches themselves.

Some of the problems were more acute in the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon than in other denominations. Meanwhile, one problem, management and maintenance of mission schools, especially was a serious concern to all three mainline Christian denominations. Being motivated by the zeal for evangelization the early missionaries established schools all over the country.

Their management and maintenance, the payment of teachers and supply of materials were subsidized by the colonial governments whose motives for education were hardly ecclesiastical. The remaining operations costs were paid by the school fees collected from the pupils; and also by the moneys the missionaries received from donors in Europe and the United States.

Government subsidies began to dwindle and the zeal of donors overseas dropped remarkably by the time of church autonomy. There was now much dependence on the moneys that accrued from school fees. Unfortunately, church autonomy came when the various resources for running mission schools were depleted and the only meagre resource left on which mission schools could depend was school fees. This, too, was soon realized to be inadequate to pay teachers' salaries and provide for the costs of primary education in mission schools. The situation was further aggravated by the drop in school enrollment which was caused by various factors including the high cost of living and high fees paid in mission schools. The consequences were alarming and threatening to the very survival and continuation of primary education in Cameroon by Christian organizations. Mission teachers often worked for several months without salaries. Several of the teachers often embarrassed the missions by abruptly resigning to take positions in secular agencies where lucrative opportunities beckoned them. The

number of teachers was reduced in some mission schools and some schools were closed because of low enrollment. Up to this time in the 1950s, the number of clergy with teaching qualifications was insignificantly small. There was no clergy in the Baptist or Presbyterian mission with a degree of any kind as of 1957. Foreign missionary work stopped short at the education of the catechists and a few evangelists.

So, primary education was an inherited problem of indigenous Christianity. It was made acute by political independence when the country, Cameroon, gained independence and the government indicated increased interest in education by opening more schools especially in rural areas. The general cry of parents who were sometimes instigated by superficial Christians and disloyal church workers was "let the government take over the mission schools!"

At last, the government started responding in 1971 by taking over mission schools in the rural areas. Those mission teachers who were taken, over along with the schools, were pleased. Most of them began to shake of what they termed "church burdens" by indulging in polygamous life and began to decline church attendance. This practice was wide-spread in the Protestant denominations. The protestants, especially the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, was badly troubled by this state of affairs. In

order to stop further embarrassment, visits were made to Europe by mission education authorities to solicit funds. Most of the visits were futile because they contradicted the moratoriums which Protestants had put up as a sign of demissionization.

The pressure of "government takeover of mission schools" weighed too heavy on primary and secondary education and also affected teacher education. Both the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches handed over to the government almost all of their primary schools in the rural areas, including some secondary schools. Christian missions gave up the training of teachers and closed down or turned those training institutes into different learning centers. Some typical examples were the Baptist Teachers Training College Soppo, Buca, opened in 1951, was turned into the Baptist Boys Secondary School, (BBSS), the Presbyterian Teachers Training College opened in 1947 at Batibo was turned into a secondary school and the Roman Catholic Teachers Training College at Bambui was turned in 1973 into a Catholic Theological Seminary.

Later on, some of the closed mission teacher training institutes were reopened as Teacher Grade Two colleges; and some of the secondary schools were upgraded to high schools. Such educational vacillation caused serious problems to the pedagogues and planners of national education. Some of the problems such as

low standards and directionless and purposeless education arose from haphazard and unstable curriculum and lack of a specific system of education. Such educational instability also provoked ecclesiastical questions as search-lights for religious reconstruction. This produced the hostility hell of Christian sectarianism and religious back-sliding in the Cameroon.

From here on and especially around the 1950s, Christianity in the Cameroon began to face challenges and the change of its evangelistic outlook and ecclesiastical emphasis. The accentuation of this epoch of church autonomy purposed by the native Cameroonians themselves to indigenize Christianity for effective religious rebuilding and national reconstruction. This time too, foreign missionary bodies were willing to allow the Africans themselves to assume more active participation in Christian planning and outreach in the country and across frontiers. This "let go" policy was necessitated partly by the political climate of the country whose "rain-clouds" were the elites who were the prime-movers for independence. The native Christian groups also urged the missionaries to grant them church autonomy.

The name of the North American Baptist Mission was changed in 1954 to the Cameroon Baptist Convention. This was followed in 1970 and 1975 by the change of names and merging of the major Baptist institutions and

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departments. The name Roman Catholic Mission was shortened around 1963 to Catholic Mission. In 1957 the Basel Mission promised church autonomy to its members and accepted the new name Presbyterian Church in Cameroon.

But, as noticed from the acute problems which Christianity experienced in the Cameroon since the time of church autonomy in 1957 and political independence in 1960, there was energy concentrated on brushing aside all external and visible obstacles. They were unaware of internal cleavages and enemies to religious and political reforms. It was evidently true that one of the major setbacks in religious and political contextualization in the Cameroon was the inadequate education of the clergy. Attempts (theological seminaries, higher education, the training of more indigenous clergy) to solve the problem of mediocrity and ineffective evangelism did not prevent indigenous Christianity from being threatened from within.

For example, after having received church autonomy in 1957, followed in 1966 by the takeover of education and all other responsibilities in 1968, the integrity of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon was tested by a spiritual, financial and administrative movement phrased as "Church on fire." A chain of some facts (not causes but consequences)

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A one hour interview on 12/07/88 at Mankon with the Reverend Samuel Ngum, the Baptist Executive Secretary about the mission and the evangelical work of the Baptist Church.



ensued from the hidden but real causes of the Prebyterian Church in Cameroon being on fire. For instance, the Basel mission had undertaken certain activities, most of them secular in outlook. Some of these were operating the printing press, prescraft, and schools. The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon did not have spiritually prepared lay workers to engage in these enterprises. These establishments were means of evangelization and services. They contributed to a religious calling for revival. They were not employments for money making. The Roman Catholics foresaw this danger and prepared their Christians before they were required to increase the salaries of the lay workers.

The mistake of the Presbyterians attracted erroneous action by the Cameroon government. The Presbyterian handicraft centers, medical work, Presbook, youth centers, printing press, homemaking centers, rural agricultural training activities were regarded as money making enterprises. The labor code invoked to categorize church lay employees in these work places to be paid according to government prescribed scales. Since no organization can survive when its expenditure is more than its income, the Presbyterian Church was badly threatened by this anomalous state of affairs. These institutions, centers, and departments were to be closed if the church refused to adhere to or was unable to fulfill the government order. The closing of these key projects would presuppose the

death of the church, a thing the people did not like. The different reactions of the Cameroonians to this hard government policy revealed that there were four different kinds of people forming the religious stratum of the society. There were those who as non-Christians wanted income producing employment. This was the main objective of most of the lay employees of the churches in the Cameroon. A vehement law of the government categorization according to the labor code made employment with the church lucrative. There was the second group who, even though Christians, felt peripheral to the community of believers. The third group comprised fundamentalists who took the Bible literally and the fourth group popularly called the inner core of the founding fathers regarded the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon as their own enterprise. They tried to resist the idea of the government decree to increase salaries.

The threat of increasing the salaries of the church workers made the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon uncomfortable. One could hear the Moderator Kangsen:

Let us be frank to say that men and women of vision in our church saw this fire coming many years before. The fact that the support of the church has not been very strong among Cameroonians has always been an indication that this fire would come one day and come very strongly. Categorization has only provoked the fire the more... 7

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Jeremiah Chi Kangsen, Help!: The True Story of a Crisis in the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (Victoria: Presbook Printing Department, 1973), p. 7.

The Moderator's diagnosis of the problem was partly true, but not the whole truth. Evidently from the announcement of church autonomy up to the time of crisis Christians of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon were weak in their financial support of the Church; but the Basel Mission missionaries were responsible for this. They did not initially develop in their African converts a generous spirit of Christian giving and tithing. Even though the "church on fire" was known as an indigenous organization, it was a Basel Mission organization. Key positions were occupied by the Basel Mission colonial missionaries. The Cameroon government was justified in regarding those business activities as money making. The government believed it was immoral for a foreign firm to extract a people's resources by exploiting the natives at very low wages.

The Moderator was not justified in seeing church support by the Cameroonian Christians only in a financial sense. The natives gave too much land to the church. Polygamists, especially traditional rulers, allowed their many wives and many children to become Christians even though they themselves (polygamists) were deprived of the faith. They (traditional rulers) ordered their subjects to do church work as communal work. Lay people did various church work for gratis.

The core cause of the controversy was the lack of trained indigenous church personnel, the clergy who needed no salary categorization or government decree of categorization. Had its pastors been trained for the secular positions which lay people occupied, the church would have escaped the law of the labor code. Worse still, the retrenchment of the catechists and evangelists because of their inadequate education, was a serious mistake which the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon made.

There was need for more and trained indigenous clergy in the Cameroon, especially when there were (as evidenced by the political and ecclesiastical moratoriums) signs of the coming independence of the country. The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon vocally indicated this need:

Young Cameroonians are today called by God to be servants of his Gospel in this country of Cameroon. Jesus Christ the Lord uses the witness and service of the ...church...to show forth his (religious and political) rule....in a young developing nation among people who aspire to a better life of security and wellbeing and grope for things to give meaning to their lives. To do this service effectively, the minister ...is to be both deeply committed to Jesus Christ... and to be trained in his vocation. 8

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Presbyterian Church in Cameroon: Theological College Nyasoso, "Cameroon Needs Pastors", 1966.

But, even though education of the Christian clergy was the need of the Christian churches in the Cameroon after the 1950s, education of the Baptist and Presbyterian pastors was far from being theologically and secularly diversified. As judged from the following statistics collected from the Protestant and Catholic churches in the Cameroon, the Roman Catholics have far more diversified training programs for the education of their clergy.

Had the Protestant churches been given the opportunity and freedom to plan the strategies of rebuilding and reconstruction by training their pastors for some of the key secular responsibilities, currently some of the acute problems might have been avoided. There arose, for example by 1968, the need for church, school, and hospital funds. The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon blundered by entrusting the project to the care of the Basel Mission laity. Instead of training the pastors for this responsibility as the church's direct stewards, lay people were recruited, trained and categorized. The big salary and responsibility difference between the laity and the clergy created distrust, suspicion, and conflict in the PCC from that time on. The lay church treasurer claimed professional administrative superiority over the parish pastor, and the parish pastor spiritually looks down on the lay treasurer as a usurper. It has been brought up several times for discussion in church meetings that a course dealing with the training of church treasurers should be added to the

curriculum of theological studies.

Sectarianism Invades Presbyterianism:

My stipulated definition for a "sect" is separatist religious group that disagrees with all or some of the teachings and practices (dogmas, tenets) of its parent group. It is a group that separates from its main group as a result of conflict of religious opinions. Such a group, often religious, declares itself dogmatically different from or more authentically genuine than other religious groups.

There are certain general characteristics that are common to all religious sects. There is a claim of possessing a history; but where no history exists, it is imputed to the life of the sect. A sect usually displays an enthusiastic and aggressive attitude at the beginning of its life as a practical demonstration that it is the right religious movement or group imbued with an evangelistic and pentecostal spirit. As a matter of fact, such religious enthusiasm is intended to inculcate sectarian teachings and win members. Most sectarian movement begin as an ideology-based movement with a leader standing on a specified defined platform or dogma. Members usually put on a sort of "holier than thou" attitude. The parent and other less fanatical groups look at such a religious group with religious indignation and disdain.

Sectarianism is created and built up by a complicated network of causes. Common and prominent among them are loop-holes in the parent group or in the immediate society. There are differences in understanding and interpreting religion. There is individual ambition for leadership so as to display authority (power) and attract recognition, respect and honor. These causes, generally speaking, may be infectious. Sectarian overlappings between Protestantism and Catholicism make one ask why Protestantism and specifically Presbyterianism is more susceptible to sectarian invasion than Catholicism? Specific, peculiar weaknesses can be perceived in Presbyterian churches in Europe, America and Africa; but universally diagnosed, Presbyterianism is a distinctive Christian religious denomination that is gravely deficient in dynamic spirituality, pentecostal outlook, revival and evangelistic zeal. Its apologetic rather than an aggressive prophetic attitude gives a false picture of and makes Christianity a mere routine religion.

Rampant and sectarian attacks are a danger signal for such an ecclesiastical organization. The spiritual weakness of a church creates opportunities for sectarianism.

The evangelical work of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon was challenged by sectarian fanaticism stirred up by Zacheria Fomum, the son of Fomum, a Presbyterian

evangelist. Fomum, holder of a doctoral degree in organic chemistry from Makerere University in Uganda, East Africa, was educated by the Presbyterian Church from primary, through secondary, to university education. As a Presbyterian Christian and son of a church worker, he was familiar with the inner life of the Presbyterian Church. He had concluded that the apologetic attitude of Presbyterians, the absence of a specific dogma of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, the mediocre education of her ministers was compounded by worldliness.

Fomum's evangelical theme for spiritual revival was "You Must Be Born Again" found in John 3. Fomum concentrated his evangelical activities around the Presbyterian congregations, institutions, and departments and attracted attention and a following. Many Presbyterians, a few Baptists, and countable Catholics were won over to his position. It was not immediately clear why Fomum concentrated his revival work around the Presbyterian Church. Was it because he was a Presbyterian or was this because it was a denomination with loose liberalism? From his vehement prophetic public sermons, it was soon realized that his spiritual attack was principally on Presbyterianism. The response to Fomumism was in three ways. A few repented and became revived Christians but remained in their respective denominations. Many repented, left their respective denominations, and were rebaptized.



The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (as deduced from the Moderator's open letter of renouncement) became indignant because she was attacked and because her Christians were being "sheep-stolen." Marriages were being broken up and the Presbyterian Church was being threatened by Christian anarchism.

Dr. Zacharias Fomum and His New Teaching

Even though the Fomum Movement was banned in the PCC, it provoked spiritual awareness and provided impetus for spiritual revival and religious reconstruction. The apparent concern for higher education of the Christian (Protestant) clergy was seen in the introduction of in-service training for the pastor who did not have opportunities to go to college.

In addition, more scholarships were awarded to pastors for graduate and advanced graduate theological and secular studies; some pastors went abroad for senior pastors' refresher courses; the practice of singing pentecostal choruses and music was introduced in the Presbyterian Church; the prayer cells were conducted by Presbyterians, Baptists, and the Roman Catholics in people's houses and in the church; Bible study groups and Christian discussion forums were organized; There was increased interest in Christian literature such as tracts. Despite the theological ignorance which made most of the followers of Fomum commit errors, and despite the fact that Fomumism contained some misleading teaching, the movement was

characterized by beautiful tenderness and brotherhood. Fomumism saw Presbyterianism as a Christian movement of earthly hope and saw itself (Fomumism) as an agent of change to the old dogmatic orthodoxies of Presbyterianism. In a summary form, the Fomum Movement accused Protestantism of religious inferiority and academic mediocrity. In turn, Fomumism was counter-accused by the Protestant pastors of fanatical mysticism and irrational religiosity.

The Moderator's open letter to Presbyterians on "Fomum and his new teaching" stated that Fomum preached on one text, "Born Again". It commented that "it is a great pity that our son has drifted away like that; on the other hand we know that fundamentalist view of the Bible can be very dangerous; what Dr. Fomum is doing is not a new thing in the history of the church." Of Fomumism, three things could be said. First, Presbyterians felt embarrassed, challenged, and hurt by a typical example of a sect rather than by sectarianism. If they were education to recognize the subtle effects of sectarianism upon a church organization, the approach to the problem would have been prayerful. It would have been followed by intensified Christian education and spiritual revival from within rather than issuing out an open letter of intimidation.

Secondly, even if it was understood that the Born Again Movement was concretized amorphous of sectarianism which appears where there are spiritual deficiencies, the Christian churches in the Cameroon and their ministers would have prayerfully and critically examined their lives and commitment to their ecclesiastical calling. The Moderator's comments were too personal making Fomum feel guilty. He undermined personal revival when one learns a new doctrine. Thirdly, sectarianism was taken for granted as a mere event of history. Such spiritual shallowness made a church or individual defensive rather than repentant. One of the tasks of theological education should be deeper studies in Sectarian movement and how to prevent or check its spread. This can be done by knowing the mark of fanaticism.

Religious misappropriation has over the decades attracted sectarian attention. Sectarian groups like the Apostolic Church in Cameroon, the Full Gospel Mission, and the Church of Christ, are determined to be different from institutional churches which grow worldly by building super structures, wrapped up in administratively routine activities, locked up committees of non-evangelistic meetings rather than getting fully engaged in evangelistic crusades.

These sects are pentecostally evangelistic in outlook and commitment. Their emergence has been engendered by the people driven to disbelief because the mainline churches have become materialist and worldly.

In interviews with the leaders of the forementioned sects, there was one main cause for their emergence - spiritual dissatisfaction. The Apostolic Faith, now Apostolic Church in Cameroon, emerged in 1959. An elder, I.O. Oyoyo of the Apostolic Church in Enugu, Nigeria, was transferred as a hospital worker to Victoria (Limbe). Oyoyo found no Apostolic Assembly in the Cameroon, and so he launched evangelistic crusades.

He was succeeded by E.E. Okon from Calabar, Nigeria. Its doctrinal teaching centered around charismatic healing by faith through a specially anointed "Apostle". Because its followers did not or were taught not to believe in or seek scientific (medical) healing, it was banned in Cameroon around 1962. It reappeared thereafter with a slightly changed name, the Apostolic Church in Cameroon.

Its headquarters are in Kumba where most of its believers, - the Ebiobios live. An Apostolic primary school was started at Bekoko in Littoral (Douala) to educate followers' children, but was closed down. Its pastors received their theological studies in Nigeria and in England. There is an Apostolic Bible school in Kumba and a health center at Banga Bakundu. Pastors of the Apostolic Church in Cameroon have no advanced education and depend

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heavily on the literal interpretation of the Bible.

The Church of Christ is another Christian sect in the Cameroon. It emerged in 1967 after a vacuum was created by the banning of the Apostolic Faith. It is affiliate to churches in the United States and Germany. Its pioneer Cameroonian pastor is D.N. Elangwe. The Church of Christ has had a Bible school in Kumba since 1971. It offers a two year course. It started issuing the bachelor of theology degree in 1985. In an interview with some members of the Church of Christ, it was conclude that most o f them left their previous churches because these churches did not have serious Bible studies. Some of the people were attracted to the Church of Christ by the name which is associated with

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Christ.

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Interview at Mbengwi, Bamenda on 12/11/88 with John Egbe, Elder of the Apostolic Church in Cameroon.

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The author of this dissertaiton had an interview on 12/13/88 with Paul Awah about the work of the Church of Christ.

The Full Gospel Mission was opened in the Cameroon in 1961 by a West German, Werner Knorr. He started it at Mutengene, Mbakang in Bamumbu. It has a Bible school where trainees graduate with a diploma in Theology. Its highest educated Cameroonian pastor is a David Njemo. He holds a diploma in Theology and a B.A. in Business Administration.<sup>12</sup>

But even though these sects promise grace by mass and indiscriminate admission of followers into sectarian fellowship through sectarian sacraments, they have gained no fast ecclesiastical foothold in the Cameroon. This is principally because their knowledge of the Christian faith is shallow, their theological understanding of grace and salvation is fanatical, and the level of education of their clergy is mediocre.

Phase One of indigenous Christianity in the Cameroon was heavily laden with mammoth and vexing problems. The majority of the problems were ecclesiastical and political, economic and administrative, spiritual and social in nature. For example, sectarianism invaded the mainline, especially the Presbyterian, Churches in Cameroon. The Cameroon Baptist Convention (C.B.C.) split in 1974 into two opposing camps because of a conflict for ecclesiastic leadership. The fight was sectional between the people of Ndu and Oku. In the Baptist annual convention meeting in Limbe elections were to be conducted for the post of Cameroon Baptist Convention Executive Secretary. The Ndu

people wanted the post, but the convention including white American missionaries were concerned about competence no matter where it was located.

Because the Ndu people had lost the fight, they broke away, formed their own church and christened it "Revival Baptist". They suspected some white American missionaries of sabotage. One of the white missionaries was brutally beaten up by a group of Ndu pastors. Some of the belligerents were tried and imprisoned. This Baptist sect "Revival Baptist" lingered on until 1987 when the disputing groups were invited to Yaounde for reconciliation by the Reverend Dr. Solomon Gwei, Vice Minister for Agriculture. Gwei was once a Baptist pastor before he was called to cabinet politics after teaching for the Cameroon Government for a long time. There was a threat of a similar disagreement in the PCC in the 1985 Moderator and Synod Clerk elections. The problem was tactfully handled with wisdom due to the advanced education of the Presbyterians, especially the clergy. From the Reverend Dr. R. Osih's tone and vehemence of sermon it could be deduced that the issue was a serious one:

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There was a 40 minute interview at Nkwen, Mankon on 12/15/88 with Pastor David Njemo about the Mission, work and educational outreach of the Full Gospel Mission in Cameroon.

"Count your blessings, name them one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord has done." But, where do we Christians go from here? Where does the Church move to? This is a call for a more dynamic and realistic evangelism. The Basel Mission stood for a unity of purpose and formed a formidable force to break through barriers to proclaim the liberating power of the Gospel. But it is not long ago when this Church nearly broke assunder through intrigues, nepotism, tribalism, sectionalism and power struggle.

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The Roman Catholic interest in parliamentary and cabinet politics plunged the Catholic world into accusations in the Cameroon in 1970. It was alleged that Catholic Bishop, Father Albert Ndongmo, led in a conspiracy to overthrow Ahmadou Ahidjo's iron rule regime. He and accomplices were tried. Although he was found not guilty, this scandal brought strained relationship between church and state. The Roman Catholic Bishop went in voluntary exile.

There was evidence of ecclesiastic warfare and spiritual uncertainty among religious groups in the Cameroon. While some sought ways to demonstrate practical ecumenism, others, particularly the Catholics regarded the

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Reuben Osih, "Centenary of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon and the Basel Mission, 188-1986", Heb. 11:23-40, Buea, 1982.



quest a contemptuous trick by the Protestants to forge forward an undesirable fraternity namely, Church Union. Hear what transpired between the Roman Catholics and the presbyterians concerning Holy Communion with the Roman catholic Church in the Cameroon. The Moderator issued an open letter to all pastors of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon urging the Presbyterians to refrain from participating in the Holy Communion with Roman Catholics least built up "relationships" between the two church organizations got foiled.

Progress Amid Problems:

Evidently, neither ecclesiastical and doctrinal disagreements and differences nor political demagoguery and social confusion within and without the Christian faith could extinguish or slow down the work and progress of indigenous Christian missions in the Cameroon in the post-foreign missionary era. Today, in the Cameroon as it is elsewhere in Africa, Christianity has been growing by leaps and bounds. The main areas of growth and progress can be seen in the ecclesiastic venture, social services, political participation, educational pursuits and cultural advancement. In the foreign missionary era there existed a clear water-tight demarcation between what western Christianity calls the sacred and the secular, but in African Christianity this invisible wall of artificiality does not exist.

The ecclesiology of African Christianity is being demonstrated and projected in the Cameroon through evangelistic outreach to the cities and farther into the interior parts of the country. Various church forms and governments, the traditions of church buildings and decorations which are based on African cultural anthropology, are carried out in such a way that reflects African cultural designs. Christian ecclesiology is made up of Christians both lay and clergy who in their various capacities and contributions claim and exercise a religious and spiritual sovereignty over traditional religions.

African Christianity has been journeying in faith from foreign missionary domination to selfhood. Attempts are being made to universalize Christianity; especially in the training of the youths for good citizenship and leadership, participation in nation building and engagement in the spread of the Gospel. A universal curriculum which was being planned by trained clergy from various churches since 1956 was finally adopted for use in 1959 for African Christian education. This project was carried out under the auspices of the World Council of Christian Education and Sunday School Association consulted by the Christian Council and other national associations of churches throughout Africa, supported financially by Mission Boards in America, Britain and Canada. Some of the lesson topics contained in this curriculum out of which a

syllabus could be produced include: The Boy Who Dreamed (Joseph), The Wise Statesman (Joseph), Finding Other Friends (Jesus) called the tax collector Matthew 9:13, Transforming a Nation (II Kings 22:23-24), An African Leader, Luke 10:1-11, The Gift of Sight (John 9:1-38), Working Together (I Cor 12), Booker T. Washington of the United States.<sup>14</sup>

This project was designed to achieve two objectives namely to enable Africans to take their places in the world-wide Christianity and politics and secondly, to make the fellowship of the African Christian Church rise above all barriers of races, colors and sexes so that God's true purposes are fulfilled; especially when peoples of all nations bring their various special gifts and talents to serve Him. These objectives are being achieved today through diversified education which the Christian churches in the Cameroon (with some help from charitable organizations overseas) design and give to their ordained clergy. Gone are those fateful days of foreign Christian

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Derrick Cuthbert and Kwao J. Clegg eds, Africa Sunday School Curriculum: Junior General Lessons (Second Year, Ibadan-Nigeria: Mapo Hill Press, 1956), pp. 50-61.

Missions when education of the black clergy was regarded as a painful insult to the white man, and regrettable waste of money and time which could be used first to evangelize the Africans the godless wretch who needed a culture, a philosophy worthy of consideration. There are junior and senior theological seminaries and secular universities in the Cameroon where African ministers are trained and prepared for parish and social work. Ecclesiastically, this increases the number of ordained and unordained clergy. Such increased ministerial staff has improved the liturgical quality of Christian worship, Bible knowledge and Christian education. The Presbyterians have three seminaries, the Baptists have one and a Bible School, the Roman Catholics have one and a preparatory one within their oldest High School at Sasse. The Church of Christ has one Bible School and the Full Gospel Mission has a junior seminary. There is a joint Protestant theological seminary in the capital city - Yaounde; but although it was intended to be Protestant, it is non-sectarian. It is ecumenical in its outlook. The Faculty of theology (as it is known) is an arm of the nation's highest institute of learning, the University of Yaounde. There is cross-registration by students in the both universities in courses in the areas of the Liberal Arts and the Social Sciences. There is exchange of teaching staff. Most Roman Catholic priests and Protestant ministers teach Philosophy and theological

studies respectively in the University of Yaounde. They are a bridge to link secular and religious learning institutions to interact in a mutual fellowship. Secular professors are invited from the University of Yaounde to teach French and English in the Faculty of Theology. This is ecumenism.

The dynamics of socio-cultural and politic-economic life of Cameroon are seen in the social services, the teachings on the African family life, demonstration on how to live healthy and teachings on how to mobilize the youth to participate in the politic-economic development and social welfare of the nation. Traditional religions trends of western influence and Christianity have been the main sources of inspiration for revolution. In the socio-cultural and economic milieus, the Christian organizations co-operate with the Cameroon Government in providing services by setting up urban and rural industrial and health missions in the rural areas and in the urban cities. Most of the Cameroonian ministers the churches send abroad for senior pastoral training specialize in urban and rural industrial missions, marriage counselling, school, prison and hospital chaplaincy. The Presbyterians and the Roman Catholics are fully engaged in rural training by training young people in agricultural and handicraft activities so as to productively and profitably occupy the youth and check rural exodus to the cities. Other objectives for

Christian participation in the social services are the preservation of traditional skills, methods and production of indigenous arts and crafts, strengthening of self-confidence and economic independence.

Politically, in a non-paternalistic way, the Cameroon Government makes requests occasionally to the Christian churches to pray for the nation, the government and people to be conscientious and honest in serving the country. Some highly educated clergy carry out specific political responsibilities at local, parliamentary and cabinet levels. Education of the indigenous Christian clergy in the Cameroon is a valuable and timely pursuit to counter-balance off the little interest of the colonial Christian missions to train Africans to assume full responsibilities of good leadership in the church and in the secular activities and bring about mutual co-operation between church and state in nation building. The indigenous church organizations believe that education of the clergy is also a strong and effective tool for evangelization.

### Conclusions

The focus of this chapter has been on the education of the indigenous Christian clergy in the Cameroon and its implications in regard to religious reconstruction and participation in nation-building. The hypothesis is that indigenous Christian Missions in the Cameroon have been more progressive in the education of their clergy than were the colonial Christian Missions. This study of the mass

religious and political cultures of foreign missionary organizations and a young African nation - Cameroon has attempted to do two things: first, has examined empirically the relationship between religion, politics and education and the Cameroonians' orientation to indigenization; and second, has discovered that even among the indigenous Christian Missions themselves there are differences in progress.

It is not surprising that after many years of church autonomy the PCC, the product of the Basel Mission, should have no definite doctrinal and traditional testimony on which to stand. Her current liturgy which has been criticized even by Presbyterians themselves is an embodiment of borrowed liturgies. This is causing confusion within the Church. Some Presbyterian congregations are Lutheran, some are Anglican, some Pentecostal and Evangelical in outlook and style of worship. There is no such visible confusion within the Roman Catholic and the Baptist denominations. This babel of tongues in the PCC gives no sense of direction to the church. Some people think this is a strong and positive indication of practical ecumenism. According to the PCC Newsletter December 1986, "The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon is very ecumenical. It is ---member of ---church union---, member of FEMEC, AACC--" It may be, but what is left as a doctrine and tradition of a church when it becomes notoriously

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ecumenical?

The concept of both the Protestant and the Roman Catholic Missions about a church as an administrative organization with an outlook more of a corporation rather than what Pentecostals call the "divine creation that is the body of Christ" has a long history, especially in the history of missiology in Germany, Holland and Switzerland.

Church autonomy was approached differently by the three mainline Christian organizations. The Roman Catholics approached it by tactful active accommodation of and adjustment to the religious culture of the Roman Papacy. In other words, autonomy did not really mean anything new and exciting to the Roman Catholic world in the Cameroon, especially as by church structure and education of the Cameroonian clergy priests were still tied to the apron strings of the Roman Catholic church in Rome. The Baptists were excited about church autonomy only in principle, but were cautious about it for they were not ready for it financially, educationally and evangelically. They needed the North American Baptist Mission, parent mission to work side by side with the C.B.C. until such a time that the latter had trained enough indigenous leaders to hold key church posts, and until when the C.B.C. had sufficient funds to run the evangelistic work of the church. That is

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PCC, News Letter, (December 1980), No. 30,  
p. 5.



Cameroonian trained pastor as head - Executive Secretary; and there is North American Baptist Field Secretariat whose leader, the Field Secretary is a North American Baptist Missionary.

To the Basel Mission Christians church autonomy was a magic word that conjured up several illusions. That is why its birth was widely publicised and its announcement sumptuously celebrated. All in all, church autonomy in the Cameroon like political independence in Africa was achieved through the initiative of a few well educated elites and clergy who acted as vanguards and spokespersons for their people. Jeremiah Chi Kangsen of the PCC has been cited as one of these spokespersons.

The motives of both European colonialism and Christianity was to exploit the Africans and impose western culture on them. So, much evangelization was carried out, but the Africans remained unconverted from the corpus of their traditional practices. Foreign Protestant missionary organizations like their counterparts did not want to give Africans opportunities to pursue academic excellence. They were reluctant to settle down as a church. The Basel Mission, for example, lacked a permanent and clear doctrine and tradition.

It is probable that colonial Missionaries had a faint idea that the heathen societies they evangelized would as a consequence become churches; and that these churches would acquire all the characteristics and qualities which could

be subsumed under the term "church". But these men and women were rarely people sent out by churches. This was evident in their hazy attitude and outlook on missiology, hesitant spirit and commitment in putting into force all the experiments which determined the founding of churches.

These Missionaries were a different species of the 18th Century religious flavor. They had almost a complete freedom of action since they had no direct church tradition and ecclesiastical control or theological education. The home bound was secular in outlook and choice of missionary activities and acted imperially in her decisions about overseas missions. It was no big surprise to see most of the missionaries beat up their Christians, destroy the people's cultural instruments, costumes, sacred places and shrines. Traditional practices, music and dances were termed pagan and devilish. These were people (Missionaries) whose education was mediocre. Their theological training was shallow. The types of seminaries set up to train them were not recognized and approved. Their church affiliation, especially that of the Protestant Missions was dubious and their ordination questionable.

The foreign Missionary status and attitude of put the African convert in a precarious religious situation more especially as he was expected (just as an inexperienced mathematics student could be expected to work out the theorem of Pythagoras for himself) to work out by himself for himself from the New Testament answers to all life's

questions. Evidently, education of the Christian clergy, far from being a blessing, has become a stumbling block in the way of religious revival and participation in nation-building in the Cameroon. This is another crucial issue the following chapter is designated to address.

## CHAPTER V

### EDUCATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CLERGY IN THE CAMEROON: IMPLICATIONS FOR AND PROBLEMS IN RELIGIOUS RECONSTRUCTION AND NATION-BUILDING

The importance of the religious dimension within modern history should be clear enough to anyone concerned theoretically or practically with the life of contemporary Africa. ...the validity of contemporary religion and its intricate relationships with many other sides of life is there (in Africa) practically manifest. African religion includes ...main strands... and a full religious history must do justice to all ...and to their interinvolvement at many levels. <sup>1</sup>

The hopes of Cameroonians were that the education of the Christian clergy in the Cameroon would lead to religious reconstruction and participation by Christians in nation-building. For example, it was hoped that public sermons were to be more intellectually enlightening and spiritually reviving. Doctrinal and catechetical instruction were to be more mature, and relevant to the time, and comprehensible to people. Religious knowledge and Bible studies in school and in church were to be more universal, uniform, and ecumenical. Religion in the Cameroon was to be more theologically contextualized, academically educative

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<sup>1</sup>

Adrian Hastings, A History of African Christianity 1950-1975 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 1.

and disciplining and more tolerant to traditional practices. It was hoped that since colonial Christianity had used education to produce African elites, these sophisticated persons in high places would use their leadership to insure the acceptability of Christianity in the country. This acceptance of Christianity was to reconcile church and state and guarantee mutual co-existence. Such a mutual co-existence could be used to demolish the artificial walls between the concepts of the sacred and secular, the holy and profane, and between politics and religion in Africa.

In fact, just as colonial independence for Africa meant different things to different parts of the continent, the various Christian organizations in the Cameroon had different motives in seeking church autonomy. Evidently, some of the objectives were not genuine, authentic, positive and Christian. For example, witness in the majority of Cameroonian clergy the absence of dedication of service to humanity and nature through God "theocreathropocracy", an insatiable scramble for literary instruction (advanced education) with ignorance in sacred scripture and theology. There is a general inability to fight cultural and modern atheism or provide for professional pastoral care and counselling. The Cameroonian pastor is unable to live a saintly life in a world that is rank with materialism and destroyed by greed. It might have

been necessary for a people to ask for religious autonomy after more than a century of brain-washing, confusion and degradation. The main task of this chapter is to examine the implications for and problems in religious reconstruction and nation-building as consequences for the education of the Christian clergy in the Cameroon.

Contemporary African religious education can be best measured in: the concept of the modern African family; parapsychological experiences and African traditional practices; materialism and the essence of life; politics and leadership; the relationship between church and state; theologies of the village and city; authentic Christianity and the emergence of the African local church. These are some of the crucial problems modern Africans grapple with and which the indigenous pastor is unable to solve despite his advanced education.

#### The Modern African Family

Webster's Dictionary defines family as the household or all those who live in one house as parents, children, servants, parents and their children who are the descendants of one common progenitor. The Oxford Advanced Dictionary of Current English defines it as collective group of parents and children, who are descended from a common ancestor. According to Collier's Encyclopedia, the family is a group of persons related by blood and generally living in one house, especially a group formed of parents and children.

All these definitions have a common shortcoming. They do not convey a common and universal concept about family or marriage. The lack of a universal definition is caused by absence of that intricate metaphysical word (virtue) called love. Love is an embodiment of shades that make up the word -- love. These shades of love are: eros, that human physiological urge which makes a person have a drive and liking for beauty, passion and fertility which is connected with a drive for sexual desire with the opposite sex; libido is an attribute of the human instinct which is like eros but more of a psychic energy, which according to Sigmund Freud is associated with sexual urges. Its more dominant forces connected with love are drive and tension; filial relationships are human characteristics associated with a child-like humble spirit and the respect manifest in human relationships called love and agape, an unconditional or intuitive human feeling which is charity or fellowship in action. The New Encyclopedia Britannica is more universal and clear in the definition of family as "a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood ...constituting a single household, interacting with each other in their respective social positions of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister, who share, create and maintain a common culture." Marriage is also defined as a "legally and socially sanctioned union between one or more husbands and one or

more wives that accord status of their offspring and is regulated by laws, rules, customs, beliefs and attitudes that prescribe the rights and duties of the partners.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter examines the various views about marriage and the concept of a family and their cross-cultural implications for religious rebuilding and Christian participation in nation-building in the Cameroon. Whatever definition one gives to marriage and family reflects one's own understanding of the word "friendship" as the starting point for marriage. Take for example, the American definition would be loose and less committed; for today's Americans rarely have a lifetime commitment with a spouse. According to the author of this essay, marriage for many Americans is not a serious matter. Most of the shades of love are distorted. The root cause is that friendship for many Americans is often a superficial, casual, situational affair.

For the French, friendship may last but is not part of or a starting point for becoming a family by marriage. The word does not exist in the French vocabulary as an indicator for intimacy between a man and woman. Instead, fiance-ship is in common practice. It may mean lifetime togetherness but not a commitment which transcends the

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<sup>2</sup>

The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 1980, Vol. 4.



fiancee and the fiance. With the French, the children are not regarded as a bond to bind the fiancee and fiance, forever.

The English idea of friendship between a man and woman means more of a commitment that results in marriage because there is a motive of creating a family from which heirs must come. With the Germans, a female friend is regarded as part of the family of the male.<sup>3</sup>

From these different meanings of friendship, marriage and family which were transported to Africa by the early Christian missionaries and colonial adventurers one can see the task of African clergy in dealing with matrimonial problems. The problem becomes complicated when his education is mediocre. A close examination of both definitions of marriage and family reveal that love is the key word does in its functions (which is manifest in its four shades - eros, libido, filial, agape) which play an integral part in effecting a successful and universally recognized "legal" marriage for constructing a healthy family. Marriage leads to a family, family leads to society, society leads to kinship, and kinship leads to nation-building which is made up of a people of a peculiar community.

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Lee A Jacobus, Improving College Reading (Chicago: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1988), pp. 53-55.

The indigenous African church, today, stands at a crossroad in her teaching about the family. The so-called African Christianity which characteristically is Western has been systematically distorted and confused so that the church does not know how to integrate into a synthetic whole the traditional European and African teachings about marriage and family. The African indigenous clergy is unable to answer the pertinent question, "What is Christian marriage and family?" The "family and its significance" is a very important core course to be included in the curriculum for theological education of the African Christian clergy. It should be taken by all students throughout the whole seminary training period with emphasis on pastoral care and counselling. The reason for this emphatic recommendation is that, according to Christian teaching, the family is the first of God's created earthly institutions.

There are differences between Christian and non-Christian marriage and family. The clamour of contradictory matrimonial voices in Africa, today, does not make marriage and the concept of the African family authentic and encouraging. This shaking foundation of the African family is evident in the high toll of separation and divorce contracted traditionally, or in customary courts, or in church, or by private arrangement between the man and woman. The church in Africa has the obligation of redeeming what Christianity asserts is the God's first created

earthly institution: partnership in one flesh; marriage; the home and the family; the society and the nation. In western nations, decadence and low morals, infidelity between husband and wife, and juvenile and adult delinquencies are unpleasant signals that something is wrong with the concept of modern marriage. The education of the Christian clergy in Africa is meaningless unless it takes this aspect of life serious -- the family.

Efforts are being sought in Europe and in the United States to stabilize marriage and the family but all is futile. Why is it so? The main reason is that the basic causes of the problem have not been diagnosed. There has to be a return to the forgotten virtues, old values, old time religion, and the selective evaluation of human relationships that lead to marriage. There are certain things needed for a genuine Christian marriage. Assurance of a stable family as a prerequisite for a healthy society within a strong nation is what every people need.

Certain steps and principles are necessary in relationships that may eventually lead to marriage. Getting to know each other is one of them. This is only necessary if both parties, the man and the woman have the same purpose -- marriage. Many contemporary marriages fail for several reasons and one of them is conflicting hidden intentions. One party may be interested in marriage but the other may only be interested in self-gratification. The

other party may be in need of a marriage partner, but the other party may want to have a marriage partner for specific personal reasons.

What really does it mean by getting to know each other and how necessary is this in marriage arrangements? The custom of getting to know each other is as old as the marriage institution itself. It is a worldwide phenomenon. Each society has its own name, but the meaning is the same. In the United States it is called "dating." In Britain it is called "intimate relationship", in France it is known as "paramour" and in Africa it is cross-family acquaintance. What does it mean? It means different things to different people and cultures. To Americans, it means everything that goes for casual friendship or temporary marriage. To Africans, it means establishing friendship that transcends the man and woman and extends to the families of both. In most African families, the fiance and the fiancée are at the background and their parents in the forefront. Getting to know each other includes knowing about kinship, health, character, credibility, past life, social status, and seirousness of both parties. The period of getting to know each other is a preparatory or orientation stage before suitorship and engagement. This is the longest stage in matrimonial arrangement in Africa. It may take up to ten years or more, but not less than five years.

It is regretable this very important marriage principle has not been prioritized by African Christianity.

In his many years of pastoral care and counselling, the author of this dissertation has noticed that about six percent of the marriages in the Cameroon today are solemnized in the church. About twenty-eight percent are arranged the traditional way. About thirty-three percent are done through customary courts and the rest takes place outside all of the above. About one percent of those who marry in the church really undergo "Holy matrimonial Fattening" known in the west as marriage counselling. Ironically almost eight-six percent of those who marry in one of the four ways go to church. About one-fourth of one percent of church marriages lead to divorce in the church. About two percent of those marriages conducted traditionally are dissolved traditionally. About sixty percent of those marriages legalized end up in court. Almost ninety-two percent of those fake marriages end up fakely too. About twenty-nine percent of all the marriages described are successful. They are successful in that both husband and wife know how to solve their marital problems without outside interference. Their children have not been to jail, or to court, or slept in the sail. Both parents and children are well disciplined and are of respectable social status.

Some of the African complaints against church weddings and Christian marriage during the colonial missionary days were that they were foreign and too expensive, full of

publicity, numerous visits to the priest, and imposed difficult obligations on the husband, and pushed the wife into slavish obedience. Religious reconstruction, based on indigenous Christianity, made effective through education of the clergy was strongly advocated. The explanation was that the indigenous clergy who were brought up in this culture and educated in the western way would be versatile enough to selectively develop a contextualized synthetic whole that integrated the African cultural aspects of marriage. But this was an illusion. The African clergy, just like the European pastor, was unable to convince his society that the church is the most protective agency of marriage, the home, the family, and the nation.

There are fewer marriages registered in African churches today than there were during the colonial Missionary era. There are two main reasons for this. Africa is caught up in the current cultural revolution of rapid social, economic, political, and religious changes made possible by science and technology, coming from Europe and the United States.<sup>4</sup> The African clergy is ill-prepared for the task. There is too much concentration on theological studies with little attention to diversified education. Most marriages in Africa fail not just because the people

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John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., Garden City Press, 1970), p. 9.

are ignorant of modern marital principles, but because sometimes Christian education is either superficial or the church is silent about the subject.

### Native Religions and Parapsychology

Beliefs in paranormal experiences are among those phenomena which have occupied the daily life of mankind since the beginnings of times. They have literally taken toll in the blood of both primitive and "civilized" societies. In the West (Europe) and the United States, they have been split into single names such as telepathy, clairvoyance and psychokinesis, but in Africa they have been condensed into one sinister phenomenon called witchery. Witchery which has become a modern superstition for intellectual discipline and a religion in Europe today was in the Middle Ages and Renaissance periods regarded as a great tyranny<sup>5</sup> that was spreading panic and death as it is in Africa today.

Early Christian Missionaries comprising anthropologists, sociologist and theologians carried along with them to Arica their own European experiences of witchcraft and approached the African phenomenology with disrespect and condemnation. Folk healing was regarded as the work of the devil in pagan societies. Traditional practices which preceded or were accompanied by rituals were condemned and people guilty of the practice were excluded from the Christian religion. This negative attitude towards traditional medicine has come to stay. Many Africans are abandoning their folk practices and are investing absolute

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Geoffrey Parrinder, Witchcraft, European and African, (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p. 9.

conviction and confidence in the superstitions and occult practices of the West and East. Both traditionalists and Christians alike openly declare themselves as punctilious adherents to modern cults such as the Rosicrucian Order, popularly abbreviated as A.M.O.R.C. Some Christian churches of Cameroon have expressed dismay against the Rosicrucian cult:

...a regional convention of the Rosicrucian Order, Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (AMORC) was held in our national capital, attended by delegates from neighbouring French-speaking countries. This convention which was organized during the Holy Week of the Christian Church, a time which reveals the mystery of God's saving work in the world, obliges us to reflect more deeply on the teaching of the Rosicrucian Order and on the on-going campaign which that organization has been carrying out in our country over the last few years.

The fact that Holy Week was chosen as a time for organizing this convention appears to us as contrived coincidence ... which obviously confronted the people of this country with an inescapable choice between the Rosicrucian emblem, namely, a cross on which a rose is graven, and the Cross on which is nailed the Son of God, the Cross which the Church proclaims.



There exists a complete and irreconcilable contradiction between the Christian Faith and the teachings of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC.

1. The Rosicrucian concept of God is essentially pantheistic, since it affirms that God's very essence is contained in the universe itself. The God of Christians is God the Creator who is distinct from creation and cannot be confused with the world which He has made.
2. Rosicrucians deny that Jesus is the only Son of God. They ..deny that Jesus died on the Cross for the salvation of the world.
3. According to Rosicrucian teaching, conscience and divine spirit make up the human soul. Their teaching also implies a denial of the distinct reality of the Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Trinity. Taking all this into consideration no one can be at one and the same time, a Rosicrucian and a Christian, i.e., a member of the Christian Church.... no one can serve two masters at the same time in the household of the faith. 6

This anomalous state of affairs is a challenge to the indigenous clergy whose educationalpursuits theological and secular is supposed to reinterpret Western phenomena and merge them with traditional practices to obtain a synthetic whole — positive synchretism. For certain reasons early missionaries would be more successful than today's indigenous clergy in making Africans Christians. The African society in the early issionary era was less multi-culturally sophisticated. Today, especially the elites are more confused and more multi-culturally sophisticated. In their education abroad and in reading all sorts

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"The Christian Rosicrucian?" Cameroon Panorama, No.205/206, (January/February, 1979).

literature they are introduced and exposed to modern European superstition such as astrology which acts as the science and witchcraft of the mind and of extrasensory perception.

Secret cults, such as the Rosicrucian Order, is taken by many to mean their religion manipulates and hypnotizes the psyche. The end results are what I call "conceptual pellets," popularly known in psychology as supernatural power, awe-inspiring, mystical thrill. Such human experiential thrills conjure up an ideological transcendental environment known in African mysticism as the invisible world of the ancestors.

There are two main differences between Christianity and African Traditional Religions. Whereas the former in its theological studies presents religion as a phenomenon apart and distinct from earthly life or a dry-bone philosophical inquiry into the nature of existence and becoming; the latter permeates life, spiritual and material, heavenly and mundane and makes everything practical. Second, whereas adherents to the former do not know and understand why they are Christians, adherents to the latter know and understand why they are traditionalists. They for example attach three strands of life-values to their faith: The faith is meaningful to them because it is used as a desire for success. It is a source of their happiness and it enables devout believers to achieve and maintain long life.

Witchcraft becomes virulent when one's economic security is threatened, when the tube of happiness is punctured and when long life is curtailed. In this context, withcraft (an ingredient of

African Traditional Religion) is a negative phenomenon. African people uphold witchcraft (weird feeling that goes on in the psyche) as a tangible phenomenal explanation for emotional insecurity and its correlates, the feeling of powerlessness and helplessness and as a sense of insignificance. This negative phenomenon witchcraft has developed from the universal experience that emotional insecurity with its correlates leads to a sense of powerlessness and to a feeling of insignificance. When this happens to a person, religion and counselling and caring become a rescue effort to remove the disorientation and disintegration of the patient's ego.

The African concept of life and attitude to death are different from those of a scientific and technological westerner. Whereas, the westerner or Fijian views life as something futile and death as rest, the African sees the former as the wealth and worth of existence and the latter as the thief of life:

Death is easy:  
Of what use is life?  
To die is rest. 7

\*Oh swift sweet life!  
How much I really like  
To enjoy you here on earth.  
I hate the thief, Death.

#### African Prose

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Paul Radin, Primitive Religion: Its Nature and Origin (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1957), p. 23.

\*The author of this dissertation is the writer of this short prose, the African prose on life. It is a short description of African ontology.

Some fake psychologists diagnose mental malignance and misassociate such paranoia with paranormal experiences. It is unfortunate such fake interpretation has often attributed paranoia to primitive religions. The fact of the matter is that whereas paranoia or a form of insanity characterized by fixed delusions makes a person act irrationally, paranormal experiences or parapsychology is the science of phenomena that are not explainable by scientific inquiries that are based on natural laws. Phenomena such as telepathy, clairvoyance, witchery, psychokinesis have been speculated as elements that constitute paranormal experiences. What exactly each of them means is still speculative.

Paranormal experiences have been associated with weird behaviors, especially those behaviours that emanate from cult and occult practices. It is difficult to determine where to draw a line and specify the difference. It is however possible to judge from their effects and distinguish what from what. Quite apart from paranormal experiences, cult and occult practices entail indulgence in and not abstinence from destructive behaviors are inclined to vengence rather than to forgiveness, glory in wickness rather than in kindness. Adherents are prone to suicide rather than try to prevent it. Members are secretive in their lives, organizations and practices rather than being public. Satanism, as it is commonly called by the Christian fraternity, is a common phenomenon to people who yearn for spiritual satisfaction. They feel and imagine the secrets and mysteries of

life are hidden in these practices.

Secrets and mysteries can only be exposed through enlightenment. Education dissolves secrets and mysteries, ventilates ignorance and dispells fears. But, why, despite enlightenment and increased religious crusades, interest in paranormal experiences and occult (witchcraft) practices persist? There are four answers to this pertinent question. The nature of the experiences is uncanny because it appeals to the emotion and psyche rather than to reasoning. This depends on the varying degree of the aura and supernatural importance a person attaches to those experiences. Second, the types of paranormal experiences and occult practices also depend on the level and extent of exposure to other civilizations a person has. Third, persistence depends on the role paranormal experiences and occult practices play in the vicissitudes of the socio-economic, politi-cultural and religious-dynamics of the society in question. In the fourth place, some of these phenomena, such as witchery, are used by some societies like Africa as a good and effective weapon to strike terror and fear so as to attract attention to certain persons who are skillful in manipulating the belie Witchery is considered as an effective phenomenon to exert influence and maintain power over other people. People like magicians, witch doctors, sorcerers are believed to possess supernatural abilities that are awesome.

If the religion of paranormal experiences is important for an African (for it is used as a distinctive means to maintain life-values), how can education of the Christian clergy in the

Cameroon utilize it in his religious reconstruction for the propagation of the Christian faith? Parenthetically, there is no contradiction between Christian mysticism and parapsychological experiences, especially when both are used for effective religious experiences. According to William Johnson, both are "the inner eye of love (that) offers an enlightening contemporary theology of mysticism that locates it at the very center of religious experience. It provides as well a practical guide for meditation that escorts----through the stages of the mystical journey, from initial call to final enlightenment"<sup>8</sup>

Johson reiterates what has been emphasized and practically illustrated in the Gospels and in Saint Paul's Letters. The source of mystical tradition is early religions. This religious experience has undergone several distortions and adulterations. Some Cameroonian clergy have become interested in this branch of religious experiences in order to show how different dynamics of purposeful self-discipline from traditional religions to the spiritual exercises of Saint Paul and Ignatius can bring people to the depths of mystical experience.

Michael Bame, a Protestant pastor for instance, a doctoral major in systematic theology, has demonstrated this interest in

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William Johnston, The Inner Eye of Love: Mysticism and Religion (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1982), p. back cover.

his dissertation "The Concept of Primal-Self in African and Biblical Thought: Its Implications For Pastoral Care."<sup>9</sup>

Bame's concept of the primal-self emanates from an African religious background. As a Christian and theologian he tries to relate his conviction and experiences of traditional and Christian religions to biblical thought. He asserts that Christian ministers could utilize his research work in pastoral care and counselling. This is praise-worthy, especially for an African minister, to integrate his traditional religious corpus with Western Christian thought. This conviction is rare with sophisticated intellectuals of Bame's calibre, especially Western Christian intellectuals. Two things are commendably important about Bame's area of studies or interest. It is not just a demonstration of an academic shrewdness, but more than this, it is substantive evidence that traditional religion, mysticism and parapsychological experiences far from being godless or dead beliefs which alledgedly were easily replaced by white Christianity have been solid foundations on which African Christianity can be built.

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Michael Bame, "The Concept of Primal-Self, In African and Biblical Thought: Its Implications For Pastoral Care" (Dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 1978) pp. 6, 82.

There are however problems surrounding Bame's assumption of the African phenomenology. Being a theme in systematic theology, one would expect it to be approached from a systematic biblical thought on the one hand and from an indepth comparison between Western and African phenomenological thought forms as a paradigm on the other. The facts and fears, experiences and anxieties Bame has postulated about the primal-self in the African phenomenology are fascinatingly instructive; but he makes the whole subject of African mysticism primarily that of a sinister story and denouncement.

To deny Bame's experience and analysis of the African mysticism is to minimize the African ontological reality; but acceptance and recognition could also make hypochondriacs of humans. A more indepth study is necessary on the subject to establish an African Christian mysticism. Africa cannot be secure until she finds her identity in the new tone and rhythm in the contemporary epoch of civilization. It would be a useful scholarly achievement to help local parish pastors in pastoral care and counselling had it not been too technical.

On the whole, such commendable effort by indigenous clergy is a helpful introduction to the nature of parapsychological and traditional practices. It could be used as effective counter to most introverted counsels which lead the honest spiritual searcher to take refuge from the world of deceitful spirituality



Materialism and the Essence of Life:

The desire for overaccumulation of wealth for its own sake through exploitation of any kind is popularly known as the urge for materialism. What has now become a world wide socio-economic and political threat to Africa has its origin in Europe. It developed from feudalism through the period of Industrial Revolution to the Age of Imperialism. Around the Middle Ages there was in Europe a system feudalism of holding land by tenant who gave services to the owner. This was considered as "holy exploitation", especially as the church as a great unifying force of Western Christendom endorsed and practiced it herself.

The Church in Europe held as real assets vast acres of land and the clergy were sacrilegiously engaged in feudal rivalries. Most of the people exploited were people who lived and worked on manors in the rural areas. In France excess land ownership by the clergy and the Church was one of the causes of the French Revolution. When the Industrial Revolution started in England in around 1750, most clergy benefited from it by selling out to big financial or factory organizations portions of their feudal land.

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Winfried Baumgart, Imperialism: The Idea and Reality of British and French Colonial Expansion, 1880-1914 (Glasgow: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 154-156.

When the Age of Imperialism (1880- ) came and Western countries began their expansionist policies overseas in Asia and Africa, the yearning for materialism became a complex enterprise. Europeans combined the urge to amass wealth with cultural imperialism, religious imperialism, tariff, economic imperialism, finance, dollar, Deutsche-market Imperialism and began to inculcate in the colonized insatiable urge for wealth. The African who did not before this time attach much value to land and its resources beyond subsistent farming was made to realize that land contained valuable resources beneath and above it that constituted wealth.

In order to deplete the African soil by extracting all its natural resources, male Africans were compelled by the white man to work and pay taxes. Christian Missionaries and colonialists coerced traditional rulers into a permanent fount of false generosity. They were being brain-washed into giving to the colonial authorities and Christian Missions extensive tracks of land free. One of the great missionaries and explorers, David Livingstone is often quoted as saying that "Christianity,  
<sup>11</sup>  
 Commerce and Civilization" must go together. The urge for materialism was betrayed by strong rivalry among European Missionary organizations, the Roman Catholics, the Protestants and the Angelicans in Africa. This sacrilegious practice,

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Ibid., p. 14.

materialism by the Church was ridiculed by the native Africans by proverbially saying "when you came here we owned the land and you had the Bible", now we have the Bible and you own the land."<sup>12</sup>

This African low opinion about European and American Christianity has made Cameroonians, especially the elites who study in Europe and America, resist Christianity. Figuratively, they throw back the Bible at white Christianity by abandoning their former Christian names, by reclaiming at any cost the tracks of land which early Christian Missionaries fraudulently acquired from traditional rulers and individuals, by giving up the liturgical patterns of Western Christianity and adopting what they call authentic African Christian liturgy. African elites disappointedly cannot comprehend the irony in a religion, Christianity which dwindles ridiculously where it started and flourishes by leaps and bounds where it was transplanted.

Church buildings in Europe and America are becoming empty with very few old church goers ministered to by a superfluous number of highly paid ministers who become comfortable in their affluence; while in Africa church buildings are becoming too small because they are being filled by enthusiastic, practical, down-to-earth worshippers who are pastored by very small numbers of meagerly paid dedicated catechists, evangelists and pastors.

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Ibid., p. 15.

Effort is being made to pull together all the selected aspects of the religions in Africa such as traditional, Islamic and Christian to build up an African Christianity; but the reconstruction effort is neither syncretistic nor archetypical. certain legacies (obstacles) of colonial Christianity, still linger on in Africa and make difficult the emergence of an authentic African Christianity. African "Christian Church" bodies such as the Roman Catholics, the Presbyterians, the Baptists and multifarious groups of sects are still being hinged to overseas fraternal Christian assistance. African churches like foreign Christian missions are perpetrating economic atrocities by engaging in exploitative businesses in the name of social services, urban and rural industrial missions. This is socio-political economic corruption that makes people question the church's morale in participating in nation-building.

The church's involvement and participation in secular activities must be linked in the life and work of the church or else the church will go astray into the grievous heresy of quietism over social injustice and corruption in high places or wallow in the inescapable apostasy of irrelevance. No doubt people are withdrawing their allegiance and loyalty from the church because the church is no longer able to define and explain the meaning of life and its essence.

Notice what is happening in the world of today, that is rank with materialism and ruined by insatiable urges and greed! Life to many has no meaning and essence. Advanced scientific and technological societies, especially in the west, reject a

religion that acts like opiate to the people; that is a religion that falsely promises personal peace, bliss and prosperity in materialism and raises false hopes in a stale atmosphere of illusion and deception.

An insatiable urge for wealth was transported from Europe to Africa and the yearning was inculcated in Africans by colonialists around 1880. Europe had developed from feudalism through industrialism to capitalism. Empires and colonies were sought and built overseas to keep these politic-economic tenets in tact. European Missionaries were used to preach poverty on the soil of Africa and expectation of pie in heaven. This biblical slogan was used as an effective tool to brain-wash the colonized. Certain passages were inadvertently quoted for ulterior motives.

As in France in the 18th Century, the church owned extensive tracks of land to exploit its resources. The church became rich and wealthy. it preached against accumulation of wealth here on earth, but was itself guilty of the evil it preached against.

To hopeless and aimless people life is empty. Existence is meaningless. Human beings can talk the talks and look the looks, but internally there is conviction that human existence is just another loose heap of dirt floating on the sea of humanity. Against the perceived futility and meaninglessness of life people defend themselves by acting important. They maintain that there is no answer to the human dilemma, no deliverance from the human predicament, no formula for world peace.

Pessimists think life is a lie, a meaningless hope, a bad idea with no significant essence that attracts admiration and longing. They maintain that existentialism is a drama of the devil. According to Shakespeare:

Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player that sturts and freds his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing. 13

This is too pessimistic and negative! The task of the educated clergy is to preach and teach on the one hand the sufficiency of the Cross and the supremacy of the man Jesus, on the other hand, to live and lead a demonstrated life that appeals and announces to the world around him saying, "Ave Crux Spes Unica". This hail to the cross the only hope principle has its essential attributes of corollative and co-operative, fulfilled and enhanced, protected and preserved conscious existence. This is life.

The essence of genuine life lies in man's ability and wisdom to be against the tendency to perpetuate abundance for the few and misery for the countless. The Church, through those who are in it, must look askance at even milder systems of socialism and refrain rom allowing herself to be prostituted by materialism. She should not make herself the ally of the monied enterprises. Once she is free from all this, she cannot be silent in the face of blatant injustice or stay aloof from political participation.

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William Shakespeare, The Tragedy of Macbeth (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1908.), p. 142.

I define life as the sum total of the activities which emanate from conscious co-existence between a supreme power which religions call god, nature and creation. In a word, life is "theocreatanthropocracy" This process of combining negatives with positives, pessimism with optimism, emanence with human, creation and nature, the world above with the world below is what makes existence interesting and educating, challenging and transforming, important and essential. It is neither absolutely negative as pessimists express it, nor is it absolutely positive as optimists claim it to be.

Existence is incomplete, ineffective because life in its content lacks the dialectical and necessary opposites. The essence of life must be determined by a pair of opposites, particularly health and wealth, energy and experience, wisdom and power and by man's ability to use these dialectical and necessary opposites to control power and himself from being destroyed. Life represents the source and substance, the strength and wisdom and the worth of existence. The worth of the pastor's education is determined not by a string of degrees but by his ability to use his educaiton to progressively adjust to rapid socio-cultural, politic-economic and psycho-religious changes that confront him in his world of evangelism.

Political Participation and Leadership:

"Read out politics and read in theology."<sup>14</sup> This was the advice the Basel Mission gave to Jeremiah Chi Kangsen, pastor of the Basel Mission/Presbyterian Church in Cameroon in 1960 as though politics and religion were incompatible extreme opposites. After having been disappointed by secular politics, Kangsen who had always been more a politician than a pastor decided to return to his former calling. The Basel Mission was, however, skeptical of his prodigal return into the Christian ministry. The skepticism of this church organization (BM) was built on the premise that Kangsen's theological studies and pastoral ethics might have been messed up by corrupt secular political pursuits. The only way to test his seriousness and determination to reclaim his pastoral credibility was to recommend to go back to the seminary for reorientation of purpose and focus. This could only be possible if he purged himself by reading out politics and reading in theology. He was given a Basel Mission scholarship to study in Edinburg, Scotland.

This ecclesiastical assertion of incompatibility of religion and politics can be refuted or verified by a careful definitive analysis of the term "politics". Did the Basel Mission understand politics as a process in which people seek and employ power

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exclusively to gain a reward of any kind for themselves? Is politics a social science, otherwise known as ideology, with specific ramifications of a platform on which a leader (self-made or duly elected) stands and outlines terms which should be followed by the populace in order to achieve certain goals that are based on the interests of broad segments of the population? Here segments may refer to ethnic groups, blocs, sexes such as feminism in the United States, the women's liberation movement, in Europe, fighting colonialism in Africa, sexism in Latin America, racism as in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, and the problem of generation gap in China.

These are contrasts which could be welded together by the cement of common necessary and commonly needed interests. Does politics, according to the Basel Mission, mean a game from which the best player gets a particular thing when he succeeds by manipulating the rules of the game? Or is politics a process through which people seek opportunities to vehemently or non-violently attack or deplore social ills and solve social problems?

The first, which is a projection of egoism, could be called totalitarianism. In the second, the individual leader is seen as one who displays heroism. In this one, the temptation of sliding into demagogy is great. The third definition gives an impression that the projection of a particular group is the main concern. In

the fourth example, the focus is away from self onto a concern for groups and individuals who need consideration. This type of politics could be called altruistic politics or objective democracy. It could be summed up thusly: foreign missionaries were against types one and three politics. This is the common impression people have about politics. They look at politics as a game of corruption, wars and enmity. Such a fatalistic feeling has created a group of pacifists. They are against violence and against politics. They disapprove of Christian involvement in political participation.

This is an old fashioned mentality which has never fitted in any period in history, especially today when the world has become an extended village. The Church is made up of people who are an index reference of a particular attachment. This means, therefore, that the Church is a significant part of that world community called nation-state. It is incumbent upon the church as a member and important part of the state to contribute her own quanta in the development and up-building of God's Kingdom (nation) here on earth. Romans 13. According to the Christian teaching Christians are called the "salt" of the earth and the "light" of the world. Matthew 5:13, 14 As salt, the presence of the Church in any secular activity helps season it and as light, the Church ventilates ignorance of the world as the word of God shines through darkness. By shining brighter in pitch darkness the Word of God exposes the ills of the world.

A journey into world political history reveals that it has been religion either constructively or destructively that has

initiated and effected revolutions that have had socio-economic and politi-cultural overtones with lasting effects. This has been through fanatical individuals or groups or ideologies. Notice the life and work of the Catholic Pope Urban II who in 1095 declared at the Council of Clermont in France what he termed a holy war (crusade) against the Muslims. This was a century of tense religious zeal in Europe prior to the Protestant Reformation. Pope Urban was continuing the religious zeal of Pope Alexander II who had organized an earlier crusade of French knights against the Muslims in Spain in 1064.<sup>15</sup> Both crusades were religious in outlook, but they also embodied some political elements, especially as they were undertaken for patently mercenary motives.

Both religions, Christianity and Islam, have had their astounding effects despite opposition and persecutions. Today, there are as many Muslims as there are many Christians in the world as the result of new religions. Islam was started by Mohammad in Medina, Mecca in the today's Middle East. The religions that have almost engulfed the whole world were spread in two ways. Islam was spread by imposition through the use of the sword (Jihad) holy war and by co-option of other cultures. This second method can be called cultural tolerance. Christianity was also spread by the use of the sword (Crusade) and variously by the different denominations principally Catholics and Protestants. Christian groups destroyed cultures, ideas and

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Stephen Neill, A History of Christian Missions (England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1971), pp. 94-113.

civilizations of societies and communities in order to install christianity.

So, religion is "politics on wheels", a force of revolution to reckon with. There is no apparent contradiction or conflict or incompatibility between religion and politics. In traditional African societies, there was no water-tight demarcation between religion and politics. The traditional ruler embodied in himself three corporate personalities. he was king when it came to political matters, priest when he was to officiate in political-religious rituals and prophet when need arose for the prognostication of any trouble (famine, drought, flood, epidemics). it is rather conceivable that healthier far and tighter close would African societies be established if religion and politics and if heads of state and heads of churches merged into one leadership in thought and action, and generated inspiration from a true, deep and genuine religious conviction: Mahatma Gandhi knew this secret and so he brilliantly expressed:

Politics, divorced from religion, has absolutely no meaning. We want also the steady light, the infallible light of religious faith, not a faith which merely appeals to the intelligence, but a faith which is indelibly inscribed on the heart. First we want to realize our religious consciousness, and immediately we have done that the whole department of life is open to us; and it should then be a sacred privilege of all, so that when young men grow to manhood they may do so properly equipped to battle with life. 16

Even though there is no contradiction between religion and politics, very few clergy can use their education and ecclesiastic conviction, inspiration and insight to wreak praise-worthy political miracles without running counter with corrupt politics. Some of these examples are Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, Pastor Andrew Young of the United States and the Reverend Jesse Jackson of the United States.

Desmond Tutu, whose middle name Mpilo given by his grandmother meaning life, is the son of a Methodist school teacher. Like Moses, he was not happy with the South African plight when he was a child. He was hurt by the fact that even though 70% of the people in South Africa are blacks, they are not allowed to vote in national elections, not allowed to live or own land or move freely in their own land. He was brought up by an Anglican priest, Father Trevor Huddleston.<sup>17</sup> He has risen in his education from teacher through priest to Bishop, and has risen in his ecclesia-political popularity from local peacemaker through national arbitrator to an international prize winner. Same is the case with the Reverend Jesse Jackson who has been called Thunder in America.<sup>18</sup>

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A clergy is expected by the world of today to be a genuine saint, a universal scholar and an international political peacemaker. Andrew Young of the United States is a brilliant example of this. This son of a dentist had taken seriously in his childhood the father advice "don't get mad; get smart."<sup>19</sup> He implemented this advice as his policy to settle segregation by talking it instead of fighting. He rose in his educational achievement from high school in 1947, B.A. from Howard University in 1951 to Bachelor of Divinity in 1955 and became ordained Protestant pastor. He became a public figure with Martin Luther King Junior during the Vietnam War. According to Young the war was wrong.

He combined his political conviction with his ecclesiastical vision and served the United States as Congressman in three consecutive terms 1972, 1974, and 1976 before becoming a mayor in 1982. As a United States ambassador to the United Nations in the regime of Jimmy Carter, Young became an international clergy - politician and brought home three achievements. He helped foreign countries, especially countries in Africa better understand the United States and her foreign policy. He made friends for the United States. He was initiator of ideas which he called young ideas which helped groups. This was a clergyman who used his education and became freedom fighter, clergyman, youth worker,

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Naurice Roberts, Andrew Young: Freedom Fighter, (Chicago: Children's Press, 1983), p. 25.

civil rights leader, congressman, ambassador and mayor. Naurice Roberts describes him thusly:

If there was a serious problem or argument, Andrew Young was called. He knew how to solve problems and make things right for both sides. 20

The Church and the State, the clergy and the congressman, the Christian and the politician need each other as partners in national development. They act as checks and balances on each other for a proper balance sheet of each other's activities. When secular authorities advocate war for instance, as a method to solve international problems, the Church counter-balances it by standing up and stepping forward for peace.

It is the Church's responsibility to engage and participate in nation-building. Her commitment is universal, her mission to the world is not bilateral and national, but multilateral and international. The church can be represented in secular activities by ideologies which deplore socio-economic and politic-economic injustices. There is the example of Liberation Theology, Latin American politic-religious ideology, Black Theology, Afro-American ideology and African Theology, a reconstructional ideology. The Church can also be represented indirectly by individual exemplified by Bishop Desmond Tutu from

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Ibid., p. 25.

South Africa or directly as Andrew Yound did.

The Church can become effectively prophetic, a helpful partner and a useful instrument in nation-building only when she is free from the very vices she deplors; and also when her workers, especially the clergy possess unseverable unity of mind and will, heart and head. This is assured when the clergy is saintly, learned and fearless. After all, religion and its teaching by its very nature is the natural guardian of genuine quality against shoddiness, truth against falsehood, watch-dog against injustices, goodness against evil, right rule against corrupt and oppressive rule and faith against godlessness. Co-existence and partnership between church and state and between the religious leader and the political leader in the Cameroon is necessary for religious reconstruction and nation-building. This can be attained when the clergy diversifies his education in order to be versatile and when the secular/lay leader takes religion and religious studies as a mental and moral discipline; but a corrupt, factious and divided society and a disunited and quarrelsome Episcopate and priesthood can become an insurmountable obstacle in the machine of religious reconstruction and nation-building.

### Conclusions

The focus of Chapter Five is on the education of the Christian clergy in the Cameroon, implications for and problems in religious reconstruction and nation-building. It is substantively possible to reconstruct religion in the Cameroon.



first, equal credence must be given to the dimensions of the three religions, African Traditional Religions, Islam and Christianity which now are African religions. Second, there must be unity of purpose among the Christian denominations and ecumenity of co-existence with the non-Christian religions. The presbyterian Church in Cameroon started this venture in 1975 with the Muslims called "dialogue with the Muslims." Third, the religious organizations and the government of Cameroon should provide the clergy with opportunities for adequate education to ventilate ignorance that breeds superstitions of witchcraft and modern occult practices, education to eliminate mediocrity, which creates an atmosphere of inferiority complex and education which could help put up a moratorium against heavy dependence on foreign aids.

These three conditions could become a compass on the journey to achieving African Christianity. Emergenc of an African Christianity can be an effective apparatus of inter-involvement at various levels by church and state in nation-building.

The current problems that arise from the attempts by the various Christian denominations to cotextualize Christianity in the Cameroon, the resentment of religious studies by Government and the turning away from Christianity at least by conviction and commitment by the so-called elites, all have a long and deep historical origin. First, Christianity was brought to Cameroon by

different Christian Missions at different times with conflicting dogmatic teachings (doctrines). Convergence resulted in factious quarrels and fighting. Resentment of religious studies by the Cameroon Government beginning especially around 1970 thus, emphasizing separation of church and state is a Francophone legacy, a mentality which emerged in France after the French Revolution of 1789. And, because European Christian Missions conspired with colonial and imperial European organizations and called themselves civilizing missions who were commissioned to tame barbarians, convert heathens and educate jungle savages, African elites have regarded such mentality and attitudes unpardonable presumption, over-weening arrogance and blatant hypocrisy.

The Roman Catholic priests drudge at abstract, hair-splitting, syllogistic, metaphysical and dogmatic irrelevance called philosophy. Presbyterian pastors pride in homiletics and a prolific production of theologians. A Presbyterian pastor would tell you how steeped he is in the Sacred Scripture evident in his personal library a collection of almost all the famous translations of the Bible, both Catholic and Protestant such as, the Revised Standard Version, the King James Version, the New English Bible, the Knox Version, the Douay Version, the Jerusalem Bible. The Baptist pastors display a superior knowledge of the Bible by excessive quoting of Bible passages during public sermons and conversations. Sects train their illiterate followers to quote passages of the Bible. But the worth of an educated

clergy lies in his shrewdness and inspiration by answering the following four questions in ascending order of magnitude.

How ably does he handle ecclesiastical and political matters without a betrayal of conflict of interest? Does he participate in politic-ecclesiastical matters as the Reverend Honorable Mr. X corporately or some or one of these is overemphasized? Second, what is his attitude towards materialism? Is he a clergyman who is sorely dedicated to the service of God and neglects the welfare of human by preaching poverty on earth and abundance in heaven when you die? Is his dedication to the service of God and human merely that of a paternalist philanthropist? Third, what is this clergy's relationship with the people in his parish, his colleagues within and without and the society at large? Is he a mere talking-drum-sunday-pulpit preacher or is he a man who possesses an unquestionable passion to care for and guide souls? Fourth, to what extent is this pastor's private, personal and family life above reproach? The last two questions are the central pillars of pastoral calling, vocation and career. The first two can be exercised indirectly.

In the celebrated words of Bernard Fonlon, the role of the African clergy is immense: His role

Is essentially a religious and moral one: to stand up for God against evil, for right against wrong, for humaneness against cruelty, for dignity of man against his debasement, for heroism against cringing emasculation, for justice against injustice. 21

In order to effectively execute this power, the Christian clergy must need three enviable qualities such as saintliness, learnedness and courage (a prophetic insight on life). The Church carries out specific unique responsibilities in nation-building by using the Word of God to correct the detours of the society, one of them being lowering standards in African secular institutes. The Word of God is used to cleanse societal defilements, especially in Francophone sectors where there is laissez-faire attitudes towards discipline in the home, in offices, in public. The Word of God also cures society's diseases such as the tendency to indulge in luxurious living; and the Word of God is also used to cut the deformities of the nation, deformities of dependency on foreign aids, bribery and corruption. The clergy's life creed should be:

Key to Leadership is Service.

Key to Service is Humility.

Key to Humility is Education.

Key to Education is Self-Discipline.

Key to Self-Discipline is Purposeful Life.

Key to Purposeful Life is Destiny.

Destiny is Eternity Provided by Providence.\*

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A Maxim prepared by author. Although poetically composed, it is intended to be a philosophy of life.

religion that acts like opiate to the people; that is a religion that falsely promises personal peace, bliss and prosperity in materialism and raises false hopes in a stale atmosphere of illusion and deception.

An insatiable urge for wealth was transported from Europe to Africa and the yearning was inculcated in Africans by colonialists around 1880. Europe had developed from feudalism through industrialism to capitalism. Empires and colonies were sought and built overseas to keep these politic-economic tenets in tact. European Missionaries were used to preach poverty on the soil of Africa and expectation of pie in heaven. This biblical slogan was used as an effective tool to brain-wash the colonized. Certain passages were inadvertently quoted for ulterior motives.

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C.F. Andrews, Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas (George Allen and Unwin), p. 110.

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Desmond Tutu, whose middle name Mpilo given by his grandmother meaning life, is the son of a Methodist school teacher. Like Moses, he was not happy with the South African plight when he was a child. He was hurt by the fact that even though 70% of the people in South Africa are blacks, they are not allowed to vote in national elections, not allowed to live or own land or move freely in their own land. He was brought up by an Anglican priest, Father Trevor Huddleston.<sup>17</sup> He has risen in his education from teacher through priest to Bishop, and has risen in his ecclesia-political popularity from local peacemaker through national arbitrator to an international prize winner. Same is the case with the Reverend Jesse Jackson who has been called Thunder in America.<sup>18</sup>

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If there was a serious problem or argument, Andrew Young was called. He knew how to solve problems and make things right for both sides. 20

The Church and the State, the clergy and the congressman, the Christian and the politician need each other as partners in national development. They act as checks and balances on each other for a proper balance sheet of each other's activities. When secular authorities advocate war for instance, as a method to solve international problems, the Church counter-balances it by standing up and stepping forward for peace.

It is the Church's responsibility to engage and participate in nation-building. Her commitment is universal, her mission to the world is not bilateral and national, but multilateral and international. The church can be represented in secular activities by ideologies which deplore socio-economic and politic-economic injustices. There is the example of Liberation Theology, Latin American politic-religious ideology, Black Theology, Afro-American ideology and African Theology, a reconstructional ideology. The Church can also be represented indirectly by individual exemplified by Bishop Desmond Tutu from

South Africa or directly as Andrew Yound did.

The Church can become effectively prophetic, a helpful partner and a useful instrument in nation-building only when she is free from the very vices she deplures; and also when her workers, especially the clergy possess unseverable unity of mind and will, heart and head. This is assured when the clergy is saintly, learned and fearless. After all, religion and its teaching by its very nature is the natural guardian of genuine quality against shoddiness, truth against falsehood, watch-dog against injustices, goodness against evil, right rule against corrupt and oppressive rule and faith against godlessness. Co-existence and partnership between church and state and between the religious leader and the political leader in the Cameroon is necessary for religious reconstruction and nation-building. This can be attained when the clergy diversifies his education in order to be versatile and when the secular/lay leader takes religion and religious studies as a mental and moral discipline; but a corrupt, factious and divided society and a disunited and quarrelsome Episcopate and priesthood can become an insurmountable obstacle in the machine of religious reconstruction and nation-building.

### Conclusions

The focus of Chapter Five is on the education of the Christian clergy in the Cameroon, implications for and problems in religious reconstruction and nation-building. It is substantively possible to reconstruct religion in the Cameroon.



First, equal credence must be given to the dimensions of the three religions, African Traditional Religions, Islam and Christianity which now are African religions. Second, there must be unity of purpose among the Christian denominations and ecumenity of co-existence with the non-Christian religions. The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon started this venture in 1975 with the Muslims called "dialogue with the Muslims." Third, the religious organizations and the government of Cameroon should provide the clergy with opportunities for adequate education to ventilate ignorance that breeds superstitions of witchcraft and modern occult practices, education to eliminate mediocrity, which creates an atmosphere of inferiority complex and education which could help put up a moratorium against heavy dependence on foreign aids.

These three conditions could become a compass on the journey to achieving African Christianity. Emergenc of an African Christianity can be an effective apparatus of inter-involvement at various levels by church and state in nation-building.

The current problems that arise from the attempts by the various Christian denominations to cotextualize Christianity in the Cameroon, the resentment of religious studies by Government and the turning away from Christianity at least by conviction and commitment by the so-called elites, all have a long and deep historical origin. First, Christianity was brought to Cameroon by

different Christian Missions at different times with conflicting dogmatic teachings (doctrines). Convergence resulted in factious quarrels and fighting. Resentment of religious studies by the Cameroon Government beginning especially around 1970 thus, emphasizing separation of church and state is a Francophone legacy, a mentality which emerged in France after the French Revolution of 1789. And, because European Christian Missions conspired with colonial and imperial European organizations and called themselves civilizing missions who were commissioned to tame barbarians, convert heathens and educate jungle savages, African elites have regarded such mentality and attitudes unpardonable presumption, over-weening arrogance and blatant hypocrisy.

The Roman Catholic priests drudge at abstract, hair-splitting, syllogistic, metaphysical and dogmatic irrelevance called philosophy. Presbyterian pastors pride in homiletics and a prolific production of theologians. A Presbyterian pastor would tell you how steeped he is in the Sacred Scripture evident in his personal library a collection of almost all the famous translations of the Bible, both Catholic and Protestant such as, the Revised Standard Version, the King James Version, the New English Bible, the Knox Version, the Douay Version, the Jerusalem Bible. The Baptist pastors display a superior knowledge of the Bible by excessive quoting of Bible passages during public sermons and conversations. Sects train their illiterate followers to quote passages of the Bible. But the worth of an educated

clergy lies in his shrewdness and inspiration by answering the following four questions in ascending order of magnitude.

How ably does he handle ecclesiastical and political matters without a betrayal of conflict of interest? Does he participate in politic-ecclesiastical matters as the Reverend Honorable Mr. X corporately or some or one of these is overemphasized? Second, what is his attitude towards materialism? Is he a clergyman who is sorely dedicated to the service of God and neglects the welfare of human by preaching poverty on earth and abundance in heaven when you die? Is his dedication to the service of God and human merely that of a paternalist philanthropist? Third, what is this clergy's relationship with the people in his parish, his colleagues within and without and the society at large? Is he a mere talking-drum-sunday-pulpit preacher or is he a man who possesses an unquestionable passion to care for and guide souls? Fourth, to what extent is this pastor's private, personal and family life above reproach? The last two questions are the central pillars of pastoral calling, vocation and career. The first two can be exercised indirectly.

In the celebrated words of Bernard Fonlon, the role of the African clergy is immense: His role

Is essentially a religious and moral one: to stand up for God against evil, for right against wrong, for humaneness against cruelty, for dignity of man against his debasement, for heroism against cringing emasculation, for justice against injustice. 21

In order to effectively execute this power, the Christian clergy must need three enviable qualities such as saintliness, learnedness and courage (a prophetic insight on life). The Church carries out specific unique responsibilities in nation-building by using the Word of God to correct the detours of the society, one of them being lowering standards in African secular insticutes. The Word of God is used to cleanse societal defilements, especially in Francophone sectors where there is laissez-faire attitudes towards discipline in the home, in offices, in public. The Word of God also cures society's diseases such as the tendency to indulge in luxurious living; and the Word of God is also used to cut the deformities of the nation, deformities of dependency on foreign aids, bribery and corruption. The clergy's life creed should be:

Key to Leadership is Service.

Key to Service is Humility.

Key to Humility is Education.

Key to Education is Self-Discipline.

Key to Self-Discipline is Purposeful Life.

Key to Purposeful Life is Destiny.

Destiny is Eternity Provided by Providence.\*

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A Maxim prepared by author. Although poetically composed, it is intended to be a philosophy of life.

## CHAPTER VI

### EDUCATION OF THE CLERGY, AN IMPERATIVE NECESSITY

Once in Russia, . . . , I was taken by one of their members to visit a Major Seminary of the Orthodox Church. . . . , an avowed atheist, remarked: "The chaps that come out of here are extremely learned men. They have no choice but to be for they have to spend their whole life in relentless warfare against atheism." 1

Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so. Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men. 2

The central point of Chapter VI is that it is imperative for the Christian clergy, especially the African clergy, to be educated. The truest words of Adrian Hastings about African religious life are when he states:

The importance of the religious dimension within modern history should be clear enough to anyone concerned theoretically or practically with the life of contemporary Africa. . . . the validity of contemporary religion and its intricate relationships with other sides of life is there practically manifest. African religion includes three main strands, the traditional, the Christian and the Islamic; and a full religious history must do justice to all three and to their interinvolvement at many levels. 3

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Bernard Fonlon, An Open Letter to the Bishops of Buea and Bamenda (Buea: Catholic Information Service, 1973), p.6.

2

The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1952), Acts 17:11-12.

3

Adrian Hastings, A History of African Christianity, 1950-1975 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 1.

From Hastings' postulation, it can be concluded that the African clergyman has a mammoth task to perform among people and therefore needs education to do his work. Some of the areas that necessitate his education have already been discussed in the preceding chapters.

But it is worth emphasizing here that besides educating him above mediocre level (as most African clergy persons are already being educated) the African pastor needs theological - secular education that equips him for the tasks of reconstructing the distorted African concept of religion, of inculcating a sense of nationalism as opposed to the egocentric feeling of cleavage and ethnic cliques and of carrying out ecclesiastical responsibilities that pertain to parish ministry, pastoral care, counselling and guidance.

The geo-ethno-demographic nature of the Cameroon has been largely responsible for the religious dynamics and problems that have developed during the years from traditional religions through Christianity and Islam (religions which are now regarded as African religions) to what is going on now, namely, religious reconstruction.

Problems arose principally because of cultural differences between the Europeans and the Africans, because of conflicting interests between the Missionaries and the colonial authorities, because of lack of commitment among the various missionary organizations and because of differences in doctrinal teachings.

The purpose of religious reconstruction is to select and integrate the various elements of the African religions mentioned

above and to create an African Christianity. The concept of African Christianity is different from the Greek and the Roman Christianities or Catholicisms.

Greek Christianity, known today as the Greek Orthodoxy, underwent some modifications (reconstruction) of the Gospels from the 3rd Century through education and achieved Greek Catholicism or orthodoxy by doing two things: ended two predominant religious exponents, heathenism and polytheism on the one hand and Neoplatonism (a branch of Greek philosophy in the Hellenistic period founded on the teaching of Plato), on the other hand. In participating in nation-building, the Christian Church in the East drew individual nations to its bosom and effected a fusion of religion with church and the two became national palladia.

In the opinion of the author, the outlook of Greek Catholicism can be described with one word - theosophy. (a branch of Greek philosophy which aims at a direct knowledge of God by means of spiritual ecstasy and contemplation is characteristic of Greek Christianity or orthodoxy)

Similarly, Roman Christianity experienced some comprehensive changes, first by educating the Romano-Germanic nations and second, (unlike the Greek Christianity which developed so intimately allied with nationality and the state) Roman Christianity upheld the concept of religious and ecclesiastical independence as it resisted state-omnipotence in spiritual matters. There are two principal characteristics of Roman Christianity. These are Caesarism and Augustinianism. The

former in the author's opinion, concerns the pontification of the church leader, the pope and the latter concerns the depth of spiritual experience of the individual believer.

Dialectically, while the Pope may regard himself as Peter's successor, judging from his responsibilities, the author of this dissertation sees him as "Pontific Maximus" of the Roman Catholic world acting like Caesar's successor in a Catholic world acting politico-religious sense, the individual Christian, like Augustine, expresses his faith by declaring that the human spirit is restless until it finds God. The Roman Catholic Church had developed and made itself a legal institution with the Pope claiming infallibility. It was no surprise to hear Pope Pius IX say, "La tradition et la loi c'est moi."<sup>4</sup>

According to Roman Catholic Christianity, exercising governmental power by the Church is as essential as proclaiming the Gospel. But from the Pope's position and function as head of the Church it seems, in my opinion, that the Roman Catholic Church is more political than religious. Substantively one hears the phrase "Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus triumphat" in a political sense. The word that best describes the Roman

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Adolf Von Harnack, What is Christianity? (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), p. 257.



Catholic Christianity is neotheocracy (a Roman Catholic religious belief and philosophy which aims at making the Catholic world resemble an empire in which a priestly Caesar (pope) rules). Neither the Greek theosophy nor the Roman Catholic neotheocracy denotes a special resuscitation of the Apostolic Age. I see them having no central motive of the Apostolic Church, namely, the desire to bring Christianity into a real and genuine connection with daily living and make its influence felt in every situation of life with the aim of arousing in individuals and nations anxiety and need for salvation.

Naming of African converts was one of the common marks of colonial Christianity in Africa. The neophyte was given or was to choose from the Bible or from the list of colonial names. Names like John and Peter, Anna and Mary, Christiana and Grace; Charles and Albert, Edward and Alexander, Donatus and Gaius were among the frequently given names to Christian catechumens at Baptism or Confirmation. The Roman Catholics usually bore two such names, especially names of Roman Catholic background. One name was given at Baptism and one at Confirmation. One often heard for example, a Roman Catholic Christian called Mary-Anne, Rose-Mary, Jean-Louis.

To the convert, especially the osus (outcasts) this act of naming meant new life, a change from one religion to another, a change from a rejected to an accepted position, and a change of status. It seemed the Missionaries used this as a device to tame or pacify the "jungle savage". It was a sort of psychic invasion

which meant conferring a European name on an inferior race helped brain-wash the bearer into a feeling of superiority.

Paradoxically, the act of naming had a wider and deeper dimension of life to traditional Africans. Ritualistically it conjured up a religious aura and made African mysticism appeal awesome and spiritual. Socially, it was a way of conferring an honorary title on someone in the society for making a significant achievement which contributed to the building and elevating the society to the stage of recognition and fame. The celebration of naming was an encouragement to aspiring prospective title seekers and title candidates. In other words, the act of naming in traditional Africa was part of culture used as a means of handing down of cultural heritage to the young. Historically, it reminded or informed a people (ethnic group) of its pedigree.

Closely related to the act of naming was ancestral obeisance, an African cultural practice which Europeans deliberately or erroneously interpreted as worship of ancestors; but they, particularly the Roman Catholic Missionaries gave no explanation for replacing the so-called ancestral worship with the worship of Saints. European colonialists and Christian Missionaries left more vestiges of insults and hurts in Africa than praise-worthy monuments. Africans have often felt that they were robbed of and severed from their African cultural milieus.

European Christian denominationalism has been partly responsible for traditional Christianity (easy believism) in the Cameroon. The emergence of sectarianism and proliferation of

sects has been a challenge to denominationalism and an indication that there is no spirituality in denominationalism.

Colonial and Missionary education in Africa stopped short at mediocrity, even though the objective was to produce responsible indigenous secular and Christian leaders, enlightened citizens and honest dedicated Christians. Mission schools were regarded as institutes for the formation of and building up good character in the child. Africans themselves did not at this time perceive the significance of these schools. There were two reasons which prevented Africans from seeing the need for these schools. There were very few non-mission schools and as such very little comparison could be made. Second, Africa at this time was not yet terribly corrupted by the European influence of rapid social and cultural change. European mission education was a positive contribution to African culture, for by insisting on good character it helped keep alive that African virtue, conscience. On the other hand, and unfortunately by over emphasizing the development of the mind and the maintenance of social ethics, Missionary and colonial education minimized or ignored spirituality. Missionaries overlooked the fact that the process of becoming a Christian begins in the heart rather than in the mind. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."<sup>5</sup>

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The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version, (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1952), Proverbs 1:7.

Demand for political independence and religious autonomy might have been motivated by the need for religious reconstruction and nation-building. It is imperative that today's African clergy be educated. He should be educated for change, for genuine religious reconstruction and nation-building. The goal of religious reconstruction and nation-building is African Christianity established on "theocreathropocracy" For the author of this dissertation, the stipulated definition for "theocreathropocracy" is a philosophy of a life-process in which people believe that God is distinctly present and supreme in every sphere of existence, animate and inanimate, yet mutually related to human, nature and the whole creation. It is a religious system which recognizes the mutual co-existence of God-human-nature, but projects God as maker of all things. Paul alludes in Romans 8:22-23 to this concept when he expresses:

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together ... not only the creation, but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the spirit groan inwardly as we wait . . .for redemption.... 6

Like Christianity in the Apostolic Age the new African Christianity strives to inspire a sensitive spirit to the pathos of nature's plight in the scientific and technological age when there is general cruelty to nature. The plight of nature is seen in the suffering of animals massively killed to make money,

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., Romans 8:22-23. . .

partner to enjoy and promote life and the whole creation as a macroscope of life. These themes are: hermeneutics, man-nature co-existence and society and politics.

### Hermeneutics

It is an inquiry that is concerned with the presuppositions and rules of interpretation of the forms of people's ways of living. Since there is a diversity of cultures and diverse opinions about ethics, there can be no universally accepted code of conduct. Hermeneutics is a method of investigation into a subject so as to reach a consensus. The success of hermeneutical analysis and interpretation, teaching and explanation depends on a number of things, namely, the mastery of the language and grammar of the language which is used for the inquiry, the possession of a knowledge of history, skill in philosophical reasoning, the understanding of the fundamental issues involved in the subject in question.

The education of the African Christian clergy is necessary to use hermeneutical teaching or explanation or exegesis within the perimeter of the Christian scriptures, called theological interpretation and explanation. Some of the hermeneutical topics relevant to this study which concerns the education of the Christian clergy are heteronomy, henotheism and existentialism.

### Heteronomy

Heteronomy is a term derived from two Greek words heteros (other) and nomos (law). It generally means a law that is imposed on one (person, group, society, ethnic group) from outside. This

particular term received much attention and gained a sort of technical meaning in the philosophy of morality and society ethics, especially propounded by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Kant was a German Protestant. His philosophy influenced the moral theory of Germany considerably around the 17th Century. It attracted attention and produced disciples who created their own moral theory philosophies. One of these exponents was Paul Tillich, author of existentialism.<sup>8</sup>

Paul Tillich's philosophy of existence emerged primarily as a response to or attempt to solve the problem of generation tension between the youths and the adults (children and parents in turmoil). Young Germans complained that most of the moral restrictions or principles which they were required to obey were imposed on them by stringent and authoritarian parents and governments who were conservative. They preferred liberalism to orthodoxy. But parents suspected and regarded their attitude as juvenile and rebellious against parental control. The youths in turn accused parents of authoritarianism.

Heteronomy became a thought-provoking phenomenon to nationalism. Before the First World War Germany was divided into several tiny kingdoms with oppressive Kaisers. Oppressive rule of the Kaisers was opposed and resisted from time to time until Otto Von Bismark united the scattered kingdoms into one united Germany in 1871 thereby creating the German empire as a result of the

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Van A. Harvey, A Handbook of Theological Terms (London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1964), p. 118.

Franco-Prussia war. Scholars, especially scholars from the protestant background, emerged with controversial explanations for the conflicts between the young and the old.

With the turn of the century, heteronomy grew into new dimensions because of various interpretations by various scholars in Germany and France. Politically, it meant that the numerous German kingdoms made the kaisers authoritarian and Germany weak. There was need for a united Germany to reduce the number of kingdoms and Kaisers to insure a strong nation and encourage voluntary participation in nation-building. Theologically as explained by theologians led by Tillich, heteronomy was the opposite of autonomy. It meant anything (law, truth, moral principle, doctrine, artistic expressions, culture) that was alien and harmful to the inherent and essential structures of BEING.

Like the German and French theologians, the educated African Christian clergyman could through his education bring a new insight to the understanding of heteronomy and autonomy. They are word opposites which can only be reconciled by the principle that comes from one's own autonomous nature and God's law. My term for such combined principles (man's autonomous nature and God's law) is "anthrotheonomy." This is what theology calls the logos of reality. A knowledge of heteronomy can immensely enhance pastoral care and counselling, marriage and family counselling, pastoral psychology, chaplaincy in hospitals, prisons and schools. The Bible is full of instructive examples that could be used to

illustrate that the law of love for example is not a heteronomous demand imposed on one by an arbitrary parent or government or God; but it is the law of man's deepest nature and therefore that law of nature expresses the law of being itself.

The task of the educated African clergyman is to use his education to make an innovative contribution by dispelling the fantasy of discarnate existence and give life some value beyond its ordinariness. Hermeneutically, some of the heteronomous issues relate to marriage and family counselling. The African clergy should be able to counsel, care and guide people to discover heteronomous products of social, and ethical, religious and political systems.

Since the dynamic age of rapid social change around the late 18th Century, concern has increased about the African family. There is resistance to the heteronomy of family ethics. The defense is that man does not need heteronomy for man is basically a reasonable being able to perform the good. This is too presumptuous. It does not matter what good intention human beings may have to do the good, differences among human beings still exist. Generally speaking and based on the author's counselling experience, there are different types of men and women. A knowledge of these types necessitates tolerance and co-existence.

#### Types of Women

Whether it was in the traditional or is in the modern African society, there has always been different types of men (husbands) and women (wives). They are temperamentally distinct from one another. There is the neurotic woman and there is the



domineering woman. The former is a woman who is abnormally sensitive and obsessedly preoccupied with things in her subconscious mind. People have to be very careful with such persons in matters of jokes, conversations, discussions, comments or statement of any kind. It is necessary for married couples to take this side of the life of each other serious. The idea of getting to know each other before deciding marriage includes temperamental disposition.

The latter woman, domineering woman, is a woman who is overbearing, has dominating manners. She formulates the rules to govern and control the family. In every rule she acts like a tyrant. She is a typical example of an advocate of heteronomy. She dominates the husband, the children and everybody in the family. She feels that no one else is capable of doing anything right or well unless she gives orders, directives and supervises.

It is in rare cases that she consults with her husband. The over possessive woman does not like suggestions or advice. Opposing or disobeying her principles or heteronomy results in marital problems, friction of affection, slide of authority and dissolution of marriage.

### Types of Men

As the concept of the African family shifts its focus from traditional to western, new issues of marriage and family counselling emerge. hermeneutically, heteronomy becomes a necessary method used to maintain certain values and also to curb problems of sibling, peers, couples, parents, associates and kindred folks which were masked by certain cultural restrictions. A brief description of the various types of men (husbands) helps bring married couples, families and African societies into a more central matrimonial position in which each person can be helped to find satisfying outlets to happiness. The purpose of heteronomy in this context is to realign the roles of each person in the family so that all its members can share some responsibilities where such rearrangement prove appropriate. The types of men (husbands) are the bully, the teenage, and the tongue-tied men. The first is a man who uses his masculine gifts (strength or power) to frighten or hurt those who are weaker, especially the feminine gender. Bully also has the ability of heteronomy (strength to persuade people to do something against their wish and will). The second type is a man (husband) who thinks he is too young or immature to take responsibilities, especially as head of the family. He lacks initiative and waits for decisions to be made for him. He cannot manage the family or contribute to family planning. He looks up to or waits for his wife and even children to reason for him. This type of husband deserves the dominating attitude of his wife. Domineering women

can either make teenage men grow up faster to maturity or make him more timid.

The third type of husband is that man who is always silent, unwilling to speak because he is shy or timid. Like teenage husbands tongue-tied men fear to take risks. The main difference between them is the availability of ability. Teenage husband does not only lack initiative, he is timid to try to do something. Tongue-tied man may have some initiative and ability to use the initiative, but he is shy to try it out. And now, my advice to married couples is, wife, know thy husband and husband know thy wife; for this is your responsibility with a promise.

African's exposure to Europe and America has been gratifying, but also regrettable. In a positive sense, science and technology, modern communications and mass media, medicines and the method of conquering nature, education and literacy have improved the quality of life, enlightened and broadened outlook, and increase the lifespan; but socio-politically, Africa is regrettably on the downward trend. The dynamics of traditional politics, human relationships and family ties are crumbling. This is a task today's educated clergyman must face. He needs a new type of education.

Missionaries labored hard to train the African's mind, but failed to make him a Christian. There was need for the theological explanation of the Christian concept of husband and wife becoming one flesh through the rite of holy matrimony and how a child could be trained the Christian way. The responsibility of the educated African pastor is to teach married

couples the elements of Christian love which makes husband and wife become one flesh. These elements are equality in mind, equality in conscience, in position, in privilege, equality in freedom and in happiness; but neglect of them leads to certain tragic mistakes in marriage and child upbringing.

There are certain common mistakes people make in marriage. Husband and wife treat each other as though they were mere roommates or household associates to part at any time because there is no bond of commitment. They gossip and criticise each other before outsiders or children. There may be absence of communication except quarrels, fighting and cursing. Disintegration of the home may begin to show itself in various forms such as a general atmosphere of insecurity, distrust and suspicion between husband and wife, especially when relatives, parents and friends step in to meddle. An absence of matrimonial oneness makes marriage susceptible to tragic mistakes, infidelity being one of them. Divorce may bring such a marriage to a sad end. If there are children in such a marriage, the children could be affected adversely in three ways: the child wish they were not born by such parents who have failed to fulfil their parental mission as example setters. Because the parents were always disagreeing, the home became unstable and the children too became unstable. Worst still, God's word and discipline could be held to contempt and ridicule by the children.

People have often questioned why the divorce rate is on the rise, child delinquency is increasing, court rooms are filled

every day and prisons are overcrowded with convicts even though statistics for professional counsellors, psychologists and psychiatrists are growing by leaps and bounds. According to Billy Graham, as a profession, --- counseling began ----in 1929. Since then it has grown by leaps and bounds until in the Los Angeles phone directory there are more than three entire columns of marriage counselors, plus two full pages of psychiatrists and psychologists, offering their services to couples whose marriages are about to collapse." <sup>9</sup>

There are three reasons for this anomalous state of affairs. First, in developed and developing societies life has drifted into purposeless secularism. Second, marriages are no longer established on the solid foundation of love, trust and affection, but upon facades such as physical attraction, education, position and wealth. Third, early child upbringing can be a determining factor to the strength or weakness of a family, society and nation. Some of the things parents should try to avoid in child upbringing are: Do not leave child in an early age to fulfill a vocation. Do not hold to the child too tight by prescribing life's obligations. Give the child some independence to adventure. Do not live out through your child the life you failed to live. That is, do not rush your child to grow up, do things far advanced for his age. Avoid making remarks that belittle your

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Billy Graham, The Christ Centered Home, (Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1972), p. 3.

child's self-esteem. Do not distrust your child. Do not set standards for children in competition or as imitation of other people's children. Do not substitute things for love of children. Children need love and affection from parents. Parents should not criticise or make negative comments on each other in the presence of children.

Although the general tendency to heteronomy is resistance, it is sometimes needed. It could be used as a deterrent or a check to curb certain behaviours. It can be self-imposed for self-control. Aside from the necessity for general education to form the base, the African clergy needs learning in the special fields of clerical studies such as philosophy and theology. These specialties are comprehensive and supplement each other. The educated African pastor is required to use his education to teach people to see the need for heteronomy and the dangers it constitutes.

#### Henotheism

Africans have been accused of the worship of ancestors, and of the belief that all inanimate things have souls (animism). In a word, the truths of the African spirituality has been scorned as mere nonsense wrapped up in a degradatory term, superstition as evident in the practice of witchcraft and jujucraft, sorcery and magic. This is a misconception, reminiscent of the Euro-medieval superstition epitomized by astrology, clairvoyance, fortune-telling. One appreciates and sympathizes with Europeans and Americans who are living in a religiously and spiritually

child's self-esteem. Do not distrust your child. Do not set standards for children in competition or as imitation of other people's children. Do not substitute things for love of children. Children need love and affection from parents. Parents should not criticise or make negative comments on each other in the presence of children.

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ambiguous period in history.

The role of the educated clergy is to teach people to see African Christianity as a religion with life values that point beyond mere desire for success, for happiness and for long life. Concentration on the latter concept of religion is a sign of disorientation and disintegration of the ego or subjectivism. Superstition rather than supernatural is a misnomer designated by non-Africans to describe African religiosity and spirituality. The appropriate term is henotheism. It means substantively the "worship of a single god without the express denial of other supernatural beings or deities."<sup>10</sup>

The validity and potency of a religion are measured in terms of its universality of rites and rituals, its approach to the supernatural and its efficacious influence in the lives of those who practice it. There may be some side-tracking in matters of value attachment such as the conviction that absence of economic security, lack of emotional consolation and its correlates, a feeling of powerlessness and a low self-esteem lead to fertility. Such a prevalence makes the roles of religious psychologists and psychotherapists, counsellors and crisis interventors significant and valuable. Religious counselling helps in the disentanglement of the ego from its infantile subjectivism. Its end-goal is

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Van A. Harvey, A handbook of Theological Terms (London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1964), p. 116.



freedom of human from his compulsive power of the mind. Irrational religious anchorage (fanaticism) takes place in somebody's spiritual life where there is intellectual vacuum. The education of the clergy is partly necessary as a check against sectarian practices.

Africans have ere long been practicing henotheism. Now, with two additional religions, Islam and Christianity which have been considered as African religions, the religious Millieu of the continent becomes complex. The African Christian clergy needs a type of education that enables him to redefine the dimensions of what should be an African Christianity, its content and how it should be practically expressed in culture and forms of worship, doctrine and rites. Attention would also be paid to religious grouping which western Christianity calls denominationalism, to religious fellowship and associations, to the individual, typological and comparative studies. The purpose is to make the African realize that the dynamics of a religious and spiritual life depend partly on the interpenetration of trends of civilizations and experiences.

The major areas of African henotheism include socio-political history, anthro-po-economic dimensions and theologumena. All these fall under one theme - hermeneutics. The first refers to the historiography of the socio-political setting of Africa from its micro origin to the present. The political activities of the African people which had a religious aura was organized within the framework of social units. These social units developed and extended from the nuclear family through the extended family to

the neighborhood called village, from lineage through the clan to the most extensive geographical unit called empire or kingdom depending on the title of the traditional leader.

Yearly celebrating occasions necessitated family reunion beginning from great grandparents down to great, great grandchildren. people got together to socialize, to jubilate, to discuss and to reconcile disagreeing people after making obeisance to the departed (ancestors). After all this is done, people are dispersed to their homes. The celebration was usually punctuated with rites and rituals, worship and religion. Unlike Westerners and Americans who are time oriented, Africans make time because they are more event oriented.

Lineage and clan are mostly patrilineal and exogamous. They are systems of conduct training and transmitting from generation to generation that claims a common ancestral descent. Definitively, the survival, the stability and the continuity of the culture of each ethnic group depended on one system. The system was in turn determined by the education of the young in the family unit. The role of the individual was defined by age and gender, achievements and status. By birth and descend the natural ruler used to be rule supreme because first he was crowned and anointed by the village gods and confirmed by the villagers at the command of the gods.

Comparatively, Africans' attitude to time is different from Europeans' and Americans'. Whereas Africans are event-oriented, Europeans and Americans are time-oriented. Excitement and the

purpose of events, their impact in people's lives and their contribution to village development usually break the shackles of time. On the other hand, Europeans and Americans are so time conscious that one is compelled to ask whether they are made for time or time is created for events. But negatively, whereas minimizing the importance of time gives the African no sense of long term planning so as to give the future a promise and a hope in the areas of cultural heritage and its maintenance, time is useful for the whites for planning and executing, for hope and expectation, for saving the surplus for themselves and for the oncoming generations.

The importance of the African pastor's education can be measured in the ability to teach about the importance of time and its events and how they can be used as correlates to the understanding of the Christian concept of eschatology (a branch of theology that deals with death, judgement, heaven and hell). henotheism forms an important part of the African ontological life.

The next dimension of African henotheism is anthro-dynamics. It refers to human aspirations and achievements based on the criteria used to determine a person's position (status) in the society. People used to strive to achieve one of three things: greatness, respect and awe. Some people sought to become ruler (appointed or natural) so as to be great. Some people yearned for respect through the display of extraordinary talents. Some people felt that to be mystical or mysterious or supernatural helped strike awe in those around them and made people fear them like

the visible village gods.

In other words certain things were used to measure the worth of individuals in African societies. Individuals or groups became important because of how much wealth they had. Some of those things that constituted wealth were land, natural resources such as forest and savannah used for locally organized games (hunting, fishing), land to grow food of various kinds, land to build as many houses as need arose. Ownership of much land made the landlord employ tenants and workers who and their families depended on the landlord. From economic viewpoint he as the people's bread provider. Monetarily, the people's wealth was determined by how much the landlord paid them. From leadership perspective because the landlord could tell his people what to do, when to do it, how to do it and why they should do what he asked them to do, he became their ruler. By organizing his tenants, employees and their children against invading or intruding villages, he conquered, ruled many territories and became great. A great landlord used his wealth from natural resources, farm crops and livestock to buy many wives. More wives meant additional workers on his farm. Also, the more wives one had the more children he was expected to have. More wives and more children made a man great for this meant that he had a larger and stronger army; and therefore he was well fortified against invaders. Being in such a position often urged the wealthy man to seek supernatural help from medicine men, seek help by turning to ancestors in prayer, to seek help by

consulting with the family spirits and by asking for advice from wise elders.

Respect or honor is one of the achievements people usually yearned for in Africa. It was achieved through a display of some extraordinary talents or skills. A person could gain many titles by becoming a skillful, courageous, bold and enduring hunter or fisherman. The killing of certain powerful and fierce animals like the elephant and buffalo, lion and tiger often rewarded the hunter with titles. Since religion permeated the life of an African, hunting was always preceded by rites and rituals. The killing of an important animal or each achievement was usually followed by celebration and ceremonies. These activities usually had a religious aura.

Some people used to aspire to supernatural power in order to heal diseases, to communicate with the dead, power to behold mysteries and be mystical so as to make people fear the power possessor or superman. In a summary form, in traditional Africa four basic things, wealth, power (physical), special personage and number of wives and children used to determine a person's position in the society. The African clerics can theologize secular congeries of interests and aspirations, especially Afro-anthropo-dynamics in order to make African Christianity a religion that transcends ontology.

In hermeneutic studies, theologumena is another important element of African henotheism. Theologumena is a Greek word. It means discussion on the gods or talk about God or theological

statements or concepts in the area of individual opinions rather than of authoritative doctrine. In the study of African Traditional Religions, some of the components of theologumena are the nature and attributes of God, creation and care, that is God's providence and sustenance "theocranthropocracy" which means the permeation of religion into every chamber of life, the worship of God, God's associates, the causes of separation of man from God, God, religion, man and ethnicity, the meaning and content of African mysticism and the soul and its destiny.

Theologumena is a very important and relevant topic to be included in the curriculum of theological studies in African theological seminaries. Hermeneutically it covers almost every area of African henotheism. It gives the African genuine theologian opportunity to teach and explain the roles of deities, angelology, agathology (inquiry into the nature of the good of ethics) the existence and composition of society in relation to natural and manmade laws. An understanding of henotheism makes the subject of existentialism more practical than philosophical.

Existentialism is an abstract way of describing the unique character of human existence. This search for new categories of describing human existence emerged in Germany after the First World War, 1914, in Europe. The war had caused so much ravage and depression, poverty and suffering, hardship and problems that eople began to search ways to describe the human predicament. Some of the exponents of existentialism were Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, Jean-Paul Sartre, Soren Kierkegaard.

Mutual Co-Existence: God-Man-Nature:

Mutual co-existence between God-man-nature is another very important element of "theocreathropocracy" the goal of African Christianity. In this context, mutual co-existence between God, man and nature "theocreathropocracy" refers to the value of life as a whole. According to the Christian teaching life is inestimably precious because it is God-given. Since this is so, then, man must co-operate with God to increase the quality of life and make it liveable and enjoyable. We must take care of our bodies and health, develop and preserve the environment and take care of natural resources. Some natural resources are so necessary to the sustenance of life that negligence brings disaster. The care and preservation of air, water, soil, plants and animal life lead to a health and productive life; but neglect of our health care and exploitation of nature threatens all life here on earth and loss of God's creation.

People in industrial societies are already realizing adverse effects of the absence of co-operation between man and nature to care and keep creation healthy. Industrial growth is having bad effects on the natural environment that people are beginning to understand the necessity for active mutual co-operation between God-man-nature. Totally cutting down of the bush and forest does not only result in lower water level, destructive soil-erosion of landscapes, scarce firewood, famine, but also deprives man of oxygen he breathes in from plants. Similarly, careless dumping of garbage creates slum and unsanitary conditions.

Life today in developed and developing societies calls for a new theology, a theology of self-discipline and social responsibility. Because the church is in close daily contact with the people; it can co-operate with the government and revive the community spirit of traditional societies and the original knowledge of mutual inter-action (co-operation) of human life with nature. "Theocreatanthropocracy" is scriptural. Paul has for instance in Romans 8:19ff alluded to the interaction of God-man-nature for the sake of salvation.

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God ---because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. 11

It is the responsibility of the clergy to show through Christian education that the preaching of the Gospel covers all creation. The church engages in rural and urban industrial development to encourage active participation with no motive for making quick profits by private and public organizations through insatiable greed. Water and sewerage systems, tree-planting, checking of soil erosion and wildlife preservation, in short, interest to restore and preserve nature is a rare project which profit-seeking enterprise embarks on. Embarcation on such

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The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version, New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1952, Romans 8:19ff.



projects is a practical understanding of the Christian concept of stewardship. Education of the clergy enables the church to contribute to solving some acute problems of desperate straits; for ministers challenge gross inequalities and inspire concern for social justice. Mediocrity engenders ignorant sermons, provokes erratic attacks on secular life, displays a holier than thou attitude and betrays an inability to see beyond its own doorsteps.

Absence of mutual co-existence between God-man-nature infects the whole creation with the disease of disharmony. A healing process must take place for restoration. This healing process is Christian education or education of the heart otherwise known as genuine education. It reconciles all areas of life to a wholistic unit. Western Christianity did disservice to nature and humanity by distinguishing body from soul, humanity from nature as though they were not connected. This was one of the factors (Pernicious mentality of arbitrary water-tight demarcation) failure of European Christianity in Africa. European hospitals, secular and religious only treated sick organs without care of the souls. Africans therefore regarded neither the church nor the hospital as competent places where they could go to heal their organ and inorganic diseases.

Education of the African clergy is incomplete or superficial without groundwork and indepth knowledge of pastoral care and counselling. The reality of this theological training would be tested by his parish ministry. His parish ministry would be

constantly challenged by confrontations and thwarted by his inability to see or show his parishioners that there is correspondence between body and soul, between sin and sickness, between guilt and confession, between forgiveness and reconciliation, between dissension, hatred, disharmony frustration and restoration.

His thorough theological studies can help him take up as a theme and teach about the relationship between humanity and nature and the biblical anthropology as a concept in African Traditional Religions. he would point to the fact that it is theocranthropocratic for African Traditional Religions to stress healing and purification by the use of nature - herbs, roots, water from different kinds of contamination; and that healing is brought about by the right medicines activated by the calling on the forces of the invisible which induce the release of faith healing enzymes.

The practical true harmonious co-existence between man and nature as a mutual response to creation (co-operation with God to utilize and enjoy life) is epitomized by man's exploration and exploitation of nature, especially in the area of botany, that is, interest in the study and understanding of the uses and effects of herbs. herbs, plants and plant drugs are part of nature's blessing, health secret and wealth. From this aspect of nature come all experimental pharmaceuticals ancient and modern.

Botany is nature's inexhaustible reservoir of herbal remedies. They are used as healing agents for health restoration. Herbalism was practiced by the forebearers of every race and land

upon the earth; but has been neglected and forgotten in the scientific and technological age. When nature is preserved and handed down from one generation to the next in the form of folklore, it raises a people to the height of recognition and fame. This is the case with China today with acupuncture in the rank and file of medical fraternity. Credit to Chairman Mao Tsetung for his presidential appeal and encouragement of his people during the period of China's cultural revolution 1966-1976. He was continuing the encouragement of Emperor Shen-ung about 3000 years B.C. From 2 years B.C. up to this date, the Papyrus Ebers, Myrrh, cummin, peppermint, caraway, fennel, olive oil have proven efficacious.<sup>12</sup>

This theocreathropocratic side of life being the healing of diseases has been introduced in the United States. It is called Clinical Pastoral Education. People are being trained and attached to hospitals and clinics as Christian counsellors to care for souls. The idea of Clinical Pastoral Education has been introduced wrongly in the United States. It has three major drawbacks. It is regarded by secular agencies as expedient rather

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Richard Lucas, Nature's Medicines: The Folklore, Romance and Value of Herbal Remedies, (California: Melvin Powers Wilshire Book Company, 1977) p. 13.

than necessary service and consequently the service has been regarded as voluntary service religious organizations are giving. Second, the service is religious by name but secular and less spiritual in tone. Third, it is a job for money making (employment) rather than a calling.

One of the reasons why Pastoral Care and Counselling is less expedient in secular institutions is because divine healing has been replaced by secular medical fraternity. The false assumption of the western medical fraternity has been that medicine and religion, physician and priest share nothing in common. But folk healing, especially in Africa where healing has a religious outlook reveals that a common concern is being shared and common ministry is being exercised by both medicine and religion, physician and priest. This common concern is health and the common exercise is healing. The book of Leviticus contains priestly and medical injunctions pertaining to health and salvation of a person; otherwise Jesus would have not carried out healing and the church would not have participated in healing or care of souls by establishing hospitals.

#### Healing Foods For Good Health-Nature's Gift

Another aspect of "theocreatanthropocracy" is that God's mysteries are hidden creation. Creation's wonders are shown through nature and nature's secrets, health miracles are revealed in the Bible. This has been exemplified by certain healing foods. The ancients knew this. No doubt why people in those days lived healthier, happier and longer than we are today.

There are four reasons why man should co-operate with nature. One of the ways of co-operation is by following the rules of a good balanced diet, namely eating healing foods. Co-operation between human and nature results in a long, productive prosperous life, enables humans to live healthier and have a radiant life. A healthier life means a happier life. A productive life is to the glory of God and service to man.

There are five main groups of health food mentioned in the Christian handbook of the principles of life - the Holy Bible. Fruits form one group. Another group is grains whose primary function is to provide the body with fibres. I Kings 13:15; Daniel 1:12. Vegetables do several works in the body according to Genesis 25:29-34. Selected flesh and not any type of flesh was recommended to the people of Israel. Leviticus 11:1-3, 7. Sea food was also recommended as a healing item of nature and minerals and vitamins were also good for health.

The Bible is specific and definite in outlining the things foods can do to health. Healing foods strengthen or add immune system to disease. By doing so, that is adding immune system, healing foods help increase a person's lifespan. Well selected food items and making up a balanced diet helps improve, increase and strengthen vigor and stamina. Nature provides man with foods that are capable of healing or preventing diseases. We read in Numbers 11:5 that melons, onions and garlic are some food items that can melt cholesterol, that silent killer. In the same book 5, 8 there is information that fish in general is good food for cleaning and cleansing the blood stream. Honey, too, according to

Proverbs 24:13-14 gives wisdom and eternal youth. Bitter herbs improve respiratory system Matthews 26:17, Luke 22:1.

It is believed that God advised the Israelites in Deut 8:8-9 to take their diet serious so that their youth might be restored through oxygenation for energy and vitality. Further, olive oil is good for health for it removes sludge from arteries and guards against arteriosclerosis. It dislodges, breaks up and washes out of the blood system accumulated porridge-like fats that cling to blood vessels. To the brain the general function of foods is to provide for mental hygiene.

The task of the educated clergy is to search in the criptures information about nature that relates to good health and teach, direct and guide families in the church, at school and in public places to use the Bible to set up their own health rules, to form healthy eating habits, to establish their own dietary rules for a balanced diet. Acts 17:11-12. God's established laws of governance or covenant to bind to himself his creation, man and nature can be experienced and held in hgh esteem because of the works and effects of nature upon life. Botanicals and herbs, seeds and fruits, and health foods are some examples of God's gift of nature to man. Hermeneutics have major topics relevant to the education of the African clergy. They enable him to interpret and relate universal Christianity to African Christianity and cotextualize certain aspects of Western Christianity in the light of or in ambience of African religiousness. These topics are heteronomy, henotheism and

existentialism. The subject of mutual co-existence between human and nature within the realm of creation has been examined and exemplified in botany, good health providing foods as revealed in the Bible. The third dimension of "theocreatanthropocracy" is epitomized by mutual co-existence between politics and religion from which emanate co-existence between church and state, between politician and priest, between Christian and citizen, between ethnicity and bloc, between regionalism and nationalism and between international relations and Christendom.

#### Compatibility Of Politics and Religion

The Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English defines politics as the science or art of government and defines religion as belief in the existence of a super-natural ruling power ....

Two things are common to both definitions. The first is government. Government is begotten by society or groups of people. Groups are created by people coming together with common interests. The second common thing between politics and religion is rules. People or society is held together and kept in tact by checks and balances called rules and regulations by politics. These rules and regulations are condensed into one word, laws.

The tragic mistake of modern civilization is artificial divorce of religion from politics, thereby detaching church from state as though they were extreme opposites or incompatible components .

Non-Christian leaders, men of thought like Mahatma Gandhi, perceived the need and necessity for mutual co-existence between politics and religion, church and state. He expressed his conviction and personal opinion in these words:

Politics divorced from religion has absolutely no meaning. We want also the steady light the infallible light of religious faith, not a faith which merely appeals to the intelligence, but a faith which is indelibly inscribed on the heart. First we want to relise our religious consciousness and immediately we have done that the whole department of life is open to us; and it should then be a sacred privilege of all, so that when young men grow to manhood they may do so properly equipped to battle with life. 13

There are advantages for mutual co-operation between politics and religion. But mutual co-operation is not sought for the sake of maximizing the advantages. It should be sought because there is compatibility between these twin phenomena, politics and religion. These advantages are: the giving of life meaning, supplement each other, selfless service for nation-building, sacred callings, schools for makers of responsible societies. All these can be summed up in one sentence. Christian or political commitment and responsibility extend from the personal to the realm of politics or from the realm of public service to the private life.

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Bernard Fonlon, An Open Letter to the Bishops of Buea and Bamenda (Buea: Catholic Information Service, 1973), p. 5.



Give Life Meaning:

Politics and religion as twin phenomena of human systems must co-exist in order to give life true meaning and balance to organized societies and communities. Human intentions to organize and operate for nation-building can be genuine, but fallible; but the conception and conviction in the immanence brings about enlightenment and transcendental faith, patience and hope for progress. Life has meaning only when it is sacred. Sacredness of life lies in the belief and conviction of the influence and power of the supernatural force called God. Consciousness of the power and governance of a supernatural being makes possible respect and obedience to human rule. Romans 13:1-7.

Supplement Each Other:

There must be co-existence between religion and politics to supplement each other. For example, while the former is concerned with the development of the heart, the latter is primarily pre-occupied with the training of the mind. Farther and healthier would every society go and be if equal priority were given to saintliness and scholarship.

Check Each Other:

The importance of politics and religion is seen in their power to act as checks and balances on each other. Since both are human institutions that are prone to arbitrary behavior they can be necessary watch-dogs over each other against wrongdoing.

The Church in the past had absolute power in the state, especially in decision-making on matters of matrimony, education, legality, will, reality, life and death. But this absolute power

corrupted the church absolutely too with tragic consequences. She became despotic as she made arbitrary decisions in and against the state. The Church made herself a lackey of capitalism and monied class by possessing extensive tracks of land and other types of wealth. This hypocritical behavior began to drive people to disbelief in the Church and in God. This anomalous state of affairs could have been avoided if church and state co-existed and exercised surveillance on each other.†

Political or secular education is needed for the enlightenment of the mind to explain philosophical ideas for the ventilation of ignorance. Religious consciousness is also necessary to inculcate transcendental faith to accept things that cannot be understood and explained by intellect and changed by human might.

Western church organizations in their so-called missionary enterprise stopped short at paternalist philanthropy with priests serving humanity for humanity's sake. This attitude was not different from the secular colonial mentality of attaching strings to foreign aid. To make a difference, the education of the African priest must be genuine and true. It must manifest itself in the origin of the Latin expression, "Cumpatior, cum passus sum." I came down to the level of sufferers, and share in their suffering.

African churches today look askanse at foreign missionary aids. They are putting up moratoriums. This holy indignation is salutary. The colonial attitude of regarding the African as a

godless wretch with no culture, no history, no philosophy can only be disproven by giving the African clergy the type of education that is worthy of international recognition and respect, capable of raising the black man's dignity and make him humble.

### Selfless Service for Nation-Building

Both politics and religion lead to self-discipline resulting in competent and selfless service, the very quintessence of the doctrine of responsibility. The idea of separation of church and state is theoretical and has never been practical anywhere. Evidently, my assertion is twofold: One finds in a given society people who are both citizens and Christians; even though there may be an absence of a pervasive sense of equal loyalty to both politics and religion.

The author's proposition is that political loyalty and religious identification are not mutually exclusive. And second, the sense of mutual coexistence between politics and religion is more practically demonstrated in joint efforts for nation-building. Take for example the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. Although this is a political treatise, in its history, the author was a clergyman, Francis Bellamy (1855-1931). Bellamy was an ordained Baptist Church minister who used his education and Christian conviction and

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wrote the pledge of allegiance. Paradoxically, politics and religion at times co-operate for a specific service while denying co-existence.

### The Teaching of True Kingship

Politics and religion draw inspiration from each other. For example, the opportunity cost of giving up the attachment to one's narrow polyethnic identity to the achievement of a wider fellowship called citizenry inspires religion into seeking universality of conviction in the immanence called god. And the religious creed of a quest for the transcendentalism inspires politics into believing that loyalty leads to nationhood.

Each inspiration eliminates the weak elements in either side. For example, the religious sense of inclusive brotherhood eliminates the narrow political feeling of ethnicity or bloc. The political understanding of international relations eliminates the narrow religious concept of denominationalism and institutes a sense of ecumenism.

Mutual partnership between church and state creates peace-makers in the political domain and ideal counsellors in the religious fraternity. Such mutual co-existence accounts for a

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Francis Bellamy, Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag (New York: House Document No. 225, 1892), p. 4.

responsible society or nation-state. The feeling of togetherness enables the Christian-citizen to formulate a creed: Ave crux spes unica. Such a creed enables people to inveterately deplore corruption and injustice.

Striving for a Common Goal:

Both political career and ecclesiastical vocation can be sacred callings only if they are undertaken for a common goal. The common goal most likely yearned for is the well-being of everybody in the society epitomized by social justice and peace. Both politics and religion demand obedience, obedience to the law of the land and obedience to commandments of God is a constant reminder by both politics and religion.

Absence of justice and peace necessitates encouragement for the building up of a new community spirit. This can be done through political propaganda and the preaching and teaching the word of God. There is therefore a need for educated men and women to show the way, to speak to the government to equitable distribute development schemes and resources. The politician's interest may end at immediate concerns; but the clergyman's responsibility transcends immediate needs. He is concerned with the universal salvation of human and nature. In both political pursuit and religious revival there is demand for selflessness, devotion to service and genuine dedication to glorify God by serving humanity.

The future of African Christianity is bright, promising and hopeful because the phenomenon is the "theocreathropocratic" (inclusive, guided liberal and co-existent life process) .

### Conclusions

The progress which the African nations have made in the sphere of education since political independence, beginning 1960 is extremely impressive. In the Cameroon there are numerous learning institutes, religious and secular. Many junior learning institutions have been upgraded. The Roman Catholics and the Protestants have upgraded some of their primary schools to secondary and most secondary schools to high schools or junior colleges; and Bible schools have been upgraded to junior and major seminaries. These schools turn out intellectuals and professionals every year. To a large extent this rapid progress is partly the result of the transition to the building of the new African nations and reconstructionist vision of pioneer leaders.

The question that is frequently asked as a reaction to this widespread educational euphoria is whether it is necessarily congruent with critical common issues of Africa? According to the author of this dissertation, Africans need a new type of education, reconstruction education. This has been discussed in the preceding chapters.

The history of education in Africa has two perspectives. There is the predominantly education of the western culture transplanted by colonialism and there is transformatory or post-colonial education with a focus on Africanization. The hypothesis of Chapter Six for example is that, in order to reconstruct all that was distorted about Africa, instill a new sense of national consciousness and give new dimensions to the concept of religion,

the African clergy must be educated. Chapter Seven outlines some basic objectives for reconstruction, for a sense of nationalism and need for ecclesiastical responsibilities. These objectives have been summarized under six major headings, further condensed into four main themes: Institutionalality; Phenomenology; Ethnicity, ethics and society and Intercultural relations.

#### The African Educational Institute

Centuries of tribulation have placed the black man at the bottom of human achievements. He has been struggling to rise to the level of international recognition and acceptance. To achieve this, he needs, the type of education that meets his needs and aspirations. This type of education depends on the nature, the quality, the outlook and the destiny of the learning institute. By nature, it is meant that an African learning institute should have a simple and small, improved and impressive beginning and grow according to needs, resources and planned strategies. In quality, the goal of the learning institute should be a striving for excellence, in discipline, conduct, character and academic. In its outlook, the African educational institution, especially the seminary should be a busy academic and solemn spiritual environment for the production of a cadre and genuine intellectuals and for the transformation of lives. The destiny of an African learning environment should be for eternity as it withstands the tests and the challenges of times. Its worth should be publicized by those intellectuals and dedicated citizens it turns out.

The four important features or characteristics of an African study institute can be achieved through five factors. There must be a prevalence of healthy dialogue between the students and faculty. Conscientiousness must be practically demonstrated in various ways, achieve among them being tutorial. The students and faculty should participate in school and national politics to build up the school and the nation.

The school should consist of a trinity of a bookshop, a press and a library. Each of them should grow as the school grows and progresses. The bookstore should be stocked with all sorts of books, laboratory and other experimental equipments. The school should be staffed with highly qualified and efficient staff and faculty. An absence of scientific and philosophical vision of a school makes education and administration, politics and government schemy and expedient rather than being established on reason and rationale, principle and practice. Finally, the teachers of such a school would be researchers and thinkers who fear God and lead a prayerful life.

The idea of the systematic and scientific, the theological and philosophical nature, the purpose and practice of an African educational institute becomes an illusion if it is not planned and preserved to be staffed and manned by the Africans themselves.



## CHAPTER VII

### BASIC OBJECTIVES FOR EDUCATING THE AFRICAN CLERGY

---true salvation embraces the soul, the mind and the physical body, and it meets both spiritual and material needs. For each believer, the eternal kingdom begins here. ---, the nation-state seeks to train morally good and responsible citizens so as to use them to accomplish material and social prosperity here on earth, within planned decades. Every nation seeks unity, peace, loyalty and conscientious service, so that prosperity may flow from good education, efficient health service, well maintained roads and communications systems, productive agropastoral establishments, progressive and profitable industries and technological advancement. Church and national goals are not in conflict, especially where the central place of God in everything is acknowledged.<sup>1</sup>

Discussion on this essay has centered on two main points: The indigenous Christian organizations in the Cameroon have been more interested in the education of their clergy than did the colonial Christian Missions. There are however problems surrounding the education of the Christian clergy in the Cameroon relating to religious reconstruction and nation-building.

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Nyansako-ni-Nku ed., Journey in Faith: The Story of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (Yaounde: Buma Kor and Company Publishers, 1982), p. 153.

The demography and multifarious ethnic groups accounted for the islands of religious concentration in the Cameroon. This was not intended to be so. The people needed education to understand that genuine Christianity is not a replica of denominationalism or religious cleavages, but universality of faith. The African clergy has to be educated to be able to teach about the theological essence of religion and the effects of spirituality in the life of a believer.

The Roman Catholics and the Protestants approached the preaching and teaching of the Word of God differently. The Protestants attempted to spread Christianity faster and farther through numerous mushroom schools, small churches and by the use of indigenous dialects and languages. The results were not encouraging. There were numerous small schools, but low enrollment. Further, notorious traditional practices hindered people from accepting Christianity. Vernacular education (the use of Mungaka language in the grassland area and Douala language in the forest area) did much harm to Protestant Christianity. It divided the people instead of uniting them. It discriminated in the education of the clergy. Those who were educated in either language were linguistically unadaptable. Christianity was limited to those who were interested in either language.

The Roman Catholics on the other hand did the opposite. They built (centralized) few, but big schools and

churches and universalized Christianity by using Latin for preaching and English for teaching. The former language was discontinued after many complaints from Christian and religious critics. Europeans introduced Christianity in Africa as an international club open to the public for membership rather than a dynamic force that confronts and convicts people into permanent decision making. Africans agreed to be Christians, but never accepted the faith.

They remained tied to the corpus of their traditional beliefs and practices. Advanced and special education makes the African clergy reconcile Western and African Christianities by contextualization.

Positively or negatively, Christianity is a force to reckon with. Judging for instance from the conflicts among the Christian bodies and between Christian bodies and secular authorities and traditional practices, it can be concluded that Christianity was presented to Africans as a club that was to be joined through membership after serious campaigns. The conflicts were not unusual nor peculiar to Africa. Basically, Christianity has historically been a religion of conflicts. Education of the clergy can help wipe out illiteracy and ignorance; even though spiritual warfare may persist.

Reflection on the foreign missionary participation in education reveals that education has always been considered as an important and effective vehicle for the transportation and transmission of Christianity. A drop of

interest in religious studies in the Cameroon has two historical origins. It was by default caused by the First World War which led to the attachment of the Cameroon to Nigeria politically where religious education was one of the aspects of education and not the only aspect. Second, government lack of interest in religious education was transferred French mentality created by the French Revolution in the 17th Century as a grudge against the church because of its being too worldly.

Three factors motivated the demand for church autonomy. Human beings do not like to be dominated by other human beings, especially those of a different race. Second, the debasing white attitude towards African traditional practices was resisted by Africans. And third, Cameroonians felt that they were now mature and capable of being politically and religiously autonomous.

Jeremiah Chi Kangsen's central role in the Protestant fight for church autonomy is characteristic of people in history who championed the course of freedom, independence and autonomy for their people. It is difficult to hypothesize what the outcome of Christianity in Africa would have been had it not coincided with colonialism. Sectarianism seemed to have taken the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon unawares. Even though early Christian Missionaries faced difficult times in Africa, Christianity still progressed and expanded. African Christianity is concerned with certain values of the family, socio-

psychology, spirituality as opposed to materialism, essence of life, political participation and leadership. Education of the Christian clergy is an imperative necessity to raise him above mediocrity and to equip him specially for the parish ministry that is peculiarly African.

Towards An African Christianity:

The goal of this discourse is an African Christianity. This precisely means a Christianity that is different from European and American Christianities. The striving is for the reclaim of the Christianity of the Apostolic Age which took its rise from the Old and New Testaments as postulated by the Synoptic Gospel writers.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord. ...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your might. ...these words which I command you ...shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children ....

No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Peace I leave with you: my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

...I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you....

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; ... and not only the creation, but we ourselves ... groan inwardly as we wait for ... redemption....

For I am sure that neither death nor, life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers nor height, nor death, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

...Are we to continue in sin that Grace may abound? By no means!

...Whatever is true... honorable, ... just...pure, ...lovely, ... gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. I can do all things in him who strengthens me. 2

As typified by the above passages, an African Christianity can be attained by following the echoes of the theological-historical development of Christianity from its mother soil, Judaic background through the broad field of the Graeco-Roman empire in the Apostolic Age to the sectarian age of Christianity.

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The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1952), Deuteronomy 6:4, 7; Matthew 6:24; John 14:27; I Corinthians 11:23; Romans 8:19-39; 6:1-2; Philippians 4:8.

According to the author, European and American Christianities take a plural form because they have drifted away from the genuine, authentic universal Christian faith described by the Gospel writers and demonstrated by the early believers and Apostles, headed by Saint Paul. Rudolf Bultmann is right when he points out:

In regard to theology we cannot be in the church without confronting responsibly the theology of antiquity as well as that of the present. Augustine, Thomas, Luther...and all others are not dead, but alive. 3

Bultmann is reiterating Karl Barth's stand about the Christian faith that Christianity cannot:

consist merely in the establishment and transmission of the results already achieved in this or that classical period. Rather must theology consist of an ever-renewed reflection. For...this reason must theology perform its task in full earnestness again and again ... beginning from the beginning. ...the theology of former times, be it classical or less than classical, also speaks to us and will be heard.... 4

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Adolf Von Harnack, What is Christianity? (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), p. IX.

4

Ibid., p. ix.

While the New Testament Christianity resisted the tendency of denominationalism, Western Christianity divided into leagues of independent individual communities.

By its nature and character Christianity has always been more of intellectualism so as to come to term with all knowledge and with intellectual life as a whole, but doctrinal side-tracking of Western Christianity threatens to obliterate this earnest character and true nature of religion.

The author sees Western Christianity as a faith that contains products of European religious evolution, western traditional orthodoxy and pietism. That is why Western Missionaries aided by their governments used Christianity as a social message and the basis of their imperial and colonial programs called civilizing missions.

American Christianity is established on the foundation of the illusive belief in the "American dream" which means earthly bliss epitomized by a good education, a good paying job, a luxurious car, a cosy house, a strong social position, erotic sexual life and frequent glamorous party fanfares.

The Gospel has never been a statutory religion not even from the time of the Gospel writers through the Apostolic Age to post-Apostolic era. If it were so, the forms in which the religion assumed intellectual and socio-political expressions would have possessed a classical and permanent character. Substantively, Jesus in his public



ministry attacked those who made religion a faith of statutoriness:

...the Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?" And Jesus answered "The son of man is lord of the Sabbath."<sup>5</sup>

The genuineness and authenticity of Christianity lie in the fact that it is not just a faith that is based on one doctrine handed down by ideological uniform repetition or verbatim or distorted arbitrarily; but it is life itself which is being kindled afresh and energized by circumstantial events.

The Synoptic writers might have differed in expressing their conviction and belief, religious experiences and spiritual insight about the person they travelled about with, listened to and from whom they learnt about life. But two things were

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The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version , Luke 6:5.

characteristically common among them. They translated and interpreted their religious conviction in the context of their environment and culture. They undertook to convey abroad their spiritual conviction not as a Jewish culture, but as a living dynamic message capable of new impetus to transform lives:

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at that gate of the temple which is called Beautiful to ask alms of those who entered the temple. Seeing Peter and John about to go into he asked for alms. And Peter directed his gaze at him with John, and said, Look at us." And he fixed his attention upon them expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold but I give you what I have; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. 6

The Gospel Message was Good News in that it was capable of changing and transforming lives. This sense of spiritual conviction or practical spirituality which gave birth to dynamic Christianity was handed down to the Apostles.

In several respects, the Apostolic Age resembled the Age of the Gospel Writers. The Gospel writers were concerned about the communication of their faith in a person (Jesus Christ) whom they knew and trusted as Lord and Saviour. This spiritual conviction was handed down to the Apostles. They were charged with the responsibility of spreading it (Good News) beyond the confines of

Jerusalem, across the frontiers of the Roman World. But whereas the Apostles continued the spirituality of the Synoptics there were unreconcilable divergencies between the Apostolic Age and the neo-Christian era (colonial Missionary period).

Apostolic Missionaries expressed and practiced racial equality in a faith whose author (Jesus) even though a Jew died for all including Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles), but colonial Missionaries were pre-occupied with ethnocentric feeling professed as white supremacy, civilizing missions, white man's burden.

The early Apostles spread the Gospel Message, but European and American Missionaries took Christianity to Africa in a complex package containing Western culture, politics, science, technology, methods of conquering diseases and education.

In the Apostolic Age the church was the body of Christ in which all believers were united, but European and American Missionaries made it a movement of denominationalism.

Early Missionaries never attempted to politicize or change the practices of their newly founded societies, slavery in the Roman world. They however reminded their listeners that whether slaves or masters, their social positions meant nothing before God. They were all equals and God was the only master to whom both the slaves and masters as brothers in the faith owed allegiance. Colonial Missionaries in using their might to change African culture, destroyed it and attracted antagonism from the natives.

Apostles presented Christianity to converts as a faith capable of a radical change of inner being; but in the colonial Missionary age Christianity became a superficial faith identified with the acceptance of dogmatic teachings.

Characteristically the phenomenon of African Traditional Religions consists of two parts. The first is the feeling of the traditionalists and the second is the ways in which this feeling is translated or made practical such as acts and customs, beliefs and conceptions associated with the feeling. Readers are reminded of the difference between African Traditional Religions and African religions. The former refers to the customs and beliefs, traditions and practices which are original with the people as handed down from generation to generation. The latter refers to the religions such as Christianity and Islam now accepted as African religions, religions that came to the people from the outside.

This study is concerned with the former. African religious feeling is esoteric and sinister, mystical and awful. At the bottom of it all is the conviction that there are powerful forces outside of human which are more powerful than a person's ability to overcome them. It is conceived that these forces are so powerful that they control all the elements upon which life depends. Islam with similar components incorporated and intensified the African religious feeling and made punctilious adherence to certain customs and beliefs firmer and stricter.

By not recognizing and accepting the African folkloristic

elements of life so as to determine and evaluate their inter-relationships with Christianity, colonial missionaries distorted the African's religious outlook and disoriented his life. Today the African finds himself at the crossroad of rapid socio-cultural, politic-economic and religious changes, coerced at certain points into the European life style. In the words of John Mbiti:

It alienates him both from the tradition of his society and from his roots. ---the individual is involved in the change and yet alienated from it. So he becomes an alien both to traditional life and to the new life brought about by modern change. 7

This state of affairs has brought confusion, especially to most elite Africans. They try, at least theoretically to live without religion. This raises questions about the religious political future of the continent. The task of an African clergy is to lead his parishioners to a faith that has only one objective - the finding of the living God by every individual as a source of existence and life in which three virtues are experienced, such as strength, peace and joy. His preaching and teaching must be centered on the premise that these three virtues are assured by three factors.

The three factors the educated clergy should strive to achieve in his pastoral calling are, by first enabling his parishioners to realize and recognize Jesus Christ as the living

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John S. Mbili, African Religions and Philosophy (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1970), p. 286-287.

Lord and Savior. The second factor is to avoid the temptation of making Christianity a mere routine dead religion. People yearn for a religion which provides for actual experience in every individual believer. It enables that individual to be conscious of a living union with God. The third factor of his ministry is, through his own life he has to guide his parishioners to lead a holy life in purity of heart and in brotherly fellowship in active anticipation and expectation of the eschatology and parousia.

#### The Future Of Christianity In Africa:

Christianity came to Africa as a harbinger of colonialism. Missionary organizations did not regard themselves as sharers of the Gospel, but as civilizing missions. They joined colonial and imperial authorities in saying that the black man (African) was the white man's burden, a savage who had no culture, no history, no education, no religion except stale and sinister superstitions.

Everything they saw of Africa was subhuman needing replacement. Missionaries and colonial authorities also brought new methods of conquering diseases. Africans' health was improved, lifespan increased and infant mortality reduced.

But credit for humanitarian service was forfeited by the phobia of superiority complex. Africans accepted European civilization and religion only as an imposed choice. Since then, Africans have always resisted Christianity as the white man's religion. African quest for political independence was accompanied by a desire for an African Christianity. This was

demonstrated by the replacing of foreign Christian and colonial names, religious liturgies and languages for preaching with what was considered authentically African. This was the beginning of religious reconstruction.

The emergence of African independent churches which contained elements of Western Christianity and much of traditional religions was another determining factor of an African Christianity. The main drawback of African Christianity is an absence of established African theology and dogmatics. This has been so because most of the African clergy have received mediocre education. Phenomenologically and not as a faith, some African intellectuals, most of them theologians have proposed various theologies as tenets of an African Christianity. Unfortunately these theologies are not refinedly coherent.

The proliferation of sects which have their origin and abase abroad (America and Europe) but shallow in education and ignorant in theological studies and insight make the establishment of an African Christianity difficult. African leaders most of them former students of missionary schools attempt to obliterate Christianity in their countries. Typical examples are Zaire where foreign Missionaries were expelled and church buildings turned into public and secular activities. Zairians were ordered by presidential decree in 1969 to change their Christian and colonial names to Zairian. In the Cameroon, in 1972 the former president, Amadou Ahidjo signed a decree rejecting religious knowledge as a qualification for jobs. Evidently, these actions

are not evidence of atheism or anti-religion, but it is because most of the hurts of colonial and missionary harms still linger on.

This state of affairs made the future of Christianity in Africa bleak. There have been attempts for revival. Emphasis has been on indigenization. Attempts are being made for religious and political reconstruction, spiritual revival and socio-cultural establishment and stability. In the Cameroon, colonial and missionary education is being criticised by both lay and clergy people.

According to the Reverend Nyansako-ni-Nku the African church, the African society, an African audience, the nation needs "the uncompromising voice ---to poke the conscience ---"<sup>8</sup>. He maintains that although printed literature is important to disseminate God's word, the radio and perhaps television would be more effective means of communicating the Gospel. He feels that early on radio and television were not seen as a necessary means of communicating the Gospel.

Nku asserts that even though African churches put up moratoriums and seemingly attained autonomy, key church positions and activities were still carried out under the auspices of and by foreign Missionaries. He maintains that the main objective of communicating the Gospel is for liberation and development.

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Nyansako-ni-Nku, ed., Journey in Faith: The Story of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. (Yaounde: Buma Kor and Company Publishers, 1982), pp 58-70.



Nku's assertions are informative and encouraging in the African aspirations for education and nation-building. It can be speculated that continuous foreign missionary presence in Africa has been motivated by three things: mediocre education for Africans, African dependency on foreign aids and sheer white egocentricity.

Nku's proposal of political theology has some drawbacks. The subordination of politics and theology to each other engenders ecclesiastical and political controversies and problems more than solves them. Prophetic and dynamic, genuine and effective witnessing for Christ is not determined by the type of device employed, but by the type and extent of the education which the word proclaimer has received. I would expect Nku to propose an African theology that makes Christianity rise above antitheses of secularism and confined socio-cultural religions.

The Reverend Michael Bame is for unitheologo Christianity, that is a Christianity whose theology is non-sectarian, but ecumenical, non-partisan, but co-existent, non-ethnological, but encompasses all cultures. This is being implemented in the Faculty of Theology, Yaounde, Cameroon where he is Dean. Even though this theological seminary was jointly founded by the Methodist, the Baptist, the Lutheran and the Reformed churches in 1961, it is non-sectarian.

It has admitted students from twenty-four different churches to the Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Divinity and Doctor of Theology programs. This seminary helps students in their spiritual growth by running yearly religious retreats and by

organizing prayer groups on the campus. The Cameroon government and this religious institute benefit from each other as they exchange teaching staff, interschool courses, occasional seminars on secular-religious and theolo-political topic. This enables both sides to open up to other and new dimensions of life. Bame is excited about his self-created unitheologo Christianity. He expresses it himself as he states:

I am convinced that most of our pastors who leave from here are not only academically equipped, but are also prepared spiritually. We are very open to all sorts of Christian outlooks, conservative and liberal. We do not have a school of thought that we are following. We are neither conservative nor liberal. We are just an open institution. So we have students coming from very fundamentalist background, from independent churches and from non-church organizations.

Our aim is to give them sound theological background and let them encounter Jesus Christ themselves. It would be up to them to decide what line of thought to follow and what life to lead. 9

The theological and revival impact of unitheologo-Christianity remains yet to be seen.

Bernard Fonlon, a Roman Catholic seminarian, has emphasized the importance of authentic universal Christianity and theology. His is a theology of absolution, absolute faith in godliness, in Jesus Christ, in stewardship, in saintliness, in self-discipline

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Interview with Michael Bame, Dean of the Protestant Theological Seminary, Younde, Cameroon, December 12th, 1988.

and in equality. He is concerned about thoroughness in scholarship, in being steeped in the scriptures or in any branch of intellectual discipline. He captions his theology in the context of the Latin origin of the word - Ave Crux Spes Unica, Hail the Cross the only hope. In his own words he states:

----there is a burning need for dedicated souls prepared to go to the other extreme, prepared to sacrifice themselves for God; men dead to the world, selflessly generous, instinctive to the core with the spirit of poverty, and dedicated heart and soul, to the service of men. ---a priest should be a man not only dedicated to the service of God, but also to the welfare of man. ---next to being a saint our future African priest should be such a scholar that he should be respected by the world of learning, whether they lie it or not. In Learning as in Saintliness, the motto of our priest should be the single word: Thorough. I believe----in a priest who is a thinker and scholar, with a scientific and philosophical turn of mind. ---in order to wage war against the onslaught of materialist godlessness, one thing is absolutely necessary - Discipline ----, stemming from deep and unshakable conviction. 10

Fonlon's theology of absolution is a spiritual and ecclesiastical challenge and a praiseworthy proposal. He is reiterating what Saint Paul has emphasized in I Corinthians 10:31. But Fonlon sounds too conservative and idealistic. He has overlooked the fact that people are easily lured to and overcome by the urges of the flesh than they are prepared to remain steadfast spiritually. According to the Christian teaching, it is probably so because man was first created of the flesh. Spirit was breathed into him afterwards.

The author of this dissertation is more interested in African phenomenology which can be broken down into mysticism comprising folk medicine and healing; religious and cultural practices consisting of ritualistic ceremonies and taboos; traditional corpus of beliefs and practices seen in socio-cultural practices made effective by social psychology and psychotherapy, crisis intervention and cultural counselling.

The author believes that some traditional concepts such as witchcraft, sorcery and mystical experiences can be utilized by the application of spontaneous and organized dynamics and therapies to poke the conscience. Conscience, which in Africa is regarded as the search light and watch dog of the soul, can be a tremendous advantage for pastoral care and intervention.

The author suggests four steps for effective cultural and cross cultural counselling to achieve peace of mind: Avoid bad memories and suspicions, waste no energy trying to change impossibilities, but do not give up fighting prayerfully and hopefully, maintain a high sense of self-esteem and maintain it with love, honor, kindness, compassion and loyalty. And be relatively realistic in the expectation of your set goals and above all else, have absolute faith in something (God) far bigger than human or yourself lest you score low.

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Mbu Walters, Avenues to Health: Comparative Studies in Folk, Scientific and Religious Ways of Healing, (Cameroon: 1974), pp. 54-64.

The author's proposed theology, phenomenology is characteristically African. When incorporated into Bame's unitheologo Christianity could lead to genuine authentic African Christianity. After all, the role of Christianity in the Apostolic Age was to meet people where they were, to develop them there and gently lead them to encounter Jesus Christ personally. The reality of Christianity is when there is personal experience of Jesus Christ through the hurdle race of life.

However, the author's proposed theology has weaknesses. It is risky to have absolute faith in the human faculty called conscience as if it were a god. Whereas God is eternal and incorruptible, conscience can be defected or destroyed by education, science and technology and changes in one's life's circumstances. It is not a guarantee that utilizing traditional concepts can necessarily lead to spiritual revival more than it can degenerate into cultural chauvinism.

But, whatever the shortcomings of proposed theologies, it is gratifying to note that African intellectuals are in dire search of an African Christianity and theology.

Intellectuals, particularly theologians, perceive God-talk (theology) differently and consequently often propose different theologies. This is aside from their personal spiritual conviction (if at all it is ever retained after intensive book drudgery). And whereas they are inclined to theologizing and philosophizing (rationalized work) Christianity as though it were a mental phenomenon, lay people perceive Christianity as a

dynamic life process that calls for serious practical consideration.

Z.M. Memoh comparatively thinks that for obvious reasons church autonomy instead of kindling and strengthening, deepening and broadening the spiritual conviction and religious vision has made Africans lose their faith in Christianity. The African church is seen as an incompetent employer on an oppressive organization which is not concerned about the material and spiritual wellbeing of its people.

Memoh feels that this attitude has devastating impact in the people's response to Christianity. He compares:

In the past (in the days of colonial Christianity) African Christians particularly teachers participated actively in church activities by teaching Sunday school, preaching, taking communion, but today hardly do the laity express their Christianity in any of these ways. One would think that education of the clergy aimed at indigenizing Christianity would bring about revival, but education of the African clergy, especially that of the Protestant Christianity is based on no planned strategy for man power training. Pastors struggle on their own to study abroad. The effects are regrettable. There is duplication, no diversification. They concentrate on shall theological studies. Some become disgruntled because the church neglected them. All this could be prevented or avoided if the church could even keep track of the whereabouts of and what its pastors are pursuing. 12

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Interview with Zacharia M. Memoh, Presbyterian Education Secretary for the North-West Province of Cameroon, December 26th, 1988.

Memoh's remarks are frank and thought provoking. The experiences of church autonomy in Africa are as bad as those of political independence, substantiated by current political upheavals. Lay people's loss of trust in the Church and faith in Christianity was evident in the teachers' (especially Protestant teachers) response to government takeover of mission schools. Most of the teachers stopped going to church. Some became polygamists.

It seems Memoh either comparatively regrets church autonomy or just honestly and objectively gives the facts as they are. It is doubtful if man is capable of judging one's spirituality from mere work alone. The likelihood that the colonial Christians were conscientious for ulterior reasons more than spiritually motivated could not be ruled out. It is appropriate to say that Africans lost Christian enthusiasm rather than saying that they lost their spirituality. I am not sure material incentives inculcate spirituality more than become the very mammoth obstacle of it. The current problem of spiritual dryness among Africans is the effect of the type of Christianity they were initiated into by colonial Missionaries. Church autonomy brought this falsehood to the surface rather than created it.

All in all, the forementioned representative African lay and clerical intellectuals have been emphasizing the following things. Too much emphasis on education and too little on personal piety results in mere eloquence, but cannot energize the Holy Spirit to bestow His unction to the sermons preached, the

catechetics taught and the prayers uttered. Uninspired sermons and prayers are sensational and titillating, but cannot change lives. On the other hand, too much spirituality (rituals) with very little education ends up in blind and insensitive fanaticism.

The neo-testament church (church after that of the Apostolic Age) is the church that has departed from the living presence of God and has concentrated on polity with distinctive ecclesiastical structures. For example, the idea of denominationalism such as Catholicism with its hierarchical structure headed by the pope as the chief of bishops, Presbyterianism a form of polity that focuses on a group of elders and congregational or Baptist, a form of government that places power in the hands of the whole congregation and emphasises the autonomy of each congregation in matters of money and policy emerged respectively from the civil governments of the ancient world known as the episcopate (monarchy), oligarchy or aristocracy and democracy respectively.

To summarize, in this research work the author has discussed five major reasons why education is an imperative necessity for an African Christian clergy. These reasons can be categorized as transcultural, political-religious, intellectual, spiritual and integrated life. Transculturally, discussion has centered on the assumption that education gives the pastor wisdom to deliver Christianity (the Gospel Message) from European cultural imperialism and make the religion African by carrying its



teachings, implications and practical application beyond and above mere African Traditional Religions. Saint Paul, too, used his education and spirituality to deliver Christianity from the narrow confines of Judaism. Through Paul, Christianity ceased from being a Judaic religion of the law and observance of rules to a living and dynamic force in the great scheme of spirit and flesh speaking to the inner and outer existence, death and life.

The African clergy would design distinctive religious characteristics that are peculiar to African Christianity and theology, yet ecclesiastically remain within the universal framework of Christendom. These characteristics could be resolved into liturgical, linguistic and regalia elements, so as to give the new religion a spiritual fervour. In the very nature of things and politic-religiously the clergy would use his education to illustrate that the Gospel is neither exclusively a social message, universal pauperisation to the poor, the outcasts and those of low social status (lest it becomes a mere social and utopian program) nor is it exclusively concerned with a yearning for abundance. It is primarily a religion of solidarity between man and God and brotherliness between man and man both of which are tied up in one word - love. At the center of the Christian message is the infinite value of the human soul which must be saved. He would point to the fact that Christianity is a religion of dualism concerned with the realization of God's kingdom in heaven and on earth. Such a dualism calls for the necessity of mutual co-existence between church and state.

It would take the scholar-saint clergy a strenuous intellectual exercise and divine wisdom to convince the world around him, especially the evangelicals and the monastery motivated fanatics that Christian existence cannot be achieved by changing the world nor asceticism; rather by living the Gospels in the struggle against mammonism, worldly cares and selfishness. He would insist on the conviction that mutual co-existence between church and state does not make the Gospel a social phenomenon nor is it the basis of a political program. He would elucidate this by explaining certain biblical expressions such as the Kingdom of God as a feeling of the presence of a supernatural environment in which the individual and the living God are linked because his sins are forgiven and misery banished; God the Father as the only peace provider to the human soul through his son Jesus Christ; infinite value of the human soul meaning that, of all God's creation, only human has a supernatural value. In the main, mutual co-existence between church and state is significantly important to African Christianity for the purpose of reconciling asceticism (world shunning) or the so-called ascetic creed and evangelistic creed (the creed of "reach the world and change it) the so-called annihilatic creed.

The purpose of diversified education, especially for the Christian and particularly for the clergy is to guarantee an integrated life. By integrated life I mean the blending of ethical systems of mundaneness with the higher goal of righteousness founded on the commandment of love. He would

demonstrate by his own exemplary life to prove that failure to blend morality with spirituality makes moral ideas (ethics) become childish or casuistic. And that the deadly consequence could be depreciation in value and effects of the Gospel Message; or that concentration on spirituality makes religion become petrified in mere ritual observances and utterances.

The task of the educated priest would precisely be to amalgamate spiritual righteousness and religious holiness. In other words his motto would be, "merge ampleness and profundity." Education equips and enables him to combine traditionalism, intellectualism and ritualism. Finally, genuine intellectual integrity enables the clergy to demonstrate the peculiar clerical characteristics which may not be common in the laity. Integrated life creates in the clergy reconstructionist, intellectual and spiritual leadership, better teacher, Bible expositor, inspired preacher and practical doer of the Word.

Interest in scholarship in Africa has more than tripled, especially beginning the 1960s because of church autonomy, political independence and because of indigenization of Christianity and politics. But one cannot count much on the today's African intellectuals to effect African Christianity and theology and insure politic-economic and socio-cultural stability. Most of these intellectuals are the products of the colonial education.

To achieve genuine scholarship and saintliness, political stability and development, Africa needs a system of education,

(secular and theological) that is realistically relevant to African needs and yet interculturally keeps a hind-eye look on national, international and global needs and changes, demand and supply provisions. The future is bright and promising and African Christianity and theology can be achieved, especially when certain themes are emphasized.

Religion and Spirituality in Africa:

According to John Mbiti "It is not enough to learn and embrace a faith which is active once a week, either on Sunday or Friday, while the rest of the week is virtually empty. It is not enough to embrace a faith which is confined to a church building or mosque, which is locked up six days and opened only once or twice a week. Since traditional religions (African Traditional Religions) occupy the whole person and the whole of his life, conversion to new religions like Christianity ... must embrace his language, thought patterns, fears, social relationship, attitudes and philosophical disposition ... ." <sup>13</sup>

Mbiti's description of Christianity and African Traditional Religions as extreme opposites is more a comparative description of adherents' attitudes towards these religions than the nature of religion. "True" religion ipso facto according to religious fanatics has three main characteristics. It has a dynamic force that intuitively permeates the whole life and energizes it to keep the soul alive. True religion has the characteristic of opposing mere routine religious activities that are cloaked in

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John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy (New York: Doubleday and Company Publishers, 1970), p. 2.

rites and rituals. Genuine religion contains a supernatural urge that makes a believer conscious and perceptive of the immance called God.

These characteristics of religion are already prevalent in African traditional religions; but the whole concept is more superstitious than genuine spirituality. The maintenance of spirituality (transcendental mysticism) is insured by constant education, clerical and secular. Genuine religion and spirituality is guaranteed by steepness in the scriptures and advanced knowledge in empirical and scientific, theological and philosophical technological and practical education. This type of education, (all round education) is what the African clergy needs for the teaching and practice of genuine religion and spirituality to prevent sectarian involvemtn and religious prostitution.

#### Counselling and Guidance:

According to the author of this essay, counselling, pastoral care and guidance is another very important contemporary issue that necessitates the education of the African clerics. In the African context, counselling and guidance features in four areas of life such as the concept of an African family, educational leadership and policy studies, political participation, and religious reconstruction.

It is no longer mere cleche to state succinctly that in the past, the African palace (known today as the presidency) was preeminently a place of high moral and enviable character

leadership. This was consequent of importance and value attached to the family and good child up-bringing. The fundamental crises underlying leadership in Africa today are several. mediocrity and Godlessness are widespread. Outstanding and penetrating policy studies of the evolution of the African in local and international politics would reveal that the sterling wise and shrewd leader is the genuine intellectual who makes politics a scientific phenomenon and leadership philosophical. But all this and administration can be schemy and expedient if politics and religion are incompatible. All round and specialty education provides the pastor with the ability of counselling and guidance in all areas of life.

The traditional Africa's concept of the family as the foundation on which the moral, the character, the conscience, the life and the destiny of a nation is built is today regarded as old fashion. What one sees today in Africa in regard to marriage, child upbringing, the extended family (blood relatives) is betrayal of a penury of the concept of a genuine African family.

Western education is making the African husband and wife regard and treat each other as though they were expedient sex partners rather than necessary co-existent halves who are bound together by genuine love. It is therefore not surprising that the rate of divorce in Africa is rising.

In modern Africa child rearing has become the responsibility of nobody. Father and mother are always out there in the world busy gathering wealth to enrich children. Children need parental love and concern, presence and care more than money and things.

Schools seem to be imparting irrelevant and destructive knowledge rather than discipline and morals. The church complasant and indifferent about her role in the life of the family. A weak family presuposes a weak society with a hopeless future and destiny.

Revive Missiology, Reverse Missions:

The author of this dissertation defines missiology as the study of the church's strategies in respect to her commission to the world in regard to the nature, the purpose and the methods of missionary activities. Mission in this context means a mandate to carry out a responsibility on behave of someone or a group.

European and American understanding of missiology was culturally conditioned. People (missionaries) sent abroad from these places regarded themselves as disciples charged with the inevitable divine commission to evangelized the world. The concept and the understanding, the application and results of missiology and mission conflicted. The European and American Christian Missionary work as experienced by the evangelized was a duty and task conceived in the culture of the missionaries.

A misconception of mission led to the execution of irreligious activities. Scientific and technological enterprises for example, designed for solving problems, setting things right, producing definite products, obtaining "tangible" and measurable results that emanated from careful planning might have been helpful and revolutionary, but in themselves, they were not part of a divine activity, especially as spirituality was never

imputed into them. Ethnocentricity, science and technology obscured the vision of Western Christian missionaries. Substantively, there was a neglect of the aspects of divine importance as stipulated in the New Testament such as preaching and teaching, accepting and incorporating into the divine thoughts and feelings of the universal fellowship, Christianity all humans and their cultures.

But what hindered Western Missionaries from being sensitive to the reactions of those they came to Christianize? it seemed there were four key factors at work; ignorance and ethnocentricity, colonialism and modern civilization. The majority of the missionaries, especially those to Africa were themselves lowly educated. They were ignorant of the history and the culture, the customs and practices of the people they were sent to. They imagined and speculated about the Africans and Africa before they went out. Because of modern science and technology, they regarded themselves as a people of a superior culture to spread and impose. Thus, they called themselves civilizing missions. no doubt, colonialism and missions were synonymous.

Missions emerge and disappear, but missiology is perennial. Its concept must be revived from time to time. The experience which calls for a reverse in missions is consistent with the reappropriation of certain biblical themes which Western protestantism and Catholicism neglected. They are hospitality and tolerance, universality and spirituality of faith seen in the love of and unity among brethren, forgiveness and acceptance.



African Christian churches retain or invite white missionaries and call them fraternal workers instead of calling them missionaries.

Education of the African clergy can help prevent repetition of missionary mistakes. This is possible because his education unlike the early missionaries enables him to know and understand European and American histories and cultures. Missionaries from former colonial countries and missionary fields sent to the today called developed countries would do better, make fewer mistakes. They could be more willing to be patient and tolerant, to watch and wait upon God's command and inspiration of the Holy Spirit rather than being anxious for tangible results. There are two compelling reasons for the author's assertion. First, Africa is still deeply religious and spiritual. These two intrinsic elements of human are almost replaced in Europe and America by science and technology which insist on explaining everything or declare it as non-existent if it cannot be rationalized. Second there is the fear of repeating western missionary's mistakes of transplanting western culture instead of propagating the Gospel, of using human intimidation to convert people instead of allowing the intimacy of the Holy spirit to wreak conversion, of being an active arm of colonialism instead of being a prophetic voice of discipleship.

#### Final Conclusions

To have the ability of listening, of tolerance, of watchfulness and of waiting patiently is intrinsically a contemplative vocation and a divine calling. This concept puts to test and divine judgement the work - righteous feeling of the

Christian ministry as a human task that must be measured in clear and tangible results based on worldly standards. General education and advanced learning is one of the urgent and burning needs of the African clergy. His education should be to discover truth. It is to the benefit of the commonwealth of his country first, to himself second, to the entire continent third and above all else, to the glory of God.

Neither European nor American Christianity is archetypical of the early new Testament Christianity. (Christianity of the Apostolic Age) The program of the early church was evangelization. The message (Good News) was Jesus Christ the crucified for salvation of those who repented and believed in him. Missionaries like Peter and John, Paul and John mark and many others went out to spread the good news and fulfill the program, execute and effect the message. The whole book of Acts is illustrative. These missionaries were believed to be truly converted and committed, decided and dedicated missionaries and evangelists.

The early church however was not without discord and division, troubles and tribulation, problems and persecution. Peter died in prison. Stephen was stoned to death. Paul was dragged to Jewish courts several times, beaten, imprisoned, shipwrecked. He was executed in prison. These were people who died for their conviction. The Church believed their blood became spiritual fertilizer for the growth of Christianity.

European Christianity tried to maintain the early church christian orthodoxy, but deluged itself in controversies and permanent split into today's Catholicism and Protestantism in 1525 (Reformation) Catholicism in Europe, especially in France, was accused of wordliness and misappropriation. Its power was reduced during the French Revoltion in 1789.<sup>14</sup> European Christian Missions were entrapped in the snares of European secular authorities by accepting sponsorship in Christian misions, support and partnership in overseas colonial and imperial adventruess and gave wrong impression to mission fields that Christianity was an arm of colonialism, a money making enterprise, an exploiting and beguiling human organization.

In Europe too, because of the negative image the Church had built up during the era of colonialism Christianity according to the author of this essay archetypically degenerated into a liberal religion, a lifeless residue of a whitewashed age of overseas adventures that did no longer need to be taken seriously by younger generation. Large church buildings in Europe have become almost empty, serving more or less as recreational centers for senior citizens.

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Donald Kagan, Steven Ozment and Frank M. Turner, The Western Heritage, Volume A, to 1527, 2nd. ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1983), pp. 402 645.

In the United States, affluence and its several temptations has made the Christian ministry more or less a lucrative enterprise for job opportunities than a divine vocation or calling. material and ministerial temptations are great and almost inescapable for the Christian minister. The recent scandal of the television "evangelist" Jim Baker who it was alleged embezzled the church club (PTL) money in 1988 has rekindled suspicions, doubts and questions about Christianity and its ministers in the United States. The ministry of pastoral care and counselling is almost ineffective, especially as the Christian clergy in the United States assumes the functions of an administrator more than being a day to day parish pastor.

In the Apostolic Age, the apostles were concerned about the daily administration, material and spiritual wellbeing of their parishioners. Education of the African clergy makes a difference between the education of a European and American clergy insofar as it enables him to escape the material and moral temptations. His life and responsibility is non-definitive except as a shepherd in daily contact with his parishioners.

African Independent Churches do not provide the ideal picture of the type of African Christianity the author of this dissertation proposes. Most of the characteristics of the independent churches such as form of worship, doctrine, teaching, dogmatics, symbolics are western. The belief system is in the paradigm of traditional religions. Rites and rituals are esoterical rather than transcendently divine. The type of

Christianity the writer of this essay proposes is "theocreathropocracy" based on Christian mysticism ( a popular subject of Michael Bame) Christian existentialism, systematic theology, pastoral psychology, care and counselling, socio-political theology and contextualized theology (syncretism)

Having experienced the western and African religious cultures, the African clergy can introduce (clinical theology) in his parish ministry. This type of theology is more effective than textbook answers to the problems. Logotherapy focuses on problems that concern compulsive aspects of human behavior which does not necessarily cease with conversion or ordination. The main objective of logotherapy as an aspect of African Christianity is to obliterate or replace esoteric tendency of religion and the stings of cultural relativity.

Elements of logotherapy are friendship and fellowship, care and concern, serving and sharing, crisis intervention in order to provoke a schizoid feeling for the confession of sins. Clinical theology or logotherapy does not deal with organic or inorganic diseases such as severe psychoses, drugs or electric shocks. This is left to the professional psychiatrist. The primary concern of logotherapy is with hystero-schizoid side of life which is often dominated by fear of death and a feeling of non-being, paranoid feeling which stems from a deep sense of meaninglessness of life

and depression which results from a feeling of guilt and self-condemnation.<sup>15</sup> The basis of clinical theology is existential notion of life. The effectiveness of logotherapy depends on the concept and knowledge of systematic theology as the source of pastoral psychology.

The education of the Christian clergy is just as worldly as that of the atheist unless it produces five admirable and prize-winning qualities such as spiritual understanding, honorable humility, transcendental faith, resolute commitment and divine power. These qualities transform hopeless humans into loving and useful servants and sordid life into a fulfilling destiny.

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**APPENDIX**

Beginning Education In Cameroon 1835 - 1914

PROPRIETORS	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	AVERAGE
Colonial Government	4	833	208.25
American Baptist Mission	37	3,151	85.2
American Presbyterian Mission	97	6,545	67
Roman Catholic Mission	151	12,531	83
Basel Mission	319	17,833	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>40,893</b>	

The Reverend Mbu Walters  
 5684 N. Ridge Av.  
 Chicago, Illinois 60660  
 U.S.A.

The Rev. Walters,

Greetings from Bamenda. I was directed by His Grace, the Archbishop of Bamenda, to send an answer to your letter of 30th July 1987. Sorry that there might have been some delayance but it was all wrapped up in trying to get the required information you needed for your work.

So herewith what you requested:

1. The Major Seminary Bambui was opened on 15th September 1973.
2. Cameroonian Priests with Degrees, where and when obtained are as follows:

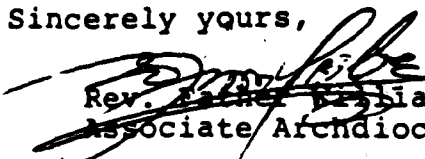
<u>Name</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Where Obtained</u>	<u>When</u>
1. Bishop Pius S. Awa	S.T.L.	Urban University Rome	1961
2. Mgr. Lucas Atang	B.A.	National University of Ireland	1962
3. Mgr. James Toba	M.A.	Detroit, U.S.A.	1966
4. Fr. Henry Mesue	Dip.Pastoral Sociology	C.I.S.I.C. Rome	1967
5. Archbishop Paul Verdzekov	S.T.D.	Gregorian University Rome	1969
6. Fr. Louis Nomi	M.A.	Institute Catholique Paris	1969
7. Fr. Clement Ndze	M.A.	Münster - Germany	1973
8. Archbishop Christian W. Tumi	Ph.D.	Fribourg	1973
9. Fr. James Suhnfor	Dip.Catechetics	Gaba-Uganda	1974
10. Fr. Engelert Kofon	S.T.D.	Academia Alfonsiana Rome	1974
11. Late Fr. Donatus Basebang	B.D.	Urban University, Rome	1974
12. Fr. Francis Lysinge	S.T.L.	Teresianum - Rome	1975
13. Fr. Ivo Ndichia	Ph.D.	Catholic University of America	1975
14. Fr. Etienne N. Khumbah	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1975
15. Fr. Anthony Fontegh	M.ED.	Catholic University of America	1976
16. Bishop Cornelius F. Esua	L.S.S.	Biblical Institute Rome	1977
17. Fr. James M. Nsokika	S.T.D.	Anselmianum Rome	1977
18. Fr. Lucas Sanosi	D.C.L.	Urban University Rome	1979
19. Fr. William Neba	S.T.L.	Academia Alfonsiana Rome	1981
20. Fr. Michael Kintang	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1981
21. Fr. John Kubuo	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1981

...2.

22. Fr. Isidore Lafon	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1981
23. Fr. George Nkuo	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1981
24. Fr. Peter Ndzenkeng	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1981
25. Fr. Michael Obi	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1981
26. Fr. Patrick Lafon	M.Phil.	Urban University Rome	1982
27. Fr. Henry Dinayen	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1982
28. Fr. Sylvester SuhNgwa	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1982
29. Fr. Robert Tanto	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1982
30. Fr. Joseph Mbiydenyuy	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1982
31. Fr. Clement Pishangu	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1983
32. Fr. Peter Amah	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1983
33. Fr. John Njingti	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1983
34. Fr. Polycarp Fonjock	Ph.D.	Urban University Rome	1984
35. Fr. Immanuel Bushu	Ph.D.	Urban University Rome	1984
36. Fr. Evaristus Yufanyi	B.A.	National University of Ireland	1984
37. Fr. Joseph Bomsa	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1984
38. Late Fr. Samson Yiinso	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1984
39. Fr. Chrysanthus Tim	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1984
40. Fr. Humphrey Tatah Mbuy	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1984
41. Fr. Edward Ngalame	S.T. L.	Urban University Rome	1985
42. Fr. Aloysius Aki	M.A.	Toronto - Canada	1985
43. Fr. Elias E. Fonji	Dip. Catechesis	Gaba-Kenya	1985
44. Fr. Roland Berngeh	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1985
45. Fr. Thaddeus Mbi	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1985
46. Fr. Lucas Ngwa	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1985
47. Fr. Anthony Ngeh	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1985
48. Fr. Martin Kima	M.ED.	University of Dublin, Ireland	1986
49. Fr. John Ambe	S.T.D.	Urban University Rome	1986
50. Fr. Christian Mofor	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1986
51. Fr. Anthony Yilaka	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1986
52. Fr. Sebastian Fonsah	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1986
53. Fr. Richard Chin	B.D.	Urban University Rome	1986
54. Fr. William Tardze	L.S.S.	Biblical Institute Rome	1987
55. Fr. Patrick Adeso	L.S.S.	Biblical Institute Rome	1987

3. Three Bishops graduated from Sasse College. Many best wishes and God bless.

Sincerely yours,

  
 Rev. William Neba  
 Associate Archdiocesan Secretary

## EDUCATION OF THE PROTESTANT (PRESBYTERIAN) AFRICAN CLERGY

No.	Names	Certificate	When	Where Obtained
1.	Aaron Su	Dip Theol	1964	Ghana
2.	Jeremiah C. Kangsen(late)	Dip.Theol,Dip. Ed.	1966	Ghana, Scotland,England
3.	Lucas Mba (late)	M.Th, M.Chris Ed.	1966	Virginia, U.S.A.
4.	Moses Fondo	M.Th, M.Ed.	1966	Virginia, U.S.A.
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