

Université de Montréal

**The Holy Spirit in an Urban African Religiosity,
Between Tradition and Transformation:
A Case Study in Two Christian Denominations in Yaoundé,
Cameroon**

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**The Holy Spirit in an Urban African Religiosity,
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Abstract

The articulation of this thesis derives from a curiosity on how the urban contemporary African believers understand the Holy Spirit. The portrayals African theologians have drawn of the African understanding of the Holy Spirit, seems to be based on a dichotomized theological paradigm: the African traditional religion and the Western Christian tradition, which had created dissonance on the academic stage. This paradigm raises a debate of continuity and discontinuity between the spiritual beings of the two traditions, the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. Elochukwu Uzukwu and Matthew Michael, whom this thesis will take a special attention, figure among the few works of the African theologians about the understanding of the Holy Spirit. Uzukwu supports continuity based on the African Independent Churches' theological orientation, whereas Michael sided with those stating the discontinuity, grounds on the Evangelical theological orientation. These theologians, whom take opposite stances based on their respective theological orientations, represent theologically bipolarized stances on Africanized Pneumatology and the African religiosity. Surprisingly, the ongoing debate among the theologians did not accord much room to the lay believers' religiosity nor on their empirical studies. Therefore, this thesis has decided to inquire the lay African believers on whom the Holy Spirit is to them hoping that this study could settle the dissonance persisting on the academic field. The voices of the contemporary lay African believers brought vivid accounts on how they have theologized the two spiritual worlds to define the Holy Spirit into an African faith. Their voices that were introduced to the academic field have brought innovative insights and discoveries. It revealed how the Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit presented by the African theologians were the stance of the very minority of believers, although it were wrapped as if it was a popular Africanized Pneumatology. Conversely, the bipolarized paradigm on which the African theologians were articulating the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit even appeared to be outmoded. Therefore, based on the voices of the ground, this thesis develops proposals for an Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit that could be relevant and pertinent to an urban contemporary African religiosity. The unheard voices that this thesis brought its attention to call to re-evaluating the articulation between Christianity and Traditional Religion in Africa.

Keywords : African Christianity, Evangelical Church, Independent Church, Holy Spirit, Pneumatology, Traditional Spirits, Lay Believers, Urbanization.

Résumé

L'articulation de cette thèse découle d'une curiosité sur la façon dont les croyants africains contemporains urbains comprennent le Saint-Esprit. Les portraits que les théologiens africains ont dressés de la compréhension africaine du Saint-Esprit, semblent être basés sur un paradigme théologique dichotomique: la religion traditionnelle africaine et la tradition chrétienne occidentale, qui avait créé la dissonance dans la scène académique. Ce paradigme soulève un débat de continuité et de discontinuité entre les êtres spirituels des deux traditions, les esprits traditionnels et le Saint-Esprit. Cette thèse va prendre une attention particulière sur les travaux de Elochukwu Uzukwu et de Matthew Michael, qui figurent parmi les quelques théologiens africains ayant travaillé sur la compréhension de l'Esprit Saint. Uzukwu soutient la continuité fondée sur l'orientation théologique des églises indépendantes africaines, tandis que Michael s'est rangé du côté de ceux qui déclarent la discontinuité, se basant sur l'orientation théologique évangélique. Ces théologiens, qui adoptent des positions opposées en s'appuyant sur leurs orientations théologiques respectives, défendent des positions théologiquement bipolarisées de la pneumatologie africanisée et de la religiosité africaine. Étonnamment, le débat en cours parmi les théologiens n'a pas accordé beaucoup de place à la religiosité des croyants laïcs, ni à son étude empirique. Par conséquent, cette thèse a décidé d'interroger les croyants africains laïcs sur qui le Saint-Esprit est pour eux, en espérant que cette étude pourrait régler la dissonance persistante dans le terrain académique. Les voix des laïcs africains contemporains ont rapporté des récits vivants à la façon dont ils ont théologisé les deux mondes spirituels pour définir le Saint-Esprit dans une foi africaine. Leurs voix, qui ont été introduites dans le domaine universitaire, ont apporté des idées novatrices et des découvertes. Elles ont révélé comment la compréhension africanisée du Saint-Esprit présentée par les théologiens Africains ont été la position de la minorité des croyants, bien qu'elle ait fût représentée comme si elle était une pneumatologie africanisée populaire. À l'inverse, le paradigme bipolarisé sur lequel les théologiens africains articulaient la compréhension africanisée du Saint-Esprit semblait même dépassé. Par conséquent, sur la base des voix du terrain, cette thèse développe des propositions, pour une compréhension africanisée du Saint-Esprit, qui pourraient être pertinentes pour la religiosité urbaine de nos jours. Par les voix inédites à qui elle offre une ouverture, cette thèse appelle à réévaluer l'articulation entre le Christianisme et la religion traditionnelle en Afrique.

Mots-clés : Christianisme africain, Cameroun, Église évangélique, Église indépendante, Saint-Esprit, Pneumatologie, Esprits traditionnels, Croyants laïcs, Urbanisation.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AM: Ante Mendum	IC1: Independent Church 1
B.C.: Before Christ	IC2: Independent Church 2
Cor: Corinthians	IMF: International Monetary Fund
CPDM: Cameroon People's Democratic Movement	Ind.: Independent
EC: Evangelical Church	Jn: John
EC1: Evangelical Church 1	L: Low
EC2: Evangelical Church 2	Lk: Luke
EDI: Existence – Dependence – Influence	M: Moderate
EH: Extremely high	Mt: Matthew
EL: Extremely low	NIV: New International Version
Evan.: Evangelical	Phil: Philippians
Ext: Extremely	Rom: Romans
Gal: Galatians	Thes: Thessalonians
H: High	Ti: Titus
IC: Independent Church	VH: Very high
	VL: Very low

Dedication

To Jesus Christ whom have given me hope of life
and vision for my brothers and sisters in Africa

Acknowledgement

This thesis had been written by the influences and blessings of so many people. Thus, it will not be possible to mention all of them in this short section of acknowledgment. Nevertheless, I would still like to mention some of those who have supported me directly throughout my period of doctoral studies. Although I would have had numerous inspirations, without their support, it would not have been an easy task to articulate them into writings.

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Introduction

Problematic

This thesis takes its interest on how the urban African religiosity that is undergoing a process of transformation from its tradition understands the Holy Spirit. The African spiritual world, which highlights ancestral spirits, plays an important role in the lives of the African people.¹ Thus, Pneumatology from the Christian spiritual world is a theme that is tightly associated with the African religiosity. Due to its analogous functions to the traditional spirits, African believers often seem not to distinguish these two spiritual entities and sometimes forego ambiguous practices.²

Such observations were made during my 17 years of youth spent in Africa as a missionary kid. The church that my father was ministering was filled with the Holy Spirit. During services, the Holy Spirit strongly acted upon the congregation by healing those who were sick and freeing those who were possessed by demons. Although some family members were hostile to Christianity, for they considered Christianity as a religion led by a white witchdoctor that will very probably anger the ancestral spirits for having turned away towards other spiritual beings, the church members were zealous toward Christianity. No matter how strong the persecutions, they still came to church. Yet, my parents were surprised when they sometimes heard and encountered some members of the church whom were still inquiring helps from the ancestral spirits by visiting the witchdoctors of the African tradition. Some of them were still worshipping their ancestors leaving their skulls in their houses and offering food to it. Such practices by some African believers raised a curiosity in my mind on wanting to comprehend the theological process of African Christians on the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit.

¹ John S Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 75.

² André Yves Samekomba, “Le laïc Camerounais face à une ‘double fidélité’. Analyse du problème de « dichotomie » dans la vie du laïc d’aujourd’hui, à la lumière de l’histoire du laïcat Camerounais” (Paris IV, 2011).

This embedded curiosity continued throughout my life until I reached my academic stage of master and doctoral studies in theology. It was time to resolve the unanswered and neglected curiosity. However, it was stupefying to discover throughout the literature review that many modern African theologians have disregarded the field of study on the Africanized Pneumatology.³ The few who had written on this theme were in strong disagreement with each other. Surprisingly, these dreadful dissonances resounding on the academic field did not base their arguments on studies from the ground but mostly on personal interpretations of the phenomena based on their theological orientations. Stunned at how no attention was brought to the voices of the ground, this thesis has tried to spotlight the unheard voices of the contemporary urbanized African Christians through a case study in Yaoundé, Cameroon. It mined two Christian denominations, the Evangelical Churches and the African Independent Churches, which have explicated their dissonances on the academic field via African theologians. Hearing what the members of these two different Christian communities have to say will lead us to an Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit in an urban contemporary African religiosity.

Overall Plan

In order to understand the urban contemporary African understanding of the Holy Spirit, this thesis has decided to raise the unheard voices of the lay African believers. The ongoing disputes between theologians have raised curiosity on how the actual urban religiosity that is undergoing a stage of transformation from its tradition is comprehending the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this thesis does not take interest on the synthesis of a particular African Traditional Religion and Christianity. It rather brings attention to the generalized urban religiosity, which encompasses the different gatherings and melding of the African spiritual world, on how this urban religiosity is perceiving the Holy Spirit introduced by Christianity while undergoing a phase of transition. I would like to reveal that my personal theological orientation is Evangelical,

³ Georges Njila Jibikilayi, *La triple exégèse de la révélation chez Hans Urs von Balthasar: Principes fondamentaux de la théologie du témoignage et implications théologiques sur le discours christologique africain* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2012), 274.

yet the power that drives this thesis to its uniqueness is the thesis' curiosity that sincerely wants to ponder on how the people on the ground understands the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, this thesis has approached the matter in four distinct parts. First, it will proceed by introducing the literature review on the works of the African theologians on how they understand God, with a focus on their comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Second, it will gather overall information on the people and the context in which the survey is to proceed. Third, it will undergo a survey on the ground in order to highlight the unheard voices of the lay African believers. Fourth, it will formulate a popular Africanized Pneumatology from the urban contemporary voices of the ground.

Part I of the thesis will introduce the literature review on how theologians have articulated the African understanding of the Holy Spirit. The African comprehension of the Holy Spirit cannot be pondered while disregarding the works done on the African understanding of God and Jesus. Therefore, the works done by the African theologians on how they understand God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son will also be briefly introduced. This may become a vast study for there are enormous works done by the African theologians. Therefore, the first chapter of thesis will limit itself to briefly considering a couple works that illustrate different African understandings on God and Jesus. The second chapter will take a special attention to the African comprehension of the Holy Spirit for that is the theme on which this thesis is focusing.

The first chapter will ponder how African believers understand God the Father and the Son. Although Christianity has been brought to the African people, Africans had their own way of interpreting this newly introduced religion with the fore-established understanding of spirituality from the African tradition. The African understanding of God the Father will be introduced from John Mbiti's perspective. As a pioneering African theologian, he repudiates missionaries' presumptions who claimed the African tradition to be demonic and anti-Christian. Expounding the nature of God expressed in the African tradition and revealing the African spiritual world, he suggests God to be pre-revealed in the African tradition.⁴ The work by Mbiti

⁴ John S Mbiti, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1986), 11.

revealed how a debate of continuity and discontinuity with the African tradition is raised on the African understanding of God. The African understanding of Jesus Christ evolved on the varied African context such as in relation to the African tradition, in relation to the thirst of liberty, in relation to the black identity, and in relation to reconstructivism. The question englobing this chapter will be on how God and Jesus were Africanized among the African believers.

The second chapter will ponder on the African understanding of the Holy Spirit. The African understanding of the Holy Spirit remarked the debate by the theologians whom stated discontinuity between the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits (Gerhardus Oosthuizen and Matthew Michael) and those whom stated the continuity (Allan Anderson and Elochukwu Uzukwu). Although questions of continuity and discontinuity were not an issue on the African understanding of Christology, due to its uniqueness, it became a stage of dissonance when approaching the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit due to its similarity in function with the traditional spirits. Thereupon, the key question that will ground this chapter is on how the African believers have understood the Holy Spirit, along with the theologians' debate on continuity or discontinuity.

Part II of the thesis will gather the given data on today's Christianity in Africa. The third chapter will have an overall introduction of Cameroon and its people, with whom the investigation was done. The fourth chapter will examine the contemporary contexts in which the surveyed respondents are grounded: Africanization of Christianity and urbanization.

The third chapter will begin by bringing attention to a country named Cameroon and to its people. It is in this nation's people that we will ponder to find answers to our question on the urban African religiosity. Cameroon had been selected as the context to investigate on the urban African religiosity due to two reasons. One, Cameroon is a nation that is currently undergoing one of the most rapid processes of urbanization in the Central region of Africa.⁵ Since my study is taking interest on the process of the spiritual world in transition from the African tradition to

⁵ Steve Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Abede Shimeles, and Desiree Yameogo, éd., *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities* (New York; London: Routledge, 2014), 5.

the newly introduced Christianity, the rapid process of urbanization ongoing in the Cameroonian society caught my interest. Two, Cameroon is one of the African countries that represent multi-ethnic diversity – with more than 200 socio-cultural groups and languages.⁶ Since the aim of my studies was not to find a relation between a particular African tradition and Christianity, my research preferred a diversified ethnic context that included different traditional backgrounds encompassing a generalized African urban religiosity. Thus, the multi ethnic context of Cameroon fitted into the criterion. An overall understanding of the nation and its people will enhance a better interpretation of the results of the survey. Therefore, this chapter will give an overall introduction of the country and its people. Along with the brief introduction, it will also discuss the nation’s history and the church’s history. The question that will be pondered in this chapter would be: “who are the Cameroonians.” Answering to this question will lead us to an in-depth comprehension of the surveyed participants.

The fourth chapter will turn its attention to the lived experiences of surveyed respondents. The surveyed respondents live in a context where there is a process of Africanizing the religion introduced by missionary Christianity. There also is a process of urbanization ongoing throughout the African society. These socio-religious phenomena of transition and transformation are the context in which the surveyed African believers are living. Therefore, a close study of the socio-religious ambiance will further enhance the interpretation of the results given by the surveyed participants. The religious process of transformation will highlight the reasons why African believers have decided to start churches of their own, the Independent Churches, and the different forms it has evolved into. The social process of transformation will analyse the history of urbanization in Africa along with the effects it has brought into the African society. Thus, the question that will hold this chapter together is, “what is the contemporary context of the surveyed ground?”

Part III of the thesis will focus on the procedure of the survey and its analysis. If Part II was a prerequisite to learn about the participants and the context in which they live, Part III will

⁶ Olivier Lyébi-Mandjeck, « Préservation du patrimoine et construction des espaces touristiques au Cameroun » (Valorisation du patrimoine et diversité culturelles, Buéa, juin 2006).

be the actual investigation to excavate the answer of the core question of the thesis, “Who is the Holy Spirit to the lay African believers?”. Therefore, it will first introduce the methodological strategies that will be used for the survey. Then, it will employ the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the survey.

The fifth chapter will inform the readers of the methodological strategies used for the investigation. The epistemological postures on which the survey will be based are “the Grounded Theory” and “the Theory of Stranger”. These two epistemological stances are chosen for they seem to best depict the uniqueness and the originality of the project. The type of method this thesis will be using is “the Sequential Mixed Explicative Method”. This method is processed in two phases in which the quantitative study will be done first and then it will be followed by the qualitative study. Such approach will enable the depiction of the phenomenon in cold hard figures through quantitative analysis, and hear explanations about the phenomenon through the qualitative analysis.⁷ Thus, the question that will be holding this chapter together will be “which methods are we to use in approaching respondents in order to learn of their understanding of the Holy Spirit?”

The sixth chapter will deal with the quantitative analysis of the data. The Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit exposed on the academic field have seemed to be in complete dissonance depending on the writers’ theological stances. Hence, the voices raised on the academic field gave an impression of dichotomized Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit. One comprehended it in continuity to the spiritual beings fore-revealed through the African tradition and another understood it as distinct from the traditional spirits. This chapter examines the actuality of the bipolarized images portrayed by Matthew Michael and Elochukwu Uzukwu. The examination will investigate the congregations of the two theological orientations mentioned – the Evangelical churches and the Independent churches. Therefore, the question synthesizing this chapter will be on what is the actual popular Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit.

⁷ Marc Corbière and Nadine Larivière, *Méthodes qualitatives, quantitatives et mixtes: dans la recherche en sciences humaines, sociales et de la santé* (Québec: Presses de l’Université du Québec, 2014), 631.

The seventh chapter will bring its attention on the lay believers' theological process of the Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit. If the previous chapter was inquiring on the results of the theological process by bringing up the cold figures of the actuality, this section will be questioning on why the African believers have resolved to theologize the two spiritual worlds, the African spiritual world and the Christian spiritual world, in a certain way. The sixth chapter of the thesis could be understood as the explanation of the results found on the fifth chapter. Thus, the core question covering the chapter will be why the respondents are understanding the Holy Spirit in a certain way.

Part IV of the thesis will gather the analysis of the collected data and expound a popular Africanized Pneumatology. In order to develop a popular Pneumatology that is based on the voices of the ground, these voices will be put in conversation with the African theologians that are already present on the academic stage, to comparatively locate their stances. Then, the thesis will forego to a stage of systemizing the lay African Christians' understanding of the Holy Spirit. Lastly, it will propose a popular Pneumatology that is relevant and pertinent to the urban contemporary African believers based on the voices of the ground.

The eighth chapter will bring up the unheard voices of the ground to the academic stage in order to locate where these unheard voices position when compared to the bipolarized voices of the African theologians, Matthew Michael and Elochukwu Uzuoku. The dialogue between the theologians and the voices of the ground will guide us further to the contemporary Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit. It would lead us to verify that the bipolarized voices of the theologians based on the theological orientations were correct or make us support one side of the dichotomized voices as the popular Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit or make us realize that none of them represented the actual contemporary understanding of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the question that frames this chapter will be on where the voices of the lay African believers stand when compared to the African theologians.

The ninth chapter will try to systemize the lay African believers' comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Since the voices of the four surveyed congregations could illustrate certain traits of particularity, this section of the thesis will try to introduce a systematized categorization that

would enable us to visualize similar and different stances of the surveyed believers. Such systematization would try to overcome the possible limits the current dichotomized categorization introduced by the African theologians could have. Therefore, the core question of this chapter will be on how to distinguish the voices raised from the ground.

The tenth chapter will articulate all the findings and analysis of the thesis in order to propose a popular Africanized Pneumatology in an urban contemporary context. The Africanized Pneumatology proposed by the African theologians were without explicit analysis of the ground, but mostly based on personal interpretations and theological orientations. The approach of an Africanized understanding proposed through this thesis would be susceptible to the actual voices of the ground, for it takes interest in how lay African believers have actually theologized on their own in order to incorporate the two spiritual words: the traditional spirits from the African tradition and the Holy Spirit from Christianity. Consequently, this section of the thesis would be summing all the findings and analysis to propose a relevant and pertinent Africanized Pneumatology in the urban contemporary context. Thus, the key question of this chapter would be, “What is the popular Africanized Pneumatology?”

Part I. Literature Review

Chapter 1: Literature Review on the Understanding of God and Jesus Christ

The first part of this thesis will contemplate how African people understand God and Jesus Christ. African theologians have done pioneering works to Africanize God and Christ into the African faith. However, the vast amount of works cannot all be surveyed, for the purpose of this thesis is to ponder how African believers understand the Holy Spirit. Developing an in-depth study on the literature review of the African comprehension of God and Jesus will be too distant from the objective of our thesis. Yet, we also cannot neglect the studies done about God and Christ while trying to perceive how African believers comprehend the Holy Spirit. Thus, this thesis will limit itself to a brief consideration of works that illustrates grounds where African theologians have done studies on God and Christ. The noticeable work on the African understanding of God is John Mbiti who fought against the missionaries' presumption that African tradition has no concept of God.

“I maintain that African soil is rich enough to have germinated its own original religious perception. It is remarkable that in spite of great distances separating the peoples of one region from those of another, there are sufficient elements of belief which make it possible for us to discuss African concepts of God as a unity and on a continental scale.”⁸

Therefore, the African comprehension of God was mostly articulated by grounding on the context of the African culture and tradition. Although African culture was a context where Christology was also developed, theologians whom have worked on Christology have put efforts to vary their field of studies by nurturing Christology on the context of liberation, black identity, and reconstructivism.

⁸ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 29.

1.1 Literature Review on the Understanding of God

How do African believers understand God? In order to grasp the African Christians' understanding of God, it is necessary to have a glance at what the traditional religion says about God. The pre-existing traditional religion's comprehension of God would have influenced the perception of the newly introduced Christian God. Many African and non-African scholars have studied this matter. However, John Mbiti is among the first African pioneers whom with his vast study has set the foundation on the concept of God in Africa. His study is still influential among many African scholars up to nowadays.

1.1.1 John Mbiti's Understanding of God

John Mbiti (1970) is a Kenyan Anglican priest and an emeritus professor at University of Bern since 2005, who challenged the missionaries' assumption of African Traditional Religion to be demonic and anti-Christian. Missionaries had the tendency not to acknowledge the African Traditional Religion as a religion that worshiped God. Instead, they denigrated the traditional religion to be an ancestral cult. The reverence of the ancestral spirits and other unknown spirits were seen as unbiblical and unchristian practice. Due to this perception, the missionaries firmly proclaim the discontinuity between Christianity and African Traditional Religion. However, Mbiti does not agree with these presumptions based on the ignorance of the traditional religion. He claims God to be pre-existent and pre-revealed in the traditional religion of Africa. Mbiti says, "Western missionaries did not introduce God to Africa, rather it was God who brought them to Africa as carriers of news about Jesus Christ".⁹

In order to depict how African Traditional Religion is not just about the reverence towards the ancestral spirits but towards God, Mbiti studies nearly 300 tribes from all over Africa and proves that without a single exception, African societies had the notion of God as the Supreme Being.¹⁰ A proverb from the Ashanti reveals how God is not a stranger to the African

⁹ Mbiti, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity*, 11.

¹⁰ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 29.

people. The proverb says, “No one shows a child the Supreme Being”. It means that the existence of God is so obvious to the African people that there is no need to show Him even to a child in order for one to believe. Everyone just knows Him.¹¹ Through the wide-ranged study Mbiti had foregone, he remarked there were sufficient elements of belief about God, which were in unity on a continental scale. The nature of God Mbiti had perceived among the African’s were omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, transcendence, immanent, self-existence and Him being Spirit.¹²

1.1.1.1 The African Nature of God perceived by John Mbiti

God is considered omniscient among the African people. In African societies, wisdom is held with great respect. Therefore, when African people are attributing omniscience to God, they are elevating Him to the highest status.¹³ A common saying among the Yoruba says, “Only God is Wise”.¹⁴ They believe God to be the discerner of the heart who sees both the inside and the outside of the man.¹⁵

Another attribute of God among Africans is omnipresence. The Bamun have named God as Njinyi or Nnui, which means he who is everywhere.¹⁶ This concept of God being everywhere is found among many African societies. The Kono say that God is met everywhere. When someone has done wrong to another person, the latter says, “May God see this person!” or “God will see him!” Among the Yoruba, wrongdoers are also believed to be incapable to escape from the judgement of God. The Kono and many other people acknowledge that God is anywhere and at any time to help, and that offenders cannot escape God’s presence. The Shilluk and the Lango metaphorically express the omnipresent attribute of God by air and wind. The Lango

¹¹ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 29.

¹² Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 30-34.

¹³ John S Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa* (London: S.P.C.K, 1970), 3.

¹⁴ Bolaji E. Idowu, *Olódùmarè: God in Yoruba Belief* (London: Longmans, 1962), 41.

¹⁵ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 30-31.

¹⁶ Merran McCulloch, Margaret Littlewood, and Idelette Dugast, *Peoples of the central Cameroons*, Ethnographic Survey of Africa 9 (London: International African Institute, 1954), 80.

believe God is invisible but always present like air. The Shilluk believe God has no fixed form of being and invisible like the wind.¹⁷

God is also known to be omnipotent. The Yoruba, Ngombe, Akan, and Ashanti name God as the All-powerful or the Almighty. The Zulu describe God as the One who roars so that all nations be struck with terror.¹⁸ When a missionary asked Africans in Zanzibar to tell him about God, they replied, “God thunders!”¹⁹ For many of the African people in the tropical, thunder is the most powerful thing they know. The banging and the booming sound of the thunder is perceived as the mighty voice of God, which cannot be silenced by anything. The Ngombe who live in the forest of Congo praise God as the One who clears the forest.²⁰ For these people, the forest is a symbol of power which they cannot do anything about. However, for God this is no problem for he can clear the forest without any difficulties.²¹

Another perception of God among Africans is transcendence. God stretches beyond the whole period of time and space. The Akan express this image when they praise Him, “He who is there now as from ancient times”.²² The Ngombe claims God to be, “the everlasting One of the forest”.²³ For them, the forest was something that had always existed. They assert God was present even before the forest.²⁴

Immanence is another attribute of God, yet it seems to contradict the transcendental attribute of God, which has been previously mentioned. Although God is transcendent, he is also immanent so that men can actually have contact with Him. When the Ngombe praise God,

¹⁷ Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, 5-6.

¹⁸ Edwin William Smith, *African Ideas of God*, éd. par E. G. Parrinder (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1961), 109.

¹⁹ Godfrey Dale, *The Peoples of Zanzibar: Their Customs and Religious Beliefs* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 27.

²⁰ Smith, *African Ideas of God*, 167.

²¹ Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, 8 – 9.

²² Joseph B. Danquah, *The Akan Doctrine of God: A Fragment of Gold Coast Ethics and Religion*, 2nd éd., Africana Modern Library 2 (London: Cass, 1968), 55.

²³ Smith, *African Ideas of God*, 166.

²⁴ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 32.

they call unto Him as the One who fills everything. Through the many acts of worship such as sacrifices, offerings, prayers, and invocations, they have acknowledged God as being near and approachable. Many natural objects and phenomena, in which Africans associate with God, were blamed of pantheism. However, such practice cannot be viewed as pantheism for people do not consider God to be everything nor everything to be God. Most of the time, African people consider God to be remote from their daily affairs and put Him far on a transcendental area. For the Africans, by theory God is transcendental. Nevertheless, in practice, He is immanent.²⁵

Significant number of African people think of God as being self-existent. One of the Zulu's name for God means, "He who is of Himself" or "He who came of Himself into being".²⁶ The Banbuti think of God being the First who had always been in existence and would never die.²⁷ The Gikuyu believe God to have no father and no mother, but to be all alone. He is just He.²⁸

The last conception about God among the Africans is God being the Spirit. Surprisingly, there are no images or physical representations of God by African people. The Igbo never represent God in symbols or figure for He is pure spirit.²⁹ This clearly indicates and proves on how the Africans consider God to be invisible, a Spiritual Being.³⁰ A description of God being the Spirit could be found in a traditional Pygmy hymn which sings, "In the beginning was God, today is God, tomorrow will be God. Who can make an image of God? He has no body. He is as a word, which comes out of your mouth. That word! It is no more. It is past, and still it lives! So is God".³¹ The African understanding of God as the Spirit is to be remarked for it could bring additional information for our studies to follow.

²⁵ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 33.

²⁶ Smith, *African Ideas of God*, 109.

²⁷ Paul Shebesta, *My Pygmy and Negro Hosts*, translation by Gerald Griffin (New York: AMS Press, 1978), 171.

²⁸ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 33.

²⁹ Aloysius Eberechukwu Ndiukwu, *Authenticity of Belief in African (Igbo) Traditional Religion* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2014), 167.

³⁰ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 34.

³¹ Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya* (London: Mercury Books, 1965), 247.

1.1.1.2 *The African Spiritual World*

The above-mentioned perceptions of God are what Mbiti had found in common in most of the tribes he had studied. Then, if the African Traditional Religion is really about worshipping God as Mbiti is insisting, what are the other spiritual beings, which the African people have seemed to revere? Who are they?

To answer to these emerging questions, Mbiti introduces the African spiritual world. According to Mbiti, there are two main categories of spiritual beings: those who were created as spirits from the beginning, and those whom once used to be human beings. Spiritual beings whom were created as spirits from the beginning could be subdivided into divinities and spirits. Those who once used to be human but have become spirits are called the living-dead. God created all these spirits.³²

Through the illustrations of the different spiritual beings of the African spiritual world, Mbiti emphasizes on how African Traditional Religion is not about revering ancestral spirits. These spirits, which seemed to be worshipped by the Africans, are all creatures of the Supreme Being and intermediaries between the Creator and the human beings. In the end, the African Traditional Religion is about worshipping God.

1.1.1.2.1 The Divinities

Divinities are spirits with higher status who are associated to God. They often represent God in activities and manifestations. The Ashanti have divinities known as Abosom who are known to come from and to be parts of God. They act as servants and intermediaries between God and other creatures. Festivals are held towards them, and they are believed to be created in order to protect men.³³ Among the Igbo, the divinities are also known to play intermediary roles between God and humans. They are God's special workers who enable people to see, remember, and respond to God. For God is the one who gives the divinities powers and authorities, apart

³² Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 75.

³³ Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, 117.

from God, they are meaningless.³⁴ The Yoruba are known to have one thousand and seven hundred divinities also called as Orisa. These divinities form a hierarchy just like the Yoruba's social political structure. Orisa-nla is the supreme divinity who acts as God's earthly deputy. Ogun is the chief among the divinities for he was the one who originally paved the way for other divinities to come to earth.³⁵

1.1.1.2.2 The Spirits

Spirits are common spiritual beings who have a lower status than the divinities, but have a status above human beings. They are the common populace of the spiritual world. When human beings die physically, spirit is what remains. Spirit is the destiny of human beings. Just as a child naturally grows old and becomes an adult, a man who dies becomes a spirit. Once a human being dies, they first become the living-dead. Living-dead are beings who have one foot in the world of the living and one foot in the world of the dead. However, after couple generations pass and all who knew the departed die, the living-dead becomes a spirit. They are no longer considered as a person but as a thing or it. People fear the spirit for they are invisible and unpredictable. The safest thing to do is to keep away from them.³⁶

1.1.1.2.3 The Living-dead

The living-dead are the spirits that African people are most concerned about. Mbiti states, "These are the 'spirits' with which African people are most concerned: it is through the living dead that the spirit world becomes personal to men. They are still part of their human families, and people have personal memories of them."³⁷ When human beings die, death becomes a passage into another form of life. The dead passes a state of transition from the human world to the world of the spirit. Although the end of the transition is to become a spirit, for five

³⁴ Bolaji E. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: a Definition* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973), 169.

³⁵ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 76.

³⁶ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 78-82.

³⁷ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 83.

generations, they are categorized differently than the ordinary spirit. They are called the living-dead or ancestors. The living-dead are those who mediate human and the spirit worlds. For they are still considered as part of the family, people feel closer to them and pay more attention to them in their daily lives.³⁸ When there are family affairs to discuss about, they are enquired as the oldest member of the family. They best know the needs of the family and at the same time have full access to communicate directly with God. Therefore, men approach their ancestors so that they could be the intermediaries to transfer their needs to God.³⁹ Special note is to be taken on the living-dead for these spiritual beings are the ones that the African theologians state to cause ambiguity on the African understanding of the Holy Spirit. Whereas Mbiti named these spiritual beings as the living-dead, they will mostly be referred as the traditional spirits throughout the thesis.

1.1.2 Continuity or Discontinuity with the Christian God?

The fact that the traditional religion is about the monotheistic God raises up a question. The question is whether we should regard the God revered by the African Traditional Religion in continuity or in discontinuity to the Christian God. This question is answered by both “yes” and “no”. Significant number of African theologians answer “yes”. Along with them aligns the churches and denominations that have been founded by the African people such as the African Independent Churches. Missionaries and denominations from Western Churches, such as the Evangelicals and the Pentecostals, generally answer “no” to this question. Some scholars agree with them, claiming the concept of God in the African Traditional Religion to be unoriginal and inspired form Christianity.

³⁸ Ndiukwu, *Authenticity of Belief in African (Igbo) Traditional Religion*, 188-189.

³⁹ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 83-84.

1.1.2.1 African Theologians Supporting the Continuity with God

John Mbiti stands on the side who answers “yes”. He sees the God of the traditional religion in continuity with the Christian God. Through his study, he depicts the Africans’ concept of God to be very similar to what the Christians believe. Mbiti believes this similarity is because it is the same God. Before the arrival of the missionaries, God had already revealed Himself in Africa through the traditional religion. The missionaries were not the ones whom introduced the Christian God to Africa. God was already revealed and present among the Africans. God revealed through the traditional religion is the God of Christianity. They are in continuity.⁴⁰

Numerous theologians align with John Mbiti’s opinion of continuity. Luke Mbefo, a Nigerian theologian, claims God had already spoken to the ancestors before Christianity. Therefore, when Christianity was introduced, it was not something that was totally alien or unconnected to the Word of God that had been spoken to the ancestors.⁴¹ Bénézet Bujo, theologian from Democratic Republic of Congo, believes a vast majority of Africans to have worshiped God before the arrival of missionaries. The arrival of Christianity did not newly introduce God to Africa, but it revealed how much Africans already knew God and loved Him.⁴² Charles Nyamiti, a theologian from Tanzania, observes that it is commonly agreed that even before the arrival of Christianity, God had revealed Himself. He states one should expect to find traces of Christian teachings when studying the African Traditional Religion.⁴³ Gwinyai Muzorewa, a theologian from Zimbabwe, follows the footsteps of Mbiti and supports the continuity. Basing most of his claims on the study done by Mbiti, he stresses African Traditional Religion to be a religion about the one and only God. He even takes a step further stating the African Traditional Religion to be the oldest form or even the origin of monotheism.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Mbiti, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity*, 11.

⁴¹ Luke Mbefo, *Theology and Inculturation. Problems and Prospects of the Nigerian Experience*, *The Nigerian Journal of Theology* 1, n° 1 (Dec 1985): 55.

⁴² Bénézet Bujo, *Introduction à la théologie africaine* (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2008), 20.

⁴³ Rosino Gibellini, *Paths of African Theology* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994), 66.

⁴⁴ Gwinyai H. Muzorewa, *African Origins of Monotheism: Challenging the Eurocentric Interpretation of God Concepts on the Continent and in Diaspora* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 5-11.

1.1.2.2 African Theologians Supporting the Discontinuity with God

On the other hand, there are those who firmly answer “no” to the question of continuity between God of the African Traditional Religion and Christianity. The Western missionaries first stated discontinuity between these two religions. The statements of the theologians who state the continuity are mostly reactions to what the missionaries have claimed beforehand. Most missionaries from Evangelical Church, Pentecostal Church, and even Catholic Church consider up to nowadays that the African Traditional Religion are in discontinuity with Christianity. Some in the extreme even consider the traditional religion to be diabolical practices.⁴⁵

Francis Arinze, a Nigerian theologian, agrees on the fact there are many elements of convergence between traditional beliefs and Christian faith. Yet, he warns of regarding Christianity as a later edition of the traditional religion.⁴⁶ Theophilus Okere, a theologian and philosopher from Nigeria, stresses on the discontinuity between traditional religion and Christianity. When Christians worship, love is the ground of their worship. However, worshipers of the traditional religion do not worship God because they love Him. Instead, fear is the root of their worship.⁴⁷ Donatus Nwoga, a Nigerian scholar of African literature, criticizes African theologians’ position on continuity between the African Traditional Religion and Christianity. He claims that Chukwu, also called as the Supreme Being, is a stranger in actual Igbo life and culture. Nwoga believes the concept of the Supreme Being to be an invention of the missionaries.⁴⁸ Rosalind Shaw, a Western anthropologist with great interest in Africa, also claims the African Traditional Religion to be an invention by the missionaries. She states that Christian missionaries did the first serious studies of African religions. Their agendas were to create bridges of homologies between Christianity and the traditional religion for the Gospel to be easily spread. Terms such as God and prayer were bridged with that of Christianity. Their

⁴⁵ Akuma-Kalu Njoku and Eolochukwu E. Uzukwu, *Interface Between Igbo Theology and Christianity* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 89–94.

⁴⁶ Njoku and Uzukwu, *Interface Between Igbo Theology and Christianity*, 17.

⁴⁷ Njoku and Uzukwu, *Interface Between Igbo Theology and Christianity*, 23–24.

⁴⁸ Ibe Donatus Nwoga, *The Supreme God as Stranger in Igbo Religious Thought* (Ahiazu Mbaise: Hawk Press, 1984).

practices of magic were linked with the ideas of Satan and Satanism. The African Traditional Religion had been formed and constructed based upon Judeo-Christian template in order to ease evangelization.⁴⁹ Therefore, the original form of the African Traditional Religion is regarded as discontinuous. These theologians state that the traditional religion that looks similar to Christianity are due to the inventions of missionaries who have put efforts to bridge the African tradition with Christianity.

1.1.3 Conclusion on the Literature Review of God

The core debate on the African understanding of God is on whether the God of the African Traditional Religion is in continuity or in discontinuity with the God of Christianity. John Mbiti stands against the Western missionaries whom had the tendency to comprehend the African Traditional Religion to be irrelevant with God. He claims how the concept of the Supreme Being, God of the African Traditional Religion, is one of the fundamental beliefs and thus links it with the Christian God. The bridging of the God from the African Traditional Religion to be the God of Christianity became a subject of debate among many scholars. Each stance whom states the continuity or the discontinuity have their own reasons on why they are supporting these opinions.

The impression the African theologians leave on why they state the continuity with the God of the traditional religion is due to their attachments toward the African tradition. They believe God had done a significant job in revealing himself through the traditional religion to the people in Africa. However, the missionaries did not see it in the same way and had a hostile stance towards the African tradition. Some were even encouraging to sever all ties with the tradition. This has led the African theologians to jump on the stage and claim how this tradition of theirs is not to be completely blotted out but to be acknowledged of partially revealing God. They started bridging the God of the tradition to the God of Christianity. Their theology were based on linking the elements of the traditional religion to Christianity. However, some scholars

⁴⁹ Rosalind Shaw, *The Invention of 'African Traditional Religion'*, Science Direct, Religion 20, n° 4 (1990): 342-343.

feel concerned on such reactions from the African theologians. Biniama alerts the African theologians not be too attached to the African culture, for this could lead to the adoration of the culture. He worries that some African theologians could be more focused on the African tradition than the Christian faith itself. He claims the best way to do theology is to harmonize culture within faith.⁵⁰ Sumaïdi states all dimensions of insurrection against the West should be rejected in order to have a new way of doing theology.⁵¹ Previously named theologians observed how significant number of African theologians were doing theology as a way to react to their resentment and revolt towards the Western missionaries. They state any dimension of insurrection would not contribute to the development of African theology, but instead hinder it from finding its creativity. For the African theology to further flourish, African theologians have to lay down their resentment and loosen their obsession of the traditional culture.

Some other theologians state the discontinuity with the traditional religion. They believe that the original form of the African Traditional Religion were irrelevant concerning God. However, missionaries and theologians have inputted efforts to emphasis the Supreme Being on the traditional religion and have tried to bridge it so that Christianity could have a familiarized approach to the African people. Examples of missionaries whom linked the God of the two religions are frequently found. An article written by Dora R. Mbuwayesango describes how Christian missionaries had decided to use the name *Mwari* that is Shona's name of their Supreme Being to make God more relevant among the Shona.⁵² Therefore, there is a phenomenon on how some theologians stress discontinuity on the two religions but at the same time, they put efforts to partially bridge the essence of God found in the traditional religion to the God of Christianity. Thus when summarizing, the theologians in this stance state the discontinuity of the two religions but the continuity of God found in these two religions due to evangelistic purposes.

⁵⁰ Fansaka Bernard Biniama, *L'incarnation de Jésus-Christ et les traditions abrahamiques en JN 8: Un christianisme africain à la façon de l'ancien testament* (Paris: Harmattan, 2010), 119.

⁵¹ Étienne Kaobo Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, Églises d'Afrique (Paris: Harmattan, 2008), 256.

⁵² Musa Wenkosi Dube, *Other ways of reading: African women and the Bible* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Litterature, 2001), 63.

1.2. Literature Review on the Understanding of Jesus Christ

Let us turn to the next question that is how do the African Christians understand Jesus Christ? In order to understand the Africanized concept of Christ, we need to comprehend the context in which the African understanding of Jesus has developed. The contexts where the African comprehension of Christ has been nurtured are inculturation, liberation, black identity, and reconstructivism.⁵³ This thesis has focused special attention to the works of Fansaka Biniama, François Kabasélé, Benoît Kungua, and Étienne Sumaïdi for they were considered to clearly depict the African comprehension of Christology.

1.2.1 Inculturation Christology

One way to perceive the concept of African Christology is to approach Jesus Christ from a traditional cultural perspective. Such concepts try to clothe Christ with African cultural elements, so that Jesus could be more appealing and familiar to Africans. Some cultural clothing theologians have tried to cover Jesus was the image of a chief, an ancestor, and a healer.

Jesus is called a chief among the Bantus. The reason they have named Christ as a chief is because, Christ has many characteristics that is similar to their traditional understanding of chief. For the Bantus, a chief is a hero who protects and defends his people. Christ has fought over Satan to protect his people. Another trait of a chief among the Africans is to be the son of the chief. One of the ancient terms the Luba referred to God was *mulopo*, meaning chief. Since the Africans had known God as the chief, and the newly introduced Jesus by Christianity was presented as the Son of God, Christ came to be recognized as a chief among the Africans.⁵⁴

Jesus is also recognized as an ancestor among the Africans. For the African people, ancestors are human beings who became more powerful by the process of passing to the spiritual world through death. They are the ones who have the vital forces ranking above humans. In order for the Africans to maintain life, they have to be related to their ancestors whom are the

⁵³ Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 58.

⁵⁴ François Kabasélé, Joseph Doré, and René Luneau, *Chemins de la christologie africaine*, Collection « Jésus et Jésus-Christ » 25 (Paris: Desclée, 2001), 118-120.

ones who mediate to God and protect his kin.⁵⁵ Jesus is also a mediator, just like the African ancestors, he mediates us to God. As the African ancestors die but are still immanent and present in their daily lives, Jesus whom died two thousand years ago is also immanent and present on the lives of the African Christians.⁵⁶ These similar traits of Christ and the African ancestors have facilitated African theologians to introduce Christ as an ancestor.

Another African clothing Jesus is clothed by the African theologians is that of the healer. To be sick in Africa means to be broken off from the society. It is not over death that sick people have to fight against, but with a just form of life. Death among the Africans is not always considered bad, as it is the case in the West, but an honorable process of passing from this world to the spiritual world to become a venerable being. The problem with sickness is not because it will be leading to death, but the sickness itself, for sickness means in Africa to have a bad life. Having a sick person in the family is considered as a shame and the family have to find the source of this sickness, to get rid of this bad form of life. Jesus' ministry in the Bible was centered on healing. He healed sicknesses and casted out demons so that people could be re-established in their family and society. Jesus' ministry that paid close attention to sickness has led the African theologians to illustrate Jesus as a healer.⁵⁷

Biniama, in his work, gives us a hint on how to approach the traditional culture while enculturating faith. His work presents how Jesus has dealt with the Jewish ancestral belief, which was one of the characteristic traits of the Jewish culture. John chapter 8 depicts a dialogue between Jesus and the Jews, in which people seem to be very attached to their ancestor, Abraham. The Jews' tight bond and reliance to Abraham could be considered similarly to the African adherence to their ancestral belief. Jesus does not deny nor rebuke what the Jews have said about Abraham but overcomes him. Biniama proposes this to be a way to deal with the traditional culture and a way to do the Theology of Inculturation. Just as Jesus has dealt with the Jewish

⁵⁵ Kabasélé, Doré, and Luneau, *Chemins de la christologie africaine*, 133-139.

⁵⁶ Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 81-82.

⁵⁷ Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 167-172.

belief, African Christians should healthily incorporate culture into their faith. Yet, that is not the end, for they have to go further to overcome the cultural reliance.⁵⁸

1.2.2 Liberation Christology

The second mainstream of the African concept of Christology is seeing Jesus as the liberator. Africa is a continent that had been enslaved and colonized for hundreds of years. Deep in the minds of the Africans, there are ardent eagerness to be thoroughly free from any form of oppression. God proclaimed by the missionaries did not reflect this ardent desire but only preached of Heaven. African Liberation theologians claim that God's salvation is not only about going to Heaven, but it is a salvation also present in this world.⁵⁹ This is why African theologians portray Jesus as the liberator from oppression, anthropological poverty, and socio-political situations.

Kungua claims Africans to be still under oppression, although the colonial era has come to an end and African nations have gained their independence. Though Africa has been freed from the European, it has only been done formally and the situation has not changed much. Therefore, there is an undeniable need for a Theology of Liberation, depicting Christ as the one who would free us from colonialism and any form of oppression. One of the major colonialism Africans have to be freed from is the Westernized Christianity. The missionaries have imposed a Western Christianity, which paralyzed the creativity and the life of the African churches. A representative of African church whom has fought against such oppression is the African Independent Church.⁶⁰

Another aspect Africans need to be liberated from is anthropological poverty. When people hear about the African Liberation Theology, they have a tendency to think that it is similar to the Latin America's Liberation Theology. However, there is a strict distinction

⁵⁸ Biniama, *L'incarnation de Jésus-Christ et les traditions abrahamiques en JN 8: Un christianisme africain à la façon de l'ancien testament*, 118-129.

⁵⁹ Rasiah S. Sugirtharajah, *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1995), 244.

⁶⁰ Benoît Awazi Mbambi Kungua, *Le Dieu crucifié en Afrique: Esquisse d'une christologie négro-africaine de la libération holistique*, Églises d'Afrique (Paris: Harmattan, 2008), 131-135.

between the two. The Latin Liberation Theology is focused on the material poverty. It wants to liberate people against the poverty that has been brought by capitalism, against the unequal distribution of wealth, class differences, etc. Yet, African Liberation Theology is not about the material poverty but an anthropological poverty. It is a struggle and a fight against the oppressors who are threatening the being of an African. The oppressors' exploitation and the negation against the African human race have fatally injured the being of Africans. African Liberation Theology is trying to free the Africans from these impoverishments. Its goal is to find them back the being of Africans that God has created in them.⁶¹

The last field of liberation is the socio-political liberation. The colonials and the corrupted elite Africans had exploited and dominated the African people. These dominations and exploitations, which are deeply rooted in the society, are continuously bearing the fruit of poverty. Liberation theologians are warning and encouraging the African churches and Christians to take a stance against the socio-political situations. Jesus had died on the cross to liberate us from the oppression of death and sin. However, Jesus' work of liberation is not only restricted in the spiritual realm but also continuous on every aspect of our lives and society. The African Christians and churches are called to participate in this liberating act of Jesus.⁶²

1.2.3 Black Theology Christology

The third mainstream of the African concept of Christ is the Black Theology. Black Theology pays close attention to race and ethnicity. Black Theology claims Jesus to be black. It is not implying that Jesus was historically black but on the fact that he identifies himself with the black race in order to liberate them. This theology, emerged in the United States around the 1960s, was adopted by South African theologians who had to confront the Apartheid.⁶³

Apartheid was a political system in South Africa, which discriminated races and structured a racial hierarchy where the whites were at the highest rank, then the half-blooded

⁶¹ Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 172-175.

⁶² Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 177.

⁶³ Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 199.

and then the black Africans. The Population Registration Act declared in 1950 segregated people by their ethnicity and did not allow people to live in the same area nor have marriage in-between different races.⁶⁴ Surprisingly, the political document declared by the Apartheid system in South Africa based its ideology upon the biblical text. Those propagating Apartheid referred to the Old Testament, saying God privileged the Israelites over the Canaanites, thus whites' superiority over the black people were promised by the Bible.⁶⁵

For the South African black Christians, the biblical appropriation created a situation where they were in a constant conflict and dilemma. God loved everyone regardless of their ethnicity. Yet, this message given by God was used to oppress black race and ethnicity. Black Theology rose in order to fight such crisis.⁶⁶ Jesus identified with the blacks, to fight against the misinterpretation of the Bible. Theologians of the Black Theology had to find back the dignity of the black race.

1.2.4 Reconstruction Christology

The last mainstream on the African concept of Christ is the Reconstruction Theology. The main goal of this approach is to reconstruct the identity of the African Christians. One might wonder of its uniqueness compared to the previously named approaches, which have also dealt with the African race and being an African. However, this approach is not dealing with finding back the lost identity of the Africans and blaming the colonials for having stolen the African identity. Instead, it criticizes Liberation and Identity Theology, which with their passive voice just blames the Occident for having caused the loss of identity.⁶⁷

Reconstruction theologians insist that we Africans are the ones to stand up to reconstruct the identity of African Christians. There is no more need to focus on giving Christianity an African look, for Christianity has already become a part of Africa. Blaming the colonials for having imposed a Westernized Christianity is not progressive. Instead, African Christians

⁶⁴ Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 202.

⁶⁵ Sugirtharajah, *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, 170.

⁶⁶ Sugirtharajah, *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, 172–173.

⁶⁷ Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 239-244.

should be in action to reconstruct the identity of an African Christian. The focus of attention goes beyond on who Christ is for Africa, but on whom the Africans become by being with Christ.⁶⁸

The reconstructive concept of the African Christology warns and insists on the African Christians to get rid of all the insurrection against the colonials. It suggests theologians to restart from a new foundation to originally interpret and reconsider the core questions of African Christianity. This brand-new way of doing theology will bring dynamic influence to the reconstruction of Africa. When we meet Christ, we change and become the ultimate form God has wanted us to be. Through the Reconstruction Theology, African theologians are pursuing the ultimate image Christ wants the African Christians to be.⁶⁹

1.2.5 Conclusion on the Literature Review of Jesus Christ

We have seen the four main contexts where the theologians have developed the Africanized understanding of Jesus. Through the context of inculturation, we have come to know how African theologians have done works to give him a more familiar look to the Africans. Christ introduced by the missionaries to Africa were foreign to Africans. Christ did not fit into the African worldview, but wandered as a stranger. That is why African theologians have tried to make Christ more relevant and appealing to the Africans. In order for Christianity to set its root in the African continent, there was a need to clothe Christ with the cultural elements.⁷⁰ Due to this reason, theologians have painted the image of Christ with illustrations that were familiar in the traditional culture. Christ was now depicted as a chief, an ancestor, and a healer. These were all images Africans were accustomed to in their lives.

Not only did the African theologians try to familiarize Christ to their traditional culture, but they have also inputted a significant effort to translate the Christian faith in the contemporary cultural contexts. The African theologians have tried to understand Christ as the liberator, as

⁶⁸ Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 256.

⁶⁹ Sumaïdi, *Christologie africaine, 1956-2000: Histoire et enjeux*, 271.

⁷⁰ Gerhardus C. Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, Studies in Christian Mission (Leiden; New York: E. J. Brill, 1992), 17.

black, and as the one reconstructing. The contemporary context of the African continent being under the oppression during the colonialism and even after they have formally gained their independence have lead the African Christians to understand Christ as the liberator whom would deliver them from these oppressions. The contemporary context of Africans being discriminated and despised because of their race, just like what happened with the Apartheid policy in South Africa, has lead the African Christians to understand Christ as the one standing up on their sides to find them back the identity of a black human being. The contemporary context of the African society being broken apart has lead the African Christians to understand Christ as the one who would reconstruct the Africans and its society to the ultimate form God has created. These theologies have enabled the African Christians to understand Jesus as one that is present and immanent in their contemporary context and situation. Jesus in Africa is no more a foreigner and a stranger, but he is black and present among the lives of the African Christians.

The great efforts African Christians have done in order to Africanize Christ in traditional and contemporary culture is to be recognized. Through the various perspectives the African theologians have offered, Christ came to be more familiarized amongst the Africans. One aspect to note is that the African understanding of Christ was exempt from the debate of continuity and discontinuity with the elements of the African Traditional Religion. Although there were elements that were taken from the traditional religion in order to clothe Jesus Christ, there were not any components that were threatening the essence of Christ to the point of arousing a debate of continuity or discontinuity. The reason the Africanized comprehension of Christ was exempted from different debates, which the Africanized understanding of God and the Holy Spirit had to undergo, is due to the uniqueness of Christ.

Chapter 2: Literature Review on the Understanding of the Holy Spirit

The next question we would like to ponder, the key question of this thesis, is the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit. The concept of spirits was one of the fundamental belief in the African religiosity.⁷¹ They were the ones whom the people inquired daily to mediate their need to God. This core element of the African Traditional Religion that existed on the mind of the Africans came in touch with the newly introduced Christian understanding of the Holy Spirit. The encounter of the two spiritual world has created a unique phenomenon among the African Christians. Some theologians observed these reactions and defined the African Traditional Religion to be influencing the core elements of Christianity. Others claimed Christianity to accept the influence of the African Traditional Religion to be Africanized and more approachable by the African people. To understand who the Holy Spirit is to the African Christians, it is indispensable to recognize arguments that revolve around this matter.

This section of the thesis will deal with two authors from each camp. Those who are claiming the elements of the traditional religion to affect Christianity and thus stating the discontinuity between the Holy Spirit and the spirits of the African Traditional Religion. Moreover, those who are willing to absorb the influence of the African Traditional Religion, claiming the Holy Spirit to be in continuity with the ancestral spirits. A Western representative and an African representative, who have had a significant work published about this controversy, were selected to introduce the delicate debate.

2.1 Discontinuity with the spirits of the African Traditional Religion

The representatives, whom stand against the influence of the African Traditional Religion on Pneumatology, are Gerhardus Oosthuizen and Matthew Michael. Gerhardus Oosthuizen, an emeritus professor of religion in University of Durban-Westville and director of research of New Religious Movements and Independent Churches under the University of

⁷¹ Vincent Mulago, *Éléments fondamentaux de la religion africaine*, *Cahiers des religions Africaines* 11 (1977): 43–63.

Zululand, has studied the prophets from the African Independent Churches in South Africa. His interview with forty prophets from the Rand and Greater Durban has been the foundation ground of his book *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*. His work talks about how the prophets of the Independent Churches understand the Holy Spirit and the ancestral spirits. Matthew Michael is a Nigerian dean of Evangelical Theological Seminary, who has compared the African traditions' concept of spirits and the Holy Spirit of Christianity in his book *Christian Theology and African Traditions*.

2.1.1 Gerhardus Oosthuizen

Oosthuizen explicates through his interview, the thoughts and beliefs of the African Independent Churches' prophets. Oosthuizen begins by mentioning how the missionaries did not pay much attention to the African spiritual world.

“The problem is that the worldview, from which missionaries started, was not that with which African concerned itself. Thus, no serious attention had been given to the realities of Africa. In example, the missionaries generally did not step into the depths of the African worldview. Even Jesus was often presented as a foreigner.”⁷²

He points out how neglecting the African cosmology made Christianity foreign to the African believers. However, African Independent Churches have put efforts to consider the reality of the African cosmology in the African Christian faith and this had a significant impact on the African people. “The only way to do something within the existential context is to take these forces seriously. This is what happens in the AIC, and they attract people by the thousands - not because it is an easy way out, but because they receive help. Bewitchment, sorcery and spirit possession are realities.”⁷³ Oosthuizen, throughout his study, tries to perceive how these prophets understand the Holy Spirit and the spirits of the traditional religion. Following are the analysis of his observation and interviews.

In the African cosmology, sickness means to be weak. For one to be cured, he has to find the strength, which in the African context is mainly referred to the ancestral spirits. The ancestral

⁷² Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 17.

⁷³ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 18.

spirits are recognized as the source of power for the Africans.⁷⁴ Although the Gospel depicts and credits Jesus as the one performing many healings, the prophets of the African Independent Churches inquire the Holy Spirit in times of healing sessions. The reason is due to the Scripture characterizing the Holy Spirit as the symbol of power. Since the Holy Spirit is more pictured in relation to the power, Jesus is hardly mentioned in any of the churches' healing sessions.⁷⁵ Instead, the Holy Spirit and ancestral spirits are called upon healing.

Oosthuizen questions the prophets of the South African Independent Churches on the spiritual beings they are working with, the Holy Spirit or the ancestors, while they perform healings and divinations. Sixty percent of the prophets from the Greater Durban area answered that the ancestors could transfer the messages from God, but the actual work is done by the power of the Holy Spirit. However, prophets from the Rand area answered they work with either or in conjunction with the power of the ancestors and of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁶ Seventy two percent of the prophets responded that they get messages of God either by the ancestors or both by the ancestors and by the Holy Spirit. Ancestors were mostly understood as mediators who brought messages from God. They were also recognized to be in collaboration with the Holy Spirit. Through the interview, Oosthuizen was able to perceive that most of the prophets accepted the presence of the ancestors and worked in cooperation.⁷⁷

Oosthuizen tries to be as objective as possible throughout his work. The main purpose of his work is to depict the Christian prophets' spiritual worldview. However, he leaves traces of anxiety here and there stating their operation to be a form of syncretism where the traditional elements have utilized the Christian context.⁷⁸ He also implies the need to consider some theological issues.⁷⁹ Although he tries to be unbiased throughout his work and reveals how the prophets' understand the collision of the two spiritual worlds, his stance of discontinuity was formerly revealed in his work *Post Christianity in Africa: a Theological and Anthropological*

⁷⁴ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 64.

⁷⁵ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 63.

⁷⁶ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 67.

⁷⁷ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 69.

⁷⁸ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 186.

⁷⁹ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 193.

Study. He states, “The functions of the ancestor spirits have been transferred to the Holy Spirit, or simply ‘the Spirit’, so that in the independent post-Christian movements, their ‘Holy Spirit’ is no longer the Holy Spirit of whom we learn in the Scripture”.⁸⁰

Although Oosthuizen recognizes the efforts African Independent Churches have done in order to fill the spiritual vacuum that persisted due to the loss of the African tradition in the African Christianity,⁸¹ his conclusion blames the African Independent Churches’ understanding of the Holy Spirit to be

in continuity with the spirits of the African tradition. The study done by Oosthuizen deserves to be applauded for his empirical research on pondering the prophets’ Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit.

2.1.2 Matthew Michael

Matthew Michael tries to compare and contrast different aspects of Christianity and of the traditional religion in his work *Christian Theology and African Traditions*. He particularly dedicates chapter 10 on how the Holy Spirit is understood among the African believers. He defines seven characteristics of spirits in traditional African society. One, African people generally accept the existence and works of these spiritual beings. Two, African people understand the spirits to be divided into two camps where one side are the good spirits that give blessings and the other side are the evil spirits that haunt people. Three, African people affiliate the spirits to traditional medicine or to religious leaders. Four, African people believe that the spiritual beings can intervene in the physical world at any given time. Five, African people acknowledge that the spirits have extraordinary powers. Six, African people understand the spirits as mediators and messengers of the Supreme God. Seven, African people believe spirits to not be limited to human restrictions.⁸²

⁸⁰ Gerhardus C. Oosthuizen, *Post-Christianity in Africa: A Theological and Anthropological Study* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1968), 86.

⁸¹ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 17.

⁸² Matthew Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2013), 94.

Issues in Africanized Christianity are raised due to the spiritual beings that are considered as benevolent.

“The good spirits are believed to offer assistance, guidance, blessing, prosperity, riches, children, and other good things of life to those who court their favor. The assistance of these good spirits could be invoked or sought through consultation with traditional diviners or seers who know how to court the favor of these good spirits.”⁸³

The existence and the functions performed by these good spirits are recognized throughout the African continent. Even Africans whom had been educated in Western culture and education acknowledge them. African believers also consider the reality and activities of these benevolent spiritual beings.⁸⁴ These good spirits are the spirits whom are called upon by the traditionalist Africans to offer guidance, blessing, prosperity, and other good things of life. The Bible also illustrates the Holy Spirit with a similar image. The Holy Spirit guides, works miracles, heals, resides, and fills a person. Due to their similarities, the understanding of the African spiritual world, the good spirits, often influenced the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit. Michael states,

“While the traditional recognition of the works of these ‘good spirits’ provides a common ground in discussing their person and activities of the Holy Spirit among African Christians, often the understanding of the impersonal nature of these ‘good spirits’ is transferred to the Holy Spirit, thus distorting the biblical understanding of the Holy Spirit.”⁸⁵

Although the good spirits gave ground for the African people to easily open up to the Holy Spirit, Michael blames that this preconception of the good spiritual being have influenced so that it distorted the biblical understanding of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit and the good spirits could seem to be in association, yet Michael claims definite differences between these two spiritual beings. The good spirits operate within the polytheistic context, while the Holy Spirit operates in a monotheistic worldview of the Bible. The good spirits are impersonal beings, yet the Holy Spirit is a person. The good spirits are lower spirits created by the Supreme Being; however, the Holy Spirit is God himself.⁸⁶

⁸³ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 190.

⁸⁴ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 191.

⁸⁵ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 191.

⁸⁶ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 191-192.

Michael worries the common association of these two different concept done by most of the African Independent Churches have brought a problematic concept of Pneumatology to the African believers.

“Most of the African Independent Churches often have a problematic concept of Pneumatology because of this common association. The African Christian church should seek ways to help church members to overcome the temptation of associating or classifying the Holy Spirit with the many good spirits of the African spiritual world.”⁸⁷

To overcome this unbiblical comprehension of the Holy Spirit, he states that the African Churches should stress more emphasis on the Godhood of the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Trinity. Once the African Christians will clearly understand the Holy Spirit to be God himself, it will lessen the temptation to classify the Holy Spirit as a Christianized spirit from an African spiritual cosmology.⁸⁸

2.2 Continuity with the spirits of the African Traditional Religion

Unlike those who stood for the discontinuity to spirits from the African Traditional Religion, there were people who were open to the influence of the African Traditional Religion claiming it will enhance Christianity to be better understood and accepted among African Christians. Two representatives who stand in this position are Allan Anderson and Elochukwu Uzukwu. Allan Anderson is an Anglo-Zimbabwean theologian whom studied and ministered in South Africa. His work published in 1991 as *Moya: The Holy Spirit in an African Context* talks about how the African Independent Churches in South Africa view and understand the Holy Spirit. Elochukwu Uzukwu is a Nigerian Reverend of Spiritan congregation who works on how to appropriate faith and culture in the West African style. His work is entitled *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*.

⁸⁷ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

⁸⁸ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

2.2.1 Allan Anderson

Anderson introduces his works on the African Pneumatology while mentioning how little the African theologians brought attention to this subject. “Because so little has been written on this subject by black Africans, there are times when this literature study will appear to be a ‘white debate’.”⁸⁹ “African Christian theologians have largely left unaddressed the subject of Christian Pneumatology, and the need for a theology that will be relevant to the African spirit world. The topic is indeed only touched on here and there.”⁹⁰

Anderson points out how Pneumatology introduced by the missionaries were not intriguing enough to the Africans. Africans were used to spirits who were active and involved in their daily lives. However, the Pneumatology, which the missionaries introduced, made it seem as if the Holy Spirit was distant. African Christians started feeling an emptiness in their religiosity. “African expect God to be closely involved in their daily lives and act upon their lives. However, the way missionaries have introduced Holy Spirit is not in such form but in a distant matter. This is where Spirit-Type Church has introduced Pneumatology where Spirit is involved in their daily lives.”⁹¹ Spirit-Type Church mentioned here by Anderson refers to the African Independent Church. Anderson states that African Independent Churches have proposed a Pneumatology, where the Holy Spirit is not distant but active in the daily lives of the African believers.⁹²

Anderson mentions how some theologians such as Oosthuizen have criticized the Independent Churches’ Pneumatology, stating it had simply replaced the function of the ancestors and has resulted in a syncretistic understanding of the Holy Spirit. “The most serious and devastating accusation leveled against the Spirit-Type Churches is that which infers that the traditional concept of ancestor spirit has simply been transferred to the ‘Holy Spirit’.”⁹³ Although Anderson does not explicitly state he supports continuity, throughout his study, he

⁸⁹ Allan Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, Manualia Didactica 13 (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1991), 2.

⁹⁰ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 20.

⁹¹ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 9.

⁹² Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 9.

⁹³ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 85.

constantly takes the position of standing against the theologians whom claim the Independent Churches' comprehension of the Holy Spirit is in continuity with the spirits of the African tradition and that it is a problem. He insists that in order to articulate a relevant comprehension of the Holy Spirit to the African believers, the reality of ancestors have to be taken into account. "We must expect therefore, that Pneumatology in Africa that does not seriously consider the objective reality of ancestors, and which fails to provide an answer to the problems inherent in that reality will be an irrelevant Pneumatology."⁹⁴ Anderson claims that the consideration of the ancestral spirits into the African Christian understanding of Pneumatology is indispensable for without it, Pneumatology will be irrelevant to the African believers. He also insists more room should be given for the Holy Spirit to be expressed in an African way. "It is necessary for the Holy Spirit to be allowed to work in a particular African way."⁹⁵

Anderson directs the readers to the prevalence of the ancestral cults in African Christianity and how there seems to exist no real conflict between the traditional belief and Christianity. Mentioning it is the opinion of several African theologians, he suggests, "There exists no real conflict between this (ancestor rituals) and Christian beliefs. The ancestor rituals are an exclusively African and personal affair which can legitimately exist side by side with Christianity. They belong to two different worlds' and yet they can also be reconciled."⁹⁶ The cohabitation of these two religions are possible for the Holy Spirit will sanctify the elements transferred from the traditional religion.⁹⁷ Although Anderson blames the criticism toward the Independent Churches' Pneumatology to be without foundation, he himself is not able to disprove this criticism to be wrong throughout his work for he recognizes his lack of empirical work. He urges for further empirical studies to be proceeded on the ambiguous concept of the ancestral spirits found among African believers.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 79.

⁹⁵ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 46.

⁹⁶ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 124.

⁹⁷ Allan Anderson, "African Independent Churches of the Spirit and Pneumatology", *Word & World* 23, vol. 2 (2003): 185.

⁹⁸ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 90.

2.2.2 Elochukwu Uzukwu

Uzukwu expounds of the stances churches have stood regarding the African spiritual world. He explains how most of the churches had a hostile attitude towards the spirits of the African tradition. However, the African Independent Churches were an exception.⁹⁹

“The African Independent Churches are closest to the ground in assimilating but transforming the ministries that are connected with the deities. They reinterpret the services rendered by the elect of the deities as the sphere or the economy of the Holy Spirit. Consciously or unconsciously they clothe the Holy Spirit with qualities of the deities.”¹⁰⁰

Uzukwu believes the African Independent Churches were most successful on assimilating and transforming the ministries that were connected to the spirits of the traditional religion. They consciously or unconsciously clothed the Holy Spirit with the qualities of the traditional spirits. The Christianity brought by the missionaries have demonized these spirits. The New African Pentecostalism was intolerant of anything related to the ancestral cultures. The Charismatic movements rejected the ancestral spirits but used their rituals.¹⁰¹ However, the African Independent Churches have absorbed them under the idea of the Generalized Holy Spirit.

The assimilation of the qualities of the spirits from the African tradition into the Africanized Pneumatology by the African Independent Churches are observed reciprocally throughout Uzukwu’s studies. “African Independent Church groups combine the Biblical and ancestral cosmologies. They boldly and radically convert the ancestral world of Vodhun into the domain of the Holy Spirit who is active amongst them in the prophetic ministry of visionaries.”¹⁰² “The Celestial Church of Christ subject African Traditional Religion spirits to ‘higher order integration in a Generalized Holy Spirit.’ The characteristics of the West African deities are subsumed under the one Holy Spirit.”¹⁰³ “African Independent Churches successfully integrate the ministry of diviner-healer into the structures of the church. African Independent

⁹⁹ Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 168.

¹⁰⁰ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 168.

¹⁰¹ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 168.

¹⁰² Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 172.

¹⁰³ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 176.

Churches reinterpret the ministry of diviner healers as falling under the operation of the One Holy Spirit...”¹⁰⁴ Through these descriptions, we get to perceive the African Independent Churches’ stance regarding the spirits of the African tradition. They convert, integrate, reinterpret, and subsume the spirits into the Africanized Pneumatology. Such approach is regarded negatively by mainline churches. “The African Independent Churches’ responses are so close to ancestral cosmology that they arouse suspicion of mainline churches and lead to outright condemnation as paganism and superstition by neo-Pentecostalism.”¹⁰⁵

Uzukwu claims that African Christians have a tendency to be flexible toward the spiritual beings they rely. It is not a matter of whom the spiritual beings are but on whether they are able to resolve the problem. “In times of need Christians do not ask the theoretical question about the identity of the health-generating spirit, they address themselves to healers who operate in the name of Agwu, Vodhun or Orisa as well as those who act in the name of the Holy Spirit of Christ.”¹⁰⁶ The African Independent Churches have taken a step further and have integrated the ministry of the diviner-healer into the structure of the church. They reinterpreted the ministry of the diviner-healer as falling under the work of the One Holy Spirit. Now all the operations proceeded by the spirits of the African tradition have been subsumed under the One Generalized Holy Spirit. Uzukwu highly appreciates this creative reinterpretation of the Holy Spirit done by the West African Christianity.¹⁰⁷

Uzukwu aligns himself with the African Independent Churches’ manifesto of 1996 that declares, “The renewal of the Holy Spirit is continuous with and greater than the spirits around us.” The manifesto’s mention of spirits around us is referring to the spirits of the African tradition.¹⁰⁸ He adds, “The interpretation of ideas on ‘spirits around us’ and ‘Holy Spirit’ of Christianity enables theological reflection in West Africa to become a critical Pneumatological

¹⁰⁴ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 177.

¹⁰⁵ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 170.

¹⁰⁶ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 177.

¹⁰⁷ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 177-179.

¹⁰⁸ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 160.

review of the Catholic tradition to reinvent this tradition.”¹⁰⁹ He further praises of the works done by the African Independent Churches as,

“A Generalized Holy Spirit who bestows all gifts of healing and divining becomes a creative Pneumatological contribution from West African Christianity to the great Christian tradition. The leading contribution of African Independent Churches in this creative Pneumatology should be recognized.”¹¹⁰

Uzukwu considers the Africanized Pneumatology he had observed from the African Independent Churches as creative and as an original contribution to the Christian tradition that should be acknowledged.

2.3 Conclusion on the Literature Review of the Holy Spirit

2.3.1 The Ongoing Debate on the Holy Spirit

One of the core elements of the African religiosity is their belief in spirits.¹¹¹ Although the newly introduced Christianity converted African people who adhered the traditional religion into Christianity, they were not able to separate themselves from the traditional belief of the ancestral spirits. Africans attachments to their traditional religions’ spirits have started influencing their Christian practice, belief, and worldview. From this phenomenon emerged a fundamental question on who the Holy Spirit is to the believers in Africa.

The gatherings of African theologians at Ibadan in 1966 pointed out the fact that the subject of Christian Pneumatology was left unaddressed.¹¹² There was a need for a relevant comprehension of the Holy Spirit to be introduced to the African Christians. However, we are surprised on how Pneumatology was left still as a disregarded topic by the African theologians after a half-century has passed.¹¹³ Anderson mentions how when reading the literature works on

¹⁰⁹ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 58.

¹¹⁰ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 179.

¹¹¹ Mulago, *Éléments fondamentaux de la religion africaine*, 43-63.

¹¹² Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 20.

¹¹³ Jibikilayi, *La triple exégèse de la révélation chez Hans Urs von Balthasar: Principes fondamentaux de la théologie du témoignage et implications théologiques sur le discours christologique africain*, 257.

this topic, it gives an impression to be a white debate, for so little have been written by African theologians.¹¹⁴ Then, what has caused the African theologians to be so silent about a subject, which is directly related to the core belief of their traditional religion? Jibikilayi answers that the silence is caused in order to avoid great panic and confusion, which could be evoked when intruding the fundamental belief of African religiosity. For the belief of the ancestral spirits is closely linked with the Holy Spirit, theologians are reluctant to bring up the core of African religiosity to the operating table, which could be of great risks. Therefore, most African theologians have concluded not to ponder on the field study of Pneumatology.¹¹⁵

This section has introduced Western and African theologians who have written influential works on the African understanding of the Holy Spirit. Oosthuizen and Michael blames the influence of the African Traditional Religion to have brought confusion on the understanding of the Holy Spirit among African Christians. The Holy Spirit is not anymore the third person of the Trinity as it is written in the Bible, but is degraded as one of the good spirits. They clearly emphasize the discontinuity between the spirits of the traditional religion and the Holy Spirit. Anderson and Uzukwu supports Christianity to open up its doors to the influence of the traditional religion. This will lead Christianity to become more African and will bring up creative insights for further development of Christian theology.

One thing we have to note here is how both Oosthuizen and Anderson are Western theologians who have taken close interest and studied the Independent Churches in Southern Africa. Both Michael and Uzukwu are Nigerian theologians who have studied churches in Nigeria, yet they have drawn different conclusions. Theologians are looking at the same picture, but drawing out different conclusions. This leads us to speculate no matter what picture is depicted from the terrain, theologians would draw conclusions based upon their own theological stance and belief.

¹¹⁴ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 2.

¹¹⁵ Jibikilayi, *La triple exégèse de la révélation chez Hans Urs von Balthasar: Principes fondamentaux de la théologie du témoignage et implications théologiques sur le discours christologique africain*, 174.

2.3.2 How are we to conclude the Debate?

Then, how are we to conclude this ongoing debate? No matter what pictures are shown, one side will claim discontinuity and the other side will claim continuity based upon their personal beliefs. This is where I have come to decide that we need to let the voices of the African terrain be heard. Although there were not many resources and studies on African Pneumatology by African theologians, we have heard the voices of the theologians. It is very probable that we would be hearing more from them. However, the voices on how lay African believers perceive this matter have not been heard. Western theologians, including Oosthuizen, did some of the explicit works surveying on the ground, yet it dates back to over 25 years. Anderson himself acknowledging of his works' lack of empirical studies, bases his works on M.L. Daneel's (1971) and B.A. Pauw's (1975) investigations¹¹⁶ that even dates back to over 45 years. Unfortunately, the African theologians who carried out comparatively recent studies on this theme did not proceed into any form of explicit studies of the ground.

One aspect I agree with Kwesi Dickson's theology is his statement, "every Christian theologizes."¹¹⁷ Before theologians have perceived a phenomenon and have undergone a study to publish it in the academic field, lay Christians would have already undergone a process of theologization to decide on how to deal with the problem. There would be believers whom have resolved the Holy Spirit to be in discord with the traditional spirits, thus severing all connections with the traditional religious practices to the ancestral spirits. On the other hand, there could be believers who insist on continuity between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. Such theologizing would result in ongoing traditional practices although the believer also attends church. Hearing from the lay Africans on how they have answered to this question will enable us to have a clearer illustration on how the African Christians understand the Holy Spirit.

¹¹⁶ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 79.

¹¹⁷ Kwesi Dickson, *Theology in Africa* (London,: Dayton, Longman and Todd., 1984), 13.

PART II. The Given Data on Today's Christianity in Africa

Chapter 3: Cameroon

The second part of this thesis has a special attention to a country in Africa named Cameroon. The reason we bring light to the Cameroonian land and its people is that we will ponder on this context to find answers to our core question on the urban African religiosity. There are two major reasons why my attention has been drawn to Cameroon as the context to investigate the urban African religiosity. Cameroonian society is currently experiencing an active transformation and it portrays the multi ethnic diversities of the African continent.

Firstly, Cameroon is one of the African countries that is currently undergoing the most rapid process of urbanization. Cameroon has been recognized as one of the most rapidly urbanizing countries in the Central African region in the last decade with an urban population growth rate of 8.5 percent. The land predominantly became urban before 2005 and in 2010; it accounted 58.5 percent of its population to dwell in urbanity.¹¹⁸ Since my thesis' curiosity revolves around the urbanity and the contemporary African society in transition, the dynamically transforming Cameroonian society seized my attention.

Secondly, Cameroon is one of the African countries that represents multi ethnic diversity. Olivier Lyébi-Mandjeck, a Cameroon geographer, states on a conference on cultural diversity, "Cameroon is a true Babel Tower with more than 200 socio-cultural groups and languages. All these elements add up to refer to Cameroun as the Africa in miniature."¹¹⁹ We often refer to Cameroon as Africa in miniature due to its geographical and population's cultural diversity. These ethnic and cultural diversities have grasped my interest for this thesis is not analyzing a certain tribe or a specific African culture. Instead, it wants to grasp the contemporary African

¹¹⁸ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles, and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 5.

¹¹⁹ Lyébi-Mandjeck, « Préservation du patrimoine et construction des espaces touristiques au Cameroun ».

consensus. Although more details are to come later on, this typical orientation of my research preferred a diversified ethnic context; and, Cameroon fitted into the criterion.

In order for us to better interpret the results of the studies processed in Cameroon, it is necessary for us to have an overall understanding of the land and its people. Having a forehand comprehension will enhance our analysis to better grasp from what context the Cameroonian believers have resolved to build the contemporary urban African religiosity. Therefore, the current chapter will introduce Cameroon in the following way. It will give an overall but brief introduction, and then explain the country's history, and will conclude with the church's history.

3.1 A Brief Glance

A general glance of the nation, Cameroon, is necessary for we will later ponder on the individuals who lived in the context, in order to apprehend their religiosity. The comprehension of different introductory aspects of the country will enhance our sympathy with the voices raised from the ground. This brief glance will cover ethnicity, language, demography, economy, and education.

3.1.1 Ethnicity and Language

The typical characteristic of Cameroon is its varied ethnic groups that exceed 200 ethnicities. We do not get to grasp how enormous this number is until we start comparing it with other homogeneous African countries. Burundi only constitutes of three ethnicities that are the Hutu, the Tutsi, and the Pygmies. Mauritania is composed of five ethnicities that are the Moors, the Toucouleur, the Soninke, the Wolof, and the Bambara. However, Cameroon has 230 ethnicities. Such enlarged number of ethnicities shows how Cameroon figures among the peculiarly diversified nations in Africa. It has 201 tribes and 236 local languages.¹²⁰ Due to these varieties, sometimes the country is mentioned as the ethnic crossroads. As briefly fore

¹²⁰ Kengne Fodouop, ed., *Le Cameroun: Autopsie d'une exception plurielle en Afrique* (Paris: L' Harmattan, 2010), 131–132.

mentioned, this thesis does not take interest in a certain African tradition, but instead ponders on the contemporary consensus. Due to this typical orientation of the study, undergoing a research on a homogeneous African context could bring results influenced by a certain African culture and tradition. However, Cameroon being a very widely diversified context enables typical traits of different traditions to be dissolved unto the amalgamated consensus. This is the reason why we have chosen Cameroon as the context to ponder on the African religiosity. Chapter 4, which mentions the methodological strategies of the survey, will detail more about why the multi ethnic context of Cameroon is attractive for this thesis. The three main linguistic groups in Cameroon are the Bantu speaking people in the south, the Sudanic-speaking people in the north, and the Semi-Bantu speaking people mostly in the west. The Bantu groups include the Maka, Ndjem, and Duala. In the beginning of the 19th century, the Fang and Beti people followed them to the land. The Sudanic groups include Sao, Fulani, and Kanuri. The Fulani were Muslims who came from the Niger basin in two different waves, in the 11th and the 19th century. The Semi-Bantu groups mostly consist of minor ethnicities, with the Bamileke as exception for they are significantly numbered, and live around the lower slopes of the Adamawa Plateau and Mount Cameroon. Tikar is also a Semi-Bantu group and they live in the Bamenda region and in the Western High Plateau. We here are to note the Pygmies who are the oldest inhabitants of the country. They lived as hunters for thousands of years in the southern forests. The ongoing deforestation in process throughout the land is consistently diminishing their numbers. Although, Cameroonians have their local and tribal languages, the influence of colonization has settled English and French as the two official languages in the country.¹²¹

3.1.2 Demography

The population of Cameroon is growing just below the regional average rate of the Sub-Saharan Africa. The country has a large youth population, for 60% of the citizens are below 25. Although the fertility rate is slightly declining, the level of fertility remains considerably high

¹²¹ Mark W. DeLancey and George Benneh, "Cameroon", Encyclopedia Britannica, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Cameroon>.

among the poor, rural, and uneducated women due to the deficient access to contraception. HIV, that prevailed since the 1990s, has curbed the life expectancy to remain low. The life expectancy is 55 years, which is well below the global average. Unemployment, poverty, corruption are all factors that trigger the younger generation to emigrate abroad. However, the meticulous immigration restrictions of their preferred destinations such as the United States and Europe led them to turn to the neighboring nations like Gabon, Nigeria, and South Africa.¹²²

3.1.3 Economy

The independence of Cameroon had placed its economy in a similar state as the other newly independent African nations. The majority of the Cameroonians were engaged in works related to agriculture. For there was not much in the industrial sector; Cameroon was predominantly dependent on exportations of cocoa, coffee, bananas, palm oil, kernels, and timber as its source of income. The country was also entirely dependent on imports for the manufactured goods needed. At independence, agriculture contributed about 48 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), whereas manufacturing and construction was only around 10 percent.¹²³ Although during the following two decades after independence Cameroon was comparatively quite prosperous, in the mid-1980s, the drop in price of important exportations such as cocoa, coffee, and oil forced the country into a recession.¹²⁴ In the 1990s, Cameroon turned to external borrowings and accepted the intervention of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank programs designed to provide structure adjustments programs. It designs to increase efficiency in agriculture, improve trade, and recapitalize the nation's banks. Despite the partial economic growth in some regions, poverty was still a significant element that influenced the Cameroon society with unemployment, reduced income, poor health care infrastructure, and lack of sanitation.¹²⁵

¹²² World Factbook, "Cameroon", Central Intelligence Agency, 2019, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cm.html>.

¹²³ Mark W. DeLancey, *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), 107.

¹²⁴ DeLancey and Benneh, "Cameroon".

¹²⁵ World Factbook, « Cameroon ».

3.1.4 Education

Educational systems in Cameroon have greatly expanded since its independence for it now has one of the highest rates of school attendance among African nations. However, access to educational facilities varies depending on the region. The attendance is low in the north due to the significant proportions of girls who do not attend school. Such phenomenon in the north is speculated to be the influence of the Islamic culture which does not stress on the importance of educating girls. Around 75 percent of all children who are at the age of primary school are enrolled in governmental education system or in Christian missional schools. Unfortunately, the access to school facilities varies by regions. There are secondary schools, vocational schools, and training schools. The University of Yaoundé was established in 1962 and additional governmental universities were opened at Buea, Dschang, Douala, and Ngaoundéré.¹²⁶

3.2 The Nation's History

History is an important factor to consider when understanding a group of people. The history people experienced forms and defines who they have become. Thus for us to understand how and why a certain society perceives and reacts in a certain way to a given matter, we need to know what this society had experienced in the past. Therefore, this section of the thesis will bring light to the Cameroon nation's history. The introduced nation's history will be subdivided in three parts: precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial period.

3.2.1 The Precolonial Period

3.2.1.1 The Carthaginian Early Discovery of Cameroon

The earliest recorded history believed to be linked with Cameroon dates back to the Carthaginian adventurers. The leaders of the Carthaginian proceeded an expedition in West Africa. To commemorate this journey, they placed a written inscription of their discovery on

¹²⁶ DeLancey and Benneh, "Cameroon".

the temple of Cronos at Carthage which nowadays is known as Tunisia. Although the period is not specified in detail, it is speculated to be around the early fifth century B.C. when the Phoenicians at Carthage were at the peak of their power.¹²⁷ The mountain discovered by the Carthaginian in West Africa is presumed to be Mount Cameroon. They named the mountain found as “The Chariots of the Gods” for it was volcanically active and boiling.¹²⁸ This historical account of the discovery of Cameroon dated back to two thousand years before the arrival of the Portuguese in the fifteenth century.

3.2.1.2 The Sao Civilization in Cameroon

The Northern part of Cameroon had been in close contact with Eastern Sudan and the Sahara up to the very early years of the Christian era. In this area, plural cultures and nations rose and declined. The Nok culture flourished around 200 B.C. expanding from Northern Nigeria to East Lake of Chad to the bend of Niger. During the first millennium after Christ, there were growths of Kanem-Bornu empires and the Sao civilization in the Northern part of Cameroon.¹²⁹ The Sao kingdom flourished in the Chari delta and in the Northern Cameroon that was already in contact with various cultures. Although, the Sao civilization was an African civilization, it was influenced by other cultures such as the Nile and the Mediterranean world. By the tenth century, the Sao civilization was firmly grounded in the Chari delta, yet they fell to the invaders from the north, known as Kanem-Bornu. By the end of the sixteenth century, the Sao civilization disappeared until archaeologists unearthed their existence in the twentieth century.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Tambi Eyongetah Mbuagbaw, Robert Brain and Robin Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon* (Harlow: Longman, 1988), 8.

¹²⁸ Daniel Abwa, *Cameroon: Histoire d'un nationalisme* (Yaoundé: Editions CLE, 2010), 43.

¹²⁹ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 10.

¹³⁰ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 15.

3.2.1.3 *The European Discovery of Cameroon*

The Portuguese reached Cameroon in the fifteenth century. In 1472, Fernando Pao discovered an island and named it after his name. Soon he noticed a coast nearby and the Portuguese further explored the region finding a river with varieties of prawns. They named it Rio dos Camaroes, meaning the river of prawns. The Anglicized name of Cameroon was derived from this Portuguese name. The Portuguese in different regions of West Africa established stations; however, no permanent stations were established in Cameroon in the early period. Thousands of Cameroonians were transported across the Atlantic in order to provide forced labor for the European plantations in the Americas.¹³¹

3.2.2 **The Colonial Period**

3.2.2.1 *The German Colonization*

The competition between the European powers in the coast of Cameroon influenced the chiefs of Douala and Bimbia to seek for protection from one of these powers. The chiefs first turned to Britain for protection.¹³² However, Britain did not respond favorably and just replied with a friendly message informing them to restrain from surrendering their territory to France or Portugal. In 1882, the British Consul Edward Hewett returned to Douala and found how conditions in the Cameroonian coast were disturbed due to the active French and German operations. The British government in April 1884 decided to send Hewett to make treaties with the chiefs.¹³³ However, upon his arrival, he found German flags flying on the coasts of Douala on Bell Town, Akwa Town, and Deido Town. The chiefs had already signed the treaty on 14th July 1884, which ceded the sovereignty of the country named Cameroon to the German forces. Cameroon now became a German colony.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 42.

¹³² Abwa, *Cameroun: Histoire d'un nationalisme*, 44-48.

¹³³ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 47.

¹³⁴ Adalbert Owona, *La naissance du Cameroun 1884-1914* (Paris: L' Harmattan, 1996), 30-32.

The treaties signed were symbolic. Its main purpose was to prevent European nations going to war with each other to further gain African territories. Although the European nations were cautious not to spark war with other European powers, they were not hesitant on triggering war with the indigenous people.¹³⁵ The treaty made with the Douala kings only agreed to give up the sovereignty of a small coastal strip to Germany. Therefore, the Germans had to fight consistently until the end of the century in order to further colonize and administer the inland Cameroon. This inland penetration was accompanied with violent resistances from the local people until the end of their regime. The Germans advanced more and more into inland Cameroon. Finding the strong influences of the chiefs inland, they restricted the mission schools from teaching the Douala language.¹³⁶ At this time, explorers penetrated further south and built a station twenty-two days from the coast, which is nowadays known as Yaoundé. This German town became an important center of trade and a point of departure for further expeditions inland. A treaty that fully accepted German's control over Cameroon was made on March 1894. The Germans were now free to travel inland and to administrate throughout the whole country.¹³⁷

3.2.2.2 *The British and French Colonization*

The First World War was triggered in the European continent and until then no one truly expected the war to be transferred to the African continent. Germany even made efforts to prevent the war affecting the African continent, especially Cameroon, for they knew having the British troops in Nigeria and the French colonies in the east would not be a plausible situation for them. Therefore, Germany requested the Allies to have the African continent exempt from war, yet the American government replied with a denial.¹³⁸ The British and French agreed to combine forces to drive the Germans out of Cameroon. British troops invaded from Nigeria and the French troops attacked from Chad and Gabon. The allied forces soon overthrew the German

¹³⁵ DeLancey, *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence*, 9.

¹³⁶ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 55.

¹³⁷ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 59.

¹³⁸ Abwa, *Cameroun: Histoire d'un nationalisme*, 116-117.

troop from Douala in September 1914. They captured Yaoundé, which was the center of German operation in January 1916. In March 1916, French General Aymerich and the British General Dobell temporarily divided the country into two zones, one that was administered by the French and the other by the British until the First World War ended.¹³⁹ Soon after the Treaty of Versailles where Germany renounced the rights to all of its former colonies, a final agreement between the two colonial powers was made in London on July 1919.¹⁴⁰

The British only received a small portion of land from Cameroon. Four fifth of the territory was partitioned to France whereas Britain only took one fifth of the territory. Yet they accepted this unequally divided portion for they were planning on having a step ahead when dealing with the former German colonies in the East of Africa. The British Cameroon was incorporated as part of Eastern Region of Nigeria for administrative purposes.¹⁴¹ Although the people from the British Cameroon had the benefit from Nigeria such as attending educational institutions in Nigeria, people constantly had this sense of regret for not having received direct attention from the colonial administration as a distinctive country.¹⁴²

The French were also preoccupied with the plural colonies they had and did not invest in Cameroon as much as the Germans did. However, it was taken into account that they had to perform better than the British and had improved the country to be economically self-sufficient. Unfortunately, such achievement was attained by the increase of taxes that were raised significantly higher than the precedent colonial regime and extended even to women. During this period, French Cameroon particularly advanced in health services and education. A successful campaign to improve health could be seen in 1924 when a quarter of the population was suffering from sleeping sickness, but due to the campaign it dropped to 1.8 percent by 1929. By 1939, there were 150 medical centers in the country and schools were opened to train nurses.

¹³⁹ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 78.

¹⁴⁰ David Kom, *Les perspectives de la coloniasation: Les trois colonisateurs du Caemeroun en trois quarts de siecle* (Paris: L' Harmattan, 2004), 108.

¹⁴¹ Walter Gam Nkwi, *Voicing the Voiceless: Contributions to Closing Gaps in Cameroon History, 1958-2009* (Bamenda: Langaa Research & Publishing CIG, 2010), 122.

¹⁴² Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 86–87.

During the French colonial period, the number of students enrolled in educational institution more than doubled.¹⁴³

The two new colonial powers in Cameroon recognized the importance to adapt the colonies' economy to suit the needs of the metropolises. They turned Cameroon into a producer of raw materials, mostly agricultural. The colonial powers saw rural areas and the farmers as the source to satisfy the needs of the Europeans. Thus, the major economic change during the British and French colonial period was the development of agricultural production to be sold in the world markets.¹⁴⁴

3.2.3 The Postcolonial Period

3.2.3.1 Towards the Independence

The aftermath of the Second World War radically transformed the situation throughout the African continent. Millions of Africans who had been mobilized for the war had widened their horizons and a movement of anti-colonial nationalism spread across the continent. Although Britain and France were on the winning side, the colonies observed how they were not the major world powers anymore. France defeated Germany and even partially had its country occupied by Germany. In addition, the United States and the Soviet Union were hostile toward the old colonial empires, Britain and France, whom were hugely in debts to the United States.¹⁴⁵

As independence approached, each section of colonies had to make a choice. The British Cameroon had to decide on whether they are to become part of the independent Nigeria, or become an independent state of its own, or rejoin the other Cameroon. The French Cameroon had to decide on whether to become a part of France, or becoming independent alone, or joining with several other French colonies, or to rejoin the British Cameroon as a new country. However,

¹⁴³ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 83.

¹⁴⁴ DeLancey, *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence*, 15-18.

¹⁴⁵ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 99.

in both part of the colonies, a sense of nationalism rose so that the two Cameroons could be unified together.¹⁴⁶

The British period of colony that integrated British Cameroon into Nigeria developed a feeling of anti-colonialism and nationalism among the inhabitants. Cameroonians felt as if the Nigerians were ruling them. The sentiment of anti-colonialism included the feeling of anti-Nigerianism.¹⁴⁷ France had changed its colonial system and promoted on forming a French union while increasing the interdependence between France and the African colonies. Africans were given the rights to become French citizens and the colonies were to elect their members for the French legislative bodies. “Loi Cadre” that was passed in 1956 provided the opportunity for the colonies to form real political organizations and parties. Elections for the territorial assembly was processed and Union Camerounaise, a group of northern ethnic under the leadership of Ahmadou Ahidjo became the party to be responsible to interpret the “loi cadre” for Cameroon. Cameroon was considered as an independent nation, but they had been given a temporary period of self-government.¹⁴⁸

3.2.3.2 Ahmadou Ahidjo

Ahmadou Ahidjo was born in Garoua, a city located in the Northern region of Cameroon, and entered the politics in 1947. Having served in the French National Assembly from 1954 to 1955, he found the party named Union Camerounaise that was elected as the local political party to temporarily self-govern Cameroon. As soon as the party was elected, it internally fixed a firm date for independence and reunification with the British Cameroon, while cooperating with France. The French government had agreed to grant full autonomy on 1st January 1959 and independence a year later. They also agreed on plebiscite under United Nations’ supervision for the reunification. Union Camerounaise started gaining support from number of small parties. Their influence rose from only controlling less than half the seats in the Assembly in 1958 to

¹⁴⁶ DeLancey, *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence*, 32.

¹⁴⁷ Abwa, *Cameroun: Histoire d’un nationalisme*, 169-170.

¹⁴⁸ DeLancey, *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence*, 37-39.

overtaking over three quarters by the end of 1961. The Republic of Cameroon was born on 1st January 1960. New elections were held on 10th April and Ahidjo became the first President of Cameroon on May 5th.¹⁴⁹

Ahidjo ruled Cameroon from independence until 1982. He centralized the political power to himself and in the capital city, Yaoundé. Ahidjo declared nation building as the major goal and while using the fear of ethnic conflict, he shaped Cameroon into an authoritarian and single party state. His policy of planned liberalism encouraged private investment with the guide of the government whom played a pivotal role. In 1973, he proposed the country to become the primary food source for its neighboring nations while being self-sufficient in food. The discovery of petroleum boosted the Cameroonian economy and became the most valuable export. On November 4th, 1982, President Ahidjo suddenly resigned and succeeded the presidency to the Prime Minister Paul Biya while still remaining as the head of the sole political party of Cameroon the Union Nationale Camerounaise.¹⁵⁰

3.2.3.3 Paul Biya

Former President Ahidjo's sudden resignation shocked the country. However, his resignation did not seem to be a complete handover of the power because he remained head of the sole political party of Cameroon, and was expected to have a strong influence over the government. However, his successor President Paul Biya was neither the puppet Ahidjo had expected to be nor an autocrat as Ahidjo. Although Ahidjo tried to assert party domination over the government, he was forced to resign his position as head of party. Ahidjo soon departed to visit Europe and official photographs of him began to disappear from public places.¹⁵¹

Unlike Ahidjo who never spoke English in public, Biya's bilingual speech fascinated the hearts of the Anglophone.¹⁵² At first Biya expected the nation to develop into a more democratic

¹⁴⁹ Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 107.

¹⁵⁰ DeLancey and Benneh, "Cameroon".

¹⁵¹ DeLancey, *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence*, 67-68.

¹⁵² Mbuagbaw, Brain and Palmer, *A History of the Cameroon*, 141.

society. However, he soon returned to an authoritarian political system. Being the sole candidate of the country's only legal political party, he won the uncontested presidential elections in 1984 and 1988. In the 1990s, he resisted the international and national pressure to democratize the country. Although he had accepted the change of legislation, which in the late 1990 provided a change to multiparty political system, he still employed expedients to ensure CPDM, Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, the status of the dominant party. In 2008, the National Assembly passed a controversial constitution that abolished the presidential term limits, which provided President Biya the legal basis to keep on running. As the law now legally allowed, he ran for the future elections in 2011 and 2018. Calls for democracy also arose from the English speaking part of Cameroon. They claimed that the President's unconcern and oppression from French speaking majority had left the Anglophone economy isolated and stagnant. Some even violently advocated for independence and contributed to the rising tensions between the Anglophone community and the Biya administration up to today.¹⁵³

In addition to the political conflict, President Paul Biya also had to deal with the economic troubles. Economic crisis that had developed under Ahidjo's regime emerged. The economy, which was strongly dependent on the agricultural exports, was seriously affected when prices dropped during the 1980s. By the 1990s the country fell into a severe recession. People lost their jobs and workers received salary cuts. A strong consensus of discontent on the economic situation arose and people blamed Biya's administration.¹⁵⁴ Due to the nation's poor economic situation, significant number of Cameroonian believers became preoccupied with this matter. We will see the theme re-emerge during the qualitative survey on chapter 7.

3.3 The Church's History

The previous sections have accounted on the history of how the nation of Cameroon came to settle as it is today.. For us to investigate on who the Cameroonians are, it was considered necessary to understand the society's past. To further enhance our study, we will also pay

¹⁵³ DeLancey and Benneh, "Cameroon".

¹⁵⁴ DeLancey and Benneh. "Cameroon".

attention on how Christianity and church came to the land and develop to its present form. Similarly as the nation's history were introduced in a format of precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial, the church's history will also be presented in an identical order. The Church's history will put more emphasis on the Protestant Church's history than the Catholic Church. The reason is due to the latter section of the research taking interest on the churches that derived from the Protestant background.

3.3.1 The Precolonial Period

3.3.1.1 The Protestant Church

The earliest missionary society that worked in Cameroon was the Jamaican Baptist Missionary Society founded in Jamaica. Between 1841 and 1852, they sent hundreds of people to Cameroon who were mostly freed slaves.¹⁵⁵ However, they had a hard time adapting to Cameroon due to its harsh climate. People started returning to Jamaica. In 1852, the Jamaican Baptist Missionary Society closed its station in the land.¹⁵⁶ Among them was Joseph Merrick, who first visited Cameroon in 1843. He focused his evangelization on propagating Christianity inland of Cameroon. He was the first foreigner to climb Mount Cameroon and settle at Bimbia just beneath the mountain. The friendship he had built with King William, the king of Bimbia, enabled him to open a school. He got in close touch with the local people in order to learn their local language, Isubu, and translate the Bible into that language. He translated the Book of Exodus in 1844, the Gospel of John in 1845, and the Gospel of Matthew in 1846. Being burned out of his intense work, Joseph Merrick left in 1848 for a break to Britain, but on his way back he died.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Jean-Paul Messina and Jaap van Slageren, *Histoire du christianisme au Cameroun: Des origines à nos jours* (Paris ; Yaoundé: Karthala; Éditions Clé, 2005), 27.

¹⁵⁶ Horace O. Russell, *The Missionary Outreach of the West Indian Church: Jamaican Baptist Missions to West Africa in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 260-262.

¹⁵⁷ Messina and Slageren, *Histoire du christianisme au Cameroun: Des origines à nos jours*, 32–33.

Alfred Saker, a missionary from London Baptist Missionary Society, succeeded Merrick and found the first church in Douala. Saker arrived Douala through Limbé, which used to be known as Victoria. He constructed a chapel and opened a school in the land of Akwa, Bonakou, where we now find the Centenary Church. He eagerly learned the Douala language in order to translate the Bible. He translated the Gospel of Matthew in 1848, the remaining Gospels in 1852, the Acts of the Apostles in 1855, the whole New Testament in 1861, and the whole Old Testament in 1872. What characterized Saker is that he focused his mission mostly in the region of Douala, whereas Merrick had endeavoured to penetrate inland.¹⁵⁸ After 11 years of his ministry in Cameroon, Saker consecrated the first Cameroonian pastor named Georges Nkwé, who became the first to aid him in translating the Bible. After 30 years of his ministry in Cameroon, Alfred Saker left the country in 1876.¹⁵⁹

3.3.1.2 *The Catholic Church*

The Catholic Church settled in Cameroon a half century after the protestant missionaries had foregone with the evangelizations.¹⁶⁰ The missionaries did not initiate the Catholic Church's arrival on the land but a Cameroonian teen named Kwa Mbange who played an influential role on dispatching the Catholic Church into Cameroon. Kwa Mbange was sent to Germany at age of fourteen to get educated as a baker. Upon his arrival in Germany, he saw the Catholic worship and wondered if he could also participate. Kwa Mbange's curiosity led him to be baptised in the Catholic Church. In the course of his baptism, the Church realised there were no Catholic missionaries in Mbange's home country and requested for missionaries to be sent to Cameroon. However, they were not able to find any volunteers from Germany so the request was sent to Rome and the Pallottines group agreed to send Heinrich Vieter, who had been working as missionary in Brazil. Although many were hesitant to volunteer for Cameroon due to the harsh

¹⁵⁸ Messina and Slageren, *Histoire du christianisme au Cameroun: Des origines à nos jours*, 30–31.

¹⁵⁹ Messina and Slageren, *Histoire du christianisme au Cameroun: Des origines à nos jours*, 34–35.

¹⁶⁰ Messina and Slageren, *Histoire du christianisme au Cameroun: Des origines à nos jours*, 127.

tropical climate, Vieter's previous experience of the tropical climate in Brazil enabled him to participate in the mission.¹⁶¹

Heinrich Vieter and his mission team arrived in Douala on the 25th October 1890 and were welcomed by an employee of the Woermann enterprise.¹⁶² The next day, the eight pioneering Catholic missionaries celebrated their first Mass in the Cameroonian land at the Woermann enterprise. They soon decided to head to Edéa where they were determined to settle for mission. However, their arrival in Edéa was not welcomed. As soon as they arrived, the local chief and armed warriors asked them to leave as soon as possible. The Pallottines had no other choice but to ask chief Toko Ngango, whom he met and built amiability on his way to Edéa. Chief Toko agreed to sell them part of the land near the Sanaga River, which became the first settlement of the Catholic Church in Cameroon.¹⁶³

3.3.2 The Colonial Period

3.3.2.1 The Protestant Church

Germany signed an agreement with the Douala chiefs, making Cameroon a colony of Germany. When Germany took over Cameroon, although they allowed local languages to be used, they imposed German as the official language and missionaries were sponsored to teach German to the local. Such circumstances led to a natural expulsion of the Britain based Baptist missionaries and solicited the arrival of the Basler Mission which had its background in Germany.¹⁶⁴ The beginning of the Basler Mission was not easy. A member of the team died four days after their arrival, and then they had conflicts with the fore settled churches which were influenced by the Baptist Missionary Society of London. They protested that the spiritual fruit

¹⁶¹ Messina and Slageren, *Histoire du christianisme au Cameroun: Des origines à nos jours*, 133–136.

¹⁶² Heinrich Vieter, *Chronik der Katholischen Mission Kamerun* (Friedberg: Pallotti-Verl, 2011), 12.

¹⁶³ Messina and Slageren, *Histoire du christianisme au Cameroun: Des origines à nos jours*, 140–142.

¹⁶⁴ Ype Schaaf, *L'histoire et le rôle de la Bible en Afrique* (Lavigny: Éditions des Groupes Missionnaires, 2000), 102.

reaped by the British Baptist missionaries be passed on to the Basler Mission without even the local's approval. The crisis escalated on the two camps which decided to separate and each developed divergent denominations. The Baptist settled in Douala and its surrounding. The Basler ripened on the South and the West of the country. The believers in Victoria, spiritually attached to the former Jamaican missionaries' influence, went their own ways and further bloomed in Limbé.¹⁶⁵

The end of the Second World War affected Cameroon by turning over the German colony to the Allied troops. General Aymerich, a French Commandant, only tolerated French missionaries in the country. This led to an end of the Basler mission and an inquiry to Paris Evangelical Mission Society to undertake the mission in Cameroon. The French Protestant missionaries were attributed two imperial tasks. One was to connect with the abandoned churches to reassure them, to comfort them, and to show them fraternal hearts. Another one was to inform on how the French government guaranteed the freedom of worship.¹⁶⁶ The Paris Evangelical Mission Society agreed to settle its mission in Cameroon. Upon their arrival in February 1917, they assured the local pastors on how they were here not to dominate the local churches but to help. Soon, they gained the confidence of the Baptist and the Basler congregations.¹⁶⁷ Local church leaders provided accounts of the situation of their churches and requested to be visited. This enabled the French missionaries to visit and observe the churches settled in Cameroon. Schools were opened a month later to better educate the Baptist and the Basler leaders and to teach French.¹⁶⁸ Conferences were conducted by the missionaries on how churches were to solve the financial problems and deal with the problems of Christian morality

¹⁶⁵ Messina and Slageren, *Histoire du christianisme au Cameroun: Des origines à nos jours*, 37–38.

¹⁶⁶ Jaap van Slageren, *Les origines de l'Église Évangélique du Cameroun: Missions européennes et christianisme autochtone* (Yaoundé: Édition CLÉ, 2009), 133-134.

¹⁶⁷ E. Allégret, *La mission du Cameroun*, *Récits missionnaires illustrées* 20 (Paris: Société des missions évangéliques de Paris, 1924), 32.

¹⁶⁸ Slageren, *Les origines de l'Église Évangélique du Cameroun: Missions européennes et christianisme autochtone*, 140.

such as polygamy. Churches agreed on self-covering all expenses that were required. The issue with the polygamy was consented not to be tolerated within the church boundary.¹⁶⁹

3.3.2.2 *The Catholic Church*

The Pallottines continued their missions in Cameroon during the German colonial periods although they were not thoroughly ready and prepared for the mission, due to the missionary team hastily sent to Cameroon. They persevered on harmoniously and peacefully settling the Gospel in Cameroon without much disputes with the fore-established Protestant Churches. During the colonial administration, they inherited favorable conditions for their missionary work, for in 1907, the colonial administration gave the monopolizing authority to educate only to the Christian. The financial support of the colonial administration enhanced the Pallottines outstanding achievements of educating many young Cameroonians.¹⁷⁰

The Peace Treaty of Versailles signed in 1919 implied that French Spiritans replaced the Pallottines missionaries who had German background. Bishop François Xavier Vogt was transferred from Tanzania to Cameroon. Vogt in the time was one of the most remarkable bishops among the Spiritans in Africa. During his leadership in Cameroon, between 1922 and 1943, he undertook the task of leading one of the most extensive mass movements. In the period of 1916 to 1939, the Catholic population in Southern Cameroon increased nine fold. Ten years later, the Catholic community grew to over 1.3 million. Vogt was overwhelmed by the outgrowing number of believers. Vogt personally stressed on the importance of consolidating the existing congregations, while the Mission Pope insisted on further evangelizing the country stating that consolidations could be worked later on.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Slageren, *Les origines de l'Église Évangélique du Cameroun: Missions européennes et christianisme autochtone*, 142.

¹⁷⁰ Messina and Slageren, *Histoire du christianisme au Cameroun: Des origines à nos jours*, 143–144.

¹⁷¹ Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 755–756.

3.3.3 The Postcolonial Period

3.3.3.1 *The Protestant Church*

The Churches' postcolonial period could be characterized by their request of independence and the recognition of their equal status as cooperators for mission by the Western missionaries instead of subordinates. The movement for independence among some churches dates back to the colonial era. Since the ministry for evangelization was spreading at a faster speed than the Bible was being translated into local languages, neighboring ethnic communities of the large linguistic groups had to learn the Bible and worship in language other than their mother tongue. Such was the case of the Basa who had to use Bhulu for they were the larger ethnic groups. American missionaries had promised that they would translate the Bible in their own language, but the promise was not kept even 35 years later. On Christmas Day in 1933, the church leaders met and decided to sever all connections with their mother Church, the American Presbyterian mission and founded their own Independent Church that worshipped in their mother tongue.¹⁷²

The Moratorium called by the Kenyan John Gatu of Nairobi is one of the historic marks of the churches in the postcolonial period. His Presbyterian co-denominationalist of Douala, Jean Kotto, followed this movement. Being the general secretary of the Evangelical Church of Cameroon, he criticized the missionary societies, especially in the case of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, to perform a one-way traffic from the West to the Third World. Kotto emphasized on the necessity to have a two-way traffic for churches to gather for further evangelization in Cameroon. Such movements changed the attitudes of the Paris Mission who developed joint associations for missions.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Sundkler and Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa*, 753.

¹⁷³ Sundkler and Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa*, 959.

3.3.3.2 *The Catholic Church*

The Catholic Church's postcolonial era is marked with its outstanding scholars' who have contributed to the different aspects of the Cameroonian society. Engelbert Mveng published in 1963 a book entitled *Histoire du Cameroun* and became a leading historian in Cameroon. He is also known as an interpreter of African art and organized international conferences on the study of religion. In 1984, he was elected as member of the Académie des Sciences d'outre-mer in Paris. Jean-Marc Éla is another scholar who strongly influenced his works. After having studied at Sorbonne and Strasbourg, with a doctoral thesis on *The Transcendence of God and Human Existence according to Luther* in 1969, he published a number of books on theology, philosophy, and social sciences in Africa. His most famous work entitled *African Cry* shows how the Catholic Church should listen to the cries of the ground and allow African expressions of faith.¹⁷⁴

3.4 Key Features to Note from the Cameroonians

We have briefly skimmed through the society of Cameroon from its overall context to its nation's history and up to its church history. Then, what are the key features we are to note on which Cameroonians have undergone through the mentioned context? The keyword that underlies the nation and the church's history is transformation. The Cameroonian society constantly experienced change and this unstable situation produced fruits such as insecurity, paranoia, fear, and deficiency.

First, we are to note the transformation the society experienced through the nation's colonial history. Although the contemporary society underwent changes due to the influences from globalization and urbanization, this transition was mostly perceived positively because, the society voluntarily wanted and felt the need to adapt to this upcoming changes. However, when pondering on Cameroon's colonial history, we grasp that the nation underwent stages of transformations regardless of the inhabitants' opinions. The colonial period shows us how Cameroon was colonized by three European colonizers that are Germany, Britain, and France.

¹⁷⁴ Sundkler and Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa*, 958.

We might think that the colonial period of the African continent is a common phase that most African countries went through, yet it is to be highlighted that Cameroon is the only African nation that was colonized by three different rulers. The rulers sometimes broke the expectations of the indigenous people and even used violence against them in order to fill their greedy needs. The Douala chiefs turned over the sovereignty of the land to Germany to insure the security of their people from other dominant European nations, but it came to be that Germany itself triggered war against the inhabitants.¹⁷⁵ The unwilling drastic changes experienced repeatedly throughout the history would have created a sense of insecurity among the population. The Cameroonian society has a paranoia that an unwanted incident can destroy and suppress their life at any given time. Due to these traumas, they thirst for security. Through the nation's history, we presume how the repeatedly unwanted drastic transitions from the colonial period have molded a sense of insecurity and paranoia in the Cameroonian society. While analyzing the qualitative survey and developing a popular African Pneumatology, we will take such circumstances of the context into account.

Second, we are to note the ongoing transformation of the society during the postcolonial period that has further escalated the sense of insecurity by inputting fear and deficiency to the citizens. Cameroon finally became an independent nation and voted Ahidjo as the first president of the country. President Ahidjo pursued his goal of building up the nation. However, as a means of concentrating the power unto himself, he used fear. The fear of ethnic conflict inputted by the government enhanced their political strategy and Cameroon became an authoritarian and single party state. The insecurity of the inhabitants further developed during the presidency of Biya. The economic troubles triggered from the times of Ahidjo outburst. The Cameroonians underwent a time of economic crisis losing their jobs, having salary cuts, and having to face the reality of a deficient life.¹⁷⁶ For the people were not able to fill their basic needs, this became their preoccupation. The transition during the postcolonial period has formed a sense of fear and deficiency in the Cameroonian society. The understanding of such context will enhance our

¹⁷⁵ DeLancey, *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence*, 9.

¹⁷⁶ DeLancey and Benneh, "Cameroon".

investigation on the qualitative survey and further developing a relevant Africanized Pneumatology.

Third, we are to note how the transformation was not only restricted to the society but it also affected the churches in Cameroon. The church history in Cameroon also went through different stages of change. During the pre-colonial period, the missionaries from the London Baptist Society were among the most influential in the land. However, Cameroon colonized by Germany replaced the British missionaries and their missions by the Basler Mission. The turnover of Cameroon to the new colonial rulers France and Britain made the Paris Evangelical Mission Society take over the works of the Basler Mission. The churches in Cameroon were not able to mature with a mother church, but they underwent involuntary changes of their mother churches due to the colonial regime. Each European missionary would have had their way of expressing faith and the Cameroonian churches could have been quite preoccupied adapting to the newly arrived missionaries. Through such circumstances, we understand how the churches in Cameroon, which were supposed to be a place of refuge, also joined the unwilling drastic transitions. Some believers refused to cooperate with the newly arrived missionaries due to their affection to the former mission groups who were replaced due to the colonial regime. We will consider such context of the Cameroonian churches while heading forth to the next chapter, which will introduce the different ways African Churches have expressed their faiths.

We could summarize our comprehension of the Cameroonians and their context by remembering the keyword that underlines its history, which is transformation. The involuntary transition Cameroonian society experienced during the colonial period brought insecurity and paranoia to the inhabitants. The changes they underwent during the postcolonial period inputted fear and deficiency among the Cameroonians. The constant replacement of collaborating mother churches due to the colonial regime made the churches in Cameroon join the society on the involuntary and insecure phase of transition. Thus, the Cameroonian society thirsts for stability.

Chapter 4: Africanization of Christianity in the Urban Context

Chapter 3 has given us an overall image of the Cameroonian context where our investigation will be held. Our analysis on the Cameroonian context will revolve around the theme of African religiosity and urbanity, as the title of the thesis clearly states, “The Holy Spirit in an Urban African Religiosity.” African religiosity here in large part implies the Africanized Christianity for we are to ponder on how the African Christians understand the Holy Spirit. Urbanity refers to the dynamic stage of urbanization the African continent is currently undergoing. Therefore, this section of the thesis will pay closer attention to the themes revolving around the formerly mentioned contemporary African context, the Africanization of Christianity and the urbanization in Africa.

4.1 Africanization of Christianity

Christianity is one of the oldest religion in Africa. According to the Coptic tradition, it dates back to Mark who evangelized Egypt and became the Apostle of Alexandria until he was martyred.¹⁷⁷ Many theologians from the African Continent, such as Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Arius, Athanasius, Augustine, all have significantly contributed to the theological development of the early Christianity. Due to these spiritual pillars, Christianity once spread and flourished in the Northern Africa. Nevertheless, the Arab forces which invaded Egypt and the Northern Africa shortly after the death of Prophet Muhammad in 632 brought Christianity at risk.¹⁷⁸ The barbaric aggression of the Crusaders and the successive waves of Arab immigration into the continent during the middle ages further worsened the positions of the Christians who now barely survive as a minority in the Northern Africa.¹⁷⁹ Churches of the middle ages made their attempts to evangelize the continent from the first Portuguese ships

¹⁷⁷ Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: from Antiquity to the Present* (Michigan; New Jersey: William B. Eerdmans Publishing; Africa World Press Inc., 1995), 17.

¹⁷⁸ Sundkler and Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa*, 19.

¹⁷⁹ Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: from Antiquity to the Present*, 42.

which arrived on the West-Central African Kingdom of Kongo in 1483. Catholicism survived on the continent until a new wave of missionary activity began.¹⁸⁰ The resounding success of Christianity in Africa is marked by the missionary activities in 19th century that went hand in hand with the European colonization. Nevertheless, Christianity that suddenly expanded to a significant majority of Africans is now taking a distinctive form from that of their Western parent churches. The new emerging denominations or churches are entitled “African Independent Churches”.¹⁸¹ The first appearance of the new denomination emerged in Western and Southern Africa. Soon, more denominations arose from the Eastern and Central Africa. Researchers have found out that the genesis of such movement was as early as 1700 by a twenty years old woman named Donna Beatrice. She proclaimed that Christ came into the world as an African and had Black Apostles. This first appearance of a Black Christ ideology fascinated the attention of the African believers who yearned for a Christ that could empathize with the despised Africans.¹⁸² This section of the thesis will handle the reasons on the appearance of the African Independent Churches and the different forms it had developed into.

4.1.1 The Reasons Why African Independent Churches Emerged

We here could question on the reasons why a distinctive form of church, different from that of the Western parent churches, had to be founded in Africa. The break- away from the historic churches was not always intentional. The Kimbanguist church in Zaire started as a revival movement within the historic church. Yet, the activities they performed within the boundary of the historic church were above the acceptable limit of the Western church leaders, which led to the arrest of the founder of such movement. Simon Kimbangu, who was a prophet and a healer, the founder of the revival movement was charged by the Belgian government for

¹⁸⁰ Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: from Antiquity to the Present*, 45.

¹⁸¹ April A. Gordon and Donald L. Gordon, ed, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, second edition (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), 286.

¹⁸² M. L. Daneel, *Quest for Belonging: Introduction to a Study of African Independent Churches*, Mission-pastoral 17 (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1987), 46.

the subversive activities and was sentenced to death, which was later reduced to life-imprisonment. The Kimbanguist church, now known as the Church of Jesus Christ according to the Prophet Simon Kimbangu, is one of the largest new denominations in Zaire. Although there were some churches that broke away from the Western parent churches unintentionally, other Independent Churches deserted from their parent churches due to particular reasons.¹⁸³ This section of the thesis will highlight the major reasons that triggered the emergence of the African Independent Churches. The ignorance of the African tradition, the discrimination against the African believers, the reluctant reaction to the transforming society, and the Africanized interpretation of the Bible are the major causes why the Independent Churches arose in the African continent.

4.1.1.1 Ignorance of the African Tradition

The first reason why the African Independent Churches emerged is due to the ignorance of the African tradition and its culture. The churches founded by the missionaries were rigid and maintained their Westernized form that was identical to the churches of missionaries back at their home. The African believers wanted to feel more at ease at church and thus wanted an Africanized church atmosphere. However, the historic churches were ignorant of the spiritual needs to familiarize Christianity to the African believers. Instead of paying a close attention to the African tradition and encompassing its element as part of the familiarized African Christianity, they were ignorant and considered the African traditions as superstition or heathen. This ignorance and disregard to the African culture by the missionary founded churches has caused some believers to return secretly to the traditional practice in which they felt more familiar. Observing such phenomenon, some African leaders stood up with the movement to found Independent Churches that would base their ground on the African ethos.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Gordon and Gordon, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, 287.

¹⁸⁴ Gordon and Gordon, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, 287.

4.1.1.2 *Discrimination against the African Believers*

The second reason why African Independent Churches arose is the discrimination against the African believers. In most African countries, which were victims of colonialism, there existed a difference of status between the colonized Africans and the colonizing Europeans. Areas of residence were segregated between Africans and Europeans in most cities in Africa before the independence. This persisted to some extent even after the independence. The colonial worldview which promoted the unequal relationship between blacks and whites was transfused in the missionary churches.¹⁸⁵ Missionaries shared common worldviews with those of the colonialists and discriminated the African believers. Missionaries tolerated and practiced racism to the point of providing distinguished entries and sections into church. Such stance of the missionaries who violated what they preached triggered the African believers' resentments toward historic churches and their missionary leaders.¹⁸⁶

Another additional factor to the acrimony towards the missionary led church is the moratorium movement. The moratorium movement held in the mid-twentieth century asked an end of the Western missionary leadership and the turn over of the leadership to the African leaders on the mainline African Churches.¹⁸⁷ However, the reluctance or the refusal to turn over the church leadership to the African leaders instigated the African congregation towards independence from the parent church.

4.1.1.3 *Reaction to the transforming Society*

The third reason that prompt the appearance of the African Independent Church is the African reaction to the transforming society. The African society was undergoing a stage of dramatic transition and thus people expected expressions of Christian faith that were more

¹⁸⁵ Daneel, *Quest for Belonging: Introduction to a Study of African Independent Churches*, 81.

¹⁸⁶ Carl F. Hallencreutz and Ambrose Moyo, ed, *Church and state in Zimbabwe*, Christianity south of the Zambezi 3 (Geneva: Mambo Press, 1988), 446.

¹⁸⁷ Stephen T. Pardue, *The Spirit over the Earth: Pneumatology in the Majority World*, Majority World Theology (William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2016), 126.

relevant to the contemporary situation. African believers expected the church to react to the actuality of phenomenon they had to endure, which broadly covered the political situation and even the economic issues. However, the historic churches were not responding sensitively to the troubles they were undergoing. This caused the rise of the African Independent Churches which stood with the African believers and for the African believers. An example of such stance is the Church and the Children of Israel founded by Enoch Mgijima. The South African government designated certain lands for whites only and ordered black Africans to move out of the area. However, the congregation refused to move from the land and fought back against the governments' biased decision. Independent Churches in South Africa became a refuge and a source of resistance to the African believers.¹⁸⁸

4.1.1.4 Africanized Interpretation of the Bible

The fourth factor that influenced the rise of the African Independent Church was the translation of the Bible into African languages. The African believers were now able to interpret the Bible for themselves. This strongly influenced Christianity in Africa for they were able to connect personally and directly to the Word of God. The African believers started perceiving some differences between what the missionaries claimed and what the Bible said. Missionaries were silent about certain values of the Bible whereas they over emphasized and exaggerated certain passages. The African believers were also stroke with the similarity between their traditional worldview and that of the Old Testament. The missionaries condemned polygamy whereas they discovered that the Old Testament did not reproach it.¹⁸⁹ It even gave ground to some African believers to include ancestral spirits as part of their faith for the Fifth Commandment of the Bible sternly ordered to honor the parents. For them, the term parents included the ancestral spirits. The possibility to interpret and understand the Bible from an African perspective developed Africanized theologies and the rise of the African Independent

¹⁸⁸ Basil Davidson, *Modern Africa: A Social and Political History* (London: Longman, 1989), 26.

¹⁸⁹ Daneel, *Quest for Belonging: Introduction to a Study of African Independent Churches*, 84-85.

Churches. Some African Independent Churches have put a strong emphasis on the Bible and forewent to delivering five to six sermons during the service.¹⁹⁰

4.1.2 The Different Forms of the African Independent Church

The previous section has introduced the four major triggering factors that influenced the rise of the African Independent Churches. Ignorance of the African tradition, the discrimination against the African believers, the reluctant reaction to the transforming society, and the Africanized interpretation of the Bible were elements that influenced the rise of the African Independent Churches. However, not all the African Independent Churches' developed spirituality in a similar way but they flourished taking varied forms. The three representative forms in which the Independent Churches developed into are the Spirit-type Churches, the Ethiopian-Type Churches, and the Messianic Churches.

4.1.2.1 The Spirit-type Churches

The first type of the African Independent Churches is the Spirit-type Churches. They are also referred to as Zionist Churches because they often self-address using the name Zion. The driving force behind this Spirit-type Churches movement was inspired by an apocalyptic church founded in the United States, in 1896, by John Alexander Dowie. This church emphasized divine healing and the second coming of Christ. In 1904, a member of this congregation visited South Africa and baptised a group of converts in which one of the converts was named P.L. le Roux. In that year le Roux and other African leaders established the Zion Apostolic Church. This church became the ground in which the movement flourished for pioneers of Zionism in Rhodesia named Makamba, Mtisi, and Masuka all became involved. Masuka returning to Rhodesia took charge of the post of chief representative of Mhlangu's church for many years, Mtisi founded his own Zion City near Umtali, and Makamba established a Zion Apostolic

¹⁹⁰ Gordon and Gordon, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, 287.

Church in the Bikita district. This Zion movement developed into numerous varied groups such as the Zion Protestant Church, the Zion Sabbath Church, the Zion Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, etc.¹⁹¹

These types of churches put a great emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit and are charismatic. The churches attentions are mostly focused on visible signs and works of the Holy Spirit such as healing, prophecy, speaking in tongues, dreams, and visions. The congregation have an inclination to anticipate practical benefits from the religion over other worldly salvations. They generally appeal to African people who are aggrieved by the destruction of the African socio-cultural norms.¹⁹² The Spirit-type Churches strongly forbid its believers to have any connections with the African Traditional Religion.¹⁹³

The African Independent Churches I have surveyed in Cameroon, which will be identified as Independent Church 3 and Independent Church 4 in the following chapters, could be categorized as fitting under this form of the Independent movement. The historical context of Cameroon mentioned from the previous chapter, provides support on why the believers in Cameroon could be inclined toward the Spirit-type movements. The context of insecurity, paranoia, fear, and deficiency led them to anticipate immediate and visible results that could bring practical benefits to free them from the current situation. This expectation joins the Spirit-type churches emphasis of the visible signs and works of the Holy Spirit that could bring practical benefits.

4.1.2.2 *The Ethiopian-type Churches*

The second representative form of the African Independent Churches is the Ethiopian-type Churches. This form of Independent Church has its root on the protest movements against

¹⁹¹ Daneel, *Quest for Belonging: Introduction to a Study of African Independent Churches*, 54-55.

¹⁹² Terence O. Ranger, *Religious Movements and Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa*, vol 29, African Studies Review (New Jersey: African Studies Association), 3.

¹⁹³ Donald George Morrison, Robert Cameron Mitchell and John Naber Paden, *Understanding Black Africa: Data and Analysis of Social Change and Nation Building* (New York: Irvington, 1989), 76.

the missionary churches that were dominated by the white missionaries, which had a tendency to have a similar stance to that of the repressive colonial regime. The pioneer of such movement is Mangena Mokone a Methodist minister who in 1892 protested against racial segregation and founded the Ethiopian Church. He stated, “No African pastor is respected by the White brethren... The white pastors do not even know the members of their own congregations. They always build their own houses one or two miles away from their parish. The separation shows that we cannot be brothers.”¹⁹⁴ Such statement could be easily grasped when we understand the context in which Mokone spoke. In the colonial time, church developed under a patriarchal atmosphere. Due to the close bond between missionaries living in the rural areas and the congregations, they were often referred to as ‘father’ and ‘mother’. However, the missionaries in the cities chose to live away from their African congregation and Mokone has emphasized on this point. Mokone referring to Psalm 68:31, “Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God” interpreted it as a promise to evangelize Africa. He believed that the promise comprised the self-governance of the African church by the African leaders.¹⁹⁵

The Ethiopian-Type Churches mostly located in Southern and Eastern Africa have their origins between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. They empathize with the oppressed black Africans and inspire them with the hope of liberation. They are non-prophetic movements and do not emphasis on the works of the Holy Spirit.¹⁹⁶ These type of churches have a propensity to maintain a similar doctrine and policy to that of the parent church from which they broke away. Nevertheless, they have replaced the leadership stressing on the African led church.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Erhard Kamphausen, *Anfänge der kirchlichen Unabhängigkeitsbewegung in Südafrika: Geschichte und Theologie der Äthiopischen Bewegung 1872-1912*, Studien Zur Interkulturellen Geschichte des Christentums (Hamburg: Bern Lang Frankfurt, 1976), 117.

¹⁹⁵ Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa*, 424.

¹⁹⁶ Gordon and Gordon, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, 299.

¹⁹⁷ Pardue, *The Spirit over the Earth: Pneumatology in the Majority World*, 126.

4.1.2.3 *The Messianic Churches*

The third type of the African Independent Churches is the Messianic Churches. Some researchers group this movement as similar to the Spirit-type churches. Such identification is comprehensible when considering the fact that both movements are prophetic, however this distinctive trait is that in Messianic Churches, their leaders' status are elevated to that of a Black Messiah. The African leader of the congregation has a prophetic power, and performs a unique role of mediating the believers and God. In some extreme cases, the place of Jesus Christ seems to be replaced by a Black Messiah, who is to some extent deified.¹⁹⁸

There is a diversified perspective on viewing the role of the African Church leaders in the messianic movements. Daneel grounding on his personal research on the messianic movement concludes that, these congregations did not replace Christ with a Black Messiah.¹⁹⁹ On the other hand, Oosthuizen claims such movement stresses more on a man's personal spiritual powers thus denying the authority and kingship of Jesus.²⁰⁰ Martin supports the messianic movement has usurped the role of Christ and has replaced it with the Black Messiah, by referring to the messianic leadership as the "controller of the keys" to the gates of Heaven. They will control and only admit their own followers to Paradise.²⁰¹

The interesting factor is that when we contrast Independent Church movements in Cameroon, there surprisingly are no noticeable movements of Messianic Churches. There were few tentative locally founded Messianic Churches but they were without success. One was in 1925 and it was named the Holy Spirit Church. Another started in 1953 by Thong Likeng in Douala and named the Liyomba Church. However, these two attempts faded away in the history. The reasons why the Messianic movements were not able to blossom in Cameroon is probably due to the government's hostile stance against them and their little popular resonance.²⁰² The

¹⁹⁸ Daneel, *Quest for Belonging: Introduction to a Study of African Independent Churches*, 41.

¹⁹⁹ Daneel, *Quest for Belonging: Introduction to a Study of African Independent Churches*, 41.

²⁰⁰ Oosthuizen, *Post-Christianity in Africa: A Theological and Anthropological Study*, 89.

²⁰¹ Marie-Louise Martin, *The Biblical Concept of Messianism* (Morija: M. Sesuto Book Depot, 1964), 125-127.

²⁰² Séverin Cécile Abéga, ed., *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne* (Yaoundé, Paris: Presses de l'Université catholique d'Afrique centrale, Karthala, 2000), 68.

government referred here as having the hostile stance is the colonial regime for Cameroon was colonized until 1960.

4.2 Urbanization in Africa

The continent of Africa experienced the fastest urbanization in the world, between 2005 and 2010, with an annual growth rate of over 3 percent. Although the African countries that were predominantly urban were mostly concentrated in Northern and Southern Africa, the rapid urbanization nowadays is a widespread phenomenon across the entire continent.²⁰³ For the thesis ponders on the transformation of the African religiosity on urbanity, a brief but impactful overview of the urbanization in Africa will enhance our study. The urbanization of Africa will be overviewed by highlighting the history of urbanization and the effects urbanization has on the African society. Due to the field of survey that will be done in Cameroon, special attention will be paid to the Sub-Saharan part of the continent, especially Cameroon.

4.2.1 History of Urbanization in Africa

The history of urbanization in Africa is characterized in two distinguished phases: the colonial period and the post-colonial period. During the colonial period, the key influential factor of urbanization was the forced labors. The migrations due to labors appeared with the emergence of plantation industries and opening of mines. The forced migration was mainly a movement from the interior colonies, such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Chad, toward the coastal countries such as Ivory Coast, Senegal, and Cameroon in order to support the labor works in demand.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles, and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 3.

²⁰⁴ Philippe Bocquier and Sadio Traoré, *Urbanisation et dynamique migratoire en Afrique de l'Ouest: la croissance urbaine en panne* (Paris, Montréal: Harmattan, 2000), 24.

The post-colonial period in Africa is marked with a urbanization without industrialization. Urbanization is a secular process of entering into the world capitalist community. Although cities have always existed on the African continent, its level of urbanization was strongly influenced by the continent's integration into the global economy. After the independence of the African nations, its national economies expanded their horizon on exportations and did not pay much attention on further developing the industries. The result of the exporting strategy was not that successful and instead agriculture and industries of mine extractions were settled.²⁰⁵ Wealth generated from the industries of mine extractions had no relevance on reducing poverty and ameliorating the lives of the African population for the profit were divided only between much-narrowed groups of elites.²⁰⁶ The African governments' failure to implant efficient infrastructures brought the consequences of an urbanization without industrialization.²⁰⁷ The urbanization of the African continent brought a rapid growth of urban population, but the poorly formed infrastructure and facilities were not able to support the population growth rate, thus it resulted in the decline of the quality of life in urban cities.²⁰⁸

4.2.1.1 Urban Population Policy in Africa

The growth of the urban population in Africa far exceeded the cities' capacity to handle its inhabitants. This growth is due to high natural birthrates and migrations from the rural areas. However, such growth exceeds the labor market offered by the cities and thus results in 40% or more of the employment being informal. The phenomenon of supply exceeding demand causes decrease in wages and make its more difficult for the population to meet the high urban living

²⁰⁵ Bocquier and Traoré, *Urbanisation et dynamique migratoire en Afrique de l'Ouest : la croissance urbaine en panne*, 27.

²⁰⁶ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 2.

²⁰⁷ Bocquier and Traoré, *Urbanisation et dynamique migratoire en Afrique de l'Ouest : la croissance urbaine en panne*, 27.

²⁰⁸ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 1.

standards. The private sector fails to meet the needs of the constituents, further worsening the condition of most African cities.²⁰⁹

Most African governments, recognizing their failures to control the urban population growth, have tried to deal with the rapid population growth in two different strategies. The first strategy is to discourage migration to the major cities. Such action includes efforts to upgrade the living conditions of the rural areas in order to prevent migration to the urbanity. An example of such policy could be observed in Cameroon where in the 1980s young farmers earned higher incomes had more training programs, and increased financial aids. The government further planned to invest more to improve the infrastructure such as roads, electricity, schools, and ameliorated public health centers.²¹⁰ However, the overall evaluation of this strategy shows that it was neither very successful nor had much effect on the migration.²¹¹ The second strategy was to develop policies that improved the conditions in the cities. Governments decided to ameliorate living conditions by destroying the squatter settlements and removing unwanted migrants in order to control the overpopulation. Still, these efforts were unsuccessful because the migrants had a tendency to return to the city, reconstruct their shelter on similar or even on the original sites where they had been chased off.²¹²

4.2.1.2 Urbanization Trend in Africa

Cameroon is one of the African countries that is undergoing the fastest growth of urbanization. This process of transformation is not only a phenomenon happening in the country but a continent wide trend. Let us have an overall look on how the African continent is undergoing a phase of alteration. The urbanization trend in Africa could be typified by regions

²⁰⁹ Gordon and Gordon, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, 181.

²¹⁰ April A. Gordon and Donald L. Gordon, "Cameroon's Urban and Rural Problems: Flipsides of the Same Coin" (University of Florida Press, 1988), 13.

²¹¹ Richard E. Stren and Rodney R. White, *African Cities in Crisis: Managing Rapid Urban Growth* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), 307.

²¹² Gordon and Gordon, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, 182.

for not all parts of the continent are undergoing a similar phase of urbanization. Yet a common factor is that the whole continent is undergoing a rapid stage of urbanization each at its stage.

Northern and Southern Africa are among the most predominantly urbanized regions in Africa. The majority of the population in Northern Africa lives in urban areas, with the exception of Egypt and Sudan. In 2010, the proportion of urban population was 77.9% in Libya, 66.5% in Algeria, and 56.7% in Morocco. However, Egypt and Sudan had a proportion of urban population that was lower than 50%. Southern Africa, which was the most urbanized region in the continent for the last two decades, accounts of 59% of its population dwelling in urbanity and this number is expected to increase up to 69% in 2030 and to 78% in 2050. Western Africa only had 33.2% of its population living in urban areas in the 1990. Nevertheless, this number jumped from 200% to 137.2 million by 2010. During this period, other five countries in the Western Africa, which are Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Liberia, exceeded 50% of its population living in the urbanity. It is expected that the entire region will be mostly urbanized by 2020. Central Africa could be numbered as the second least urbanized region in Africa. Around 43% of its population lived in urban areas in 2010. Yet, this region is rapidly pursuing the rest of the continent as its urban population growth rate has been the highest since 2005. Gabon has been the most urbanized country in the region with 86% of urban population and Chad is the least urbanized country with 27% of urban population. We note here that Cameroon, one of the most rapidly urbanized countries during the last decade has had an urban population growth rate of 8.5%, due to the fossil fuel boom. Eastern Africa remained mostly rural and is identified as the least urbanized region in the continent with 23.7% of its population living in urbanity in 2010. Only 11% of Burundi, 13.3% of Uganda, 17.6% of Ethiopia, and 18.9% of Rwanda population lived in the urban areas. It is anticipated that in 2030 a third of the East African population will live in urban areas and in 2050 half of the population will still be living in the rural regions, thus making it the least urbanized region in the continent for now and for many more years to come.²¹³

²¹³ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 3–5.

The fore-mentioned 8.5% of urban population growth rate per year in Cameroon reveals the country's dynamic movement toward urbanization. The typical trend of urbanization in Cameroon is not only the inhabitants gathering on the major cities such as Douala and Yaoundé but also the government's efforts to create new cities. This process of urbanization in Cameroon started accelerating with its independence. From 1960 to 2005, the number of cities with more than 5000 inhabitants exploded from 41 cities to 298 cities. In 45 years, there has been 800% increase in the number of cities. The multiple villages that have grown their sizes into cities have been due to government policy that focuses not only on forming couple major cities but also on creating multiple cities throughout the country.²¹⁴

4.2.2 The Effects of Urbanization in the African Society

Urbanization in Africa is characterized by an urbanization without industrialisation.²¹⁵ African cities with neither well formed infrastructure nor proficient economic growth had to face the rapid growth of population that went beyond the critical point the society could hold. Such unstable and unbalanced processes of transformation surely have brought changes and effects to the society and its component. Although there are other numerous effects of urbanization than the ones mentioned, our thesis will focus on the poverty, secularization, and the crisis of the familial relationship.

4.2.2.1 Poverty

The rapid growth of the urban population in most African cities and the mismatch of the economic growth rates have plural consequences such as high rates of inflation, deepened poverty, polarisation of incomes, fast growing rates of unemployment, and homelessness in

²¹⁴ Fodouop, *Le Cameroun: Autopsie d'une exception plurielle en Afrique*, 61-64.

²¹⁵ Bocquier and Traoré, *Urbanisation et dynamique migratoire en Afrique de l'Ouest : la croissance urbaine en panne*, 28.

major African cities.²¹⁶ In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is estimated that 42% of the total population is living in extreme poverty. Another observation made on the Sub-Saharan Africa's urban population is that 62% live in slums.²¹⁷ Therefore, poverty due to rapid population growth and poor infrastructure of cities that cannot contain the enlarged population could be considered as a trait that typifies urbanization in the African cities. The situation is not that different in urbanized cities in Cameroon. Marie Mengue, who investigated poverty in the city of Yaoundé, stated that, poverty is a reality people have to live with in their daily lives. It degrades their lifestyle and quality of life with effects such as unemployment, lowered wages, elevated cost of life, destabilized families, violence, and insecurity.²¹⁸ This section of analyzing the effects of urbanization such as poverty, will be mostly based on her studies undertaken in Yaoundé. I would like to introduce the voices of the 276 people she investigated, think about the causes of poverty in urbanity and, their attitudes toward poverty as urban dwellers.²¹⁹ There are two main reasons why I am taking a close interest at Mengue's study. First, we are both carrying out a study on identical terrain although from different perspectives. While hers will be from a socio-economical view, mine is going to be from a religious background. Second, she places a strong emphasis on what the voices on the ground have to say about their experience of urbanization and poverty. Their contributions are anticipated to enrich my studies on the effect urbanization and poverty could have on the African religiosity.

4.2.2.1.1 The Causes of Poverty

Mengue's work illustrates how the urban population in Yaoundé understands the cause of poverty in Cameroon urban cities. . The voices she analysed, attribute the four major causes

²¹⁶ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 137.

²¹⁷ UN-Habitat, "State of the World's Cities 2010/2011: Bridging the Urban Divide" (Nairobi: UN-Habitat, 2010).

²¹⁸ Séverin Cécile Abéga, ed, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne* (Yaoundé, Paris: Presses de l'Université catholique d'Afrique centrale, Karthala, 2000), 413.

²¹⁹ Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 418.

of poverty in Yaoundé to the government, the influence of colonial forces, the lack of workplace, and witchcraft.

Mengue's sampled population perceives the Cameroonian government as the primary cause of poverty and disorder prevalent in the country. According to them, the government itself is at the center of all corruption, nepotism, and theft.²²⁰ Although the voices of the urban population blaming the government could seem a little blunt, Solomon Mulugeta on his chapter entitled *Upgrading Informal Settlements in African Cities* makes a claim that supports their statement. He states that the inappropriate urban policy and the weak institutional capacity proceeding the policy are the main cause of the low quality of life in African urbanity. Thus, his study is also blaming the governments for the current urban situation in African cities. They do not have a clear and effective policy and the local governments are not able to live out the policy framed at the national level.²²¹

Second factor that was perceived as the cause of poverty by the respondents were the European colonial forces that still influence Africa directly and indirectly. The participants claim, "You want to ask me on what poverty is? Ask the Europeans so that they can account on what they have done to Africa." The respondents have the feeling of resentments that blames the European colonial forces to have unjustly dealt toward the African nations.²²² Such statement could be acknowledged to be partially true for the colonial cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, characterized by the separation between blacks and whites. Very little resources were applied to develop the urban areas in which the Africans used to live. This situation comes in contrasts with most of the Northern African cities, which were developed and treated in a similar way.²²³ In Sub-Saharan Africa, such as Cameroon, the poorly and unevenly developed infrastructure inherited from the colonial forces was not able to sustain the post-colonial urban

²²⁰ Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 420.

²²¹ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 139.

²²² Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 420.

²²³ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 8.

growth that was triggered by the rural migration and natural growth, thus the quality of life in urban in Africa collapsed.

Third element that is causing poverty in Yaoundé, perceived by the participants of the Survey of Mengue was the lack of work. Some interviewees have accounted that the lack of work gave them no other choice than to indulge in alcohol and prostitution. One women states, “If I worked, I would not be drinking my beer. I can not refuse a man, because I can not live like that.”²²⁴ The lack of work is closely related to the two previously mentioned causes of poverty namely, the current national government and the former governing colonial forces. These old and current governing forces both have not done an appropriate work of properly structuring and developing the infrastructure of the cities in Africa. However, although the infrastructures were not properly done, the population started outgrowing the economic capacity of the city, which led to unemployment. Some scholars even perceive unemployment to be one of the characteristics representing urbanization in Western Africa.²²⁵

Fourth cause of poverty claimed by the participants of the survey is witchcraft. An interviewee says, “The situation of poverty that I am living in today is a curse of the witches from my village. I cannot do anything, it is like they have tied me with a string and are pulling it.” Mengue notes that poverty plunges Cameroonians into a sort of schizophrenia, pushing them to adhere to the beliefs in witchcraft that, throughout Cameroon and Africa in general, becomes the model of interpreting misfortune. The power of such beliefs does not help them cope with their present situation and envision future. Instead, it sinks them into fear and anguish, or rather into a despair that renders them inactive.²²⁶ The colonial assumption of witchcraft was that it was a prescientific interpretation of happenings. Therefore, the colonial courts understood the witchcraft belief to be a result of being uneducated and that with education and modernization such beliefs would disappear. However, the postcolonial official perception of witchcraft is different. They understand it as an active resistance against

²²⁴ Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 421.

²²⁵ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 5.

²²⁶ Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 423.

modernization and development. If during the colonial system, those accused of performing witchcraft were set free because it was impossible to prove the crime in the court, the postcolonial courts began to approach witchcraft as a societal crime and courts are mandated to punish them.²²⁷ A Cameroonian state attorney's appeal before the court supports the surveyed respondents' criticism, on witchcraft to be the source of poverty and poor development of their area, is a feeling shared among the society. He states, "We are all Africans. We should not pretend that witchcraft does not exist. It is very much alive here in the East Province. We cannot allow all these primitive villagers to threaten government agents who are transferred to work here in the East. It is witchcraft that is drawing back development in this province."²²⁸ The postcolonial African societies and governments are perceiving witchcraft as a major societal virus and a hindrance to development.²²⁹ We will see witchcraft often referred to throughout the thesis for it occupies a significant part on the lives of the Africans.

4.2.2.1.2 Attitudes toward Poverty

There are three distinctive attitudes the inhabitants surveyed by Mengue undertake toward poverty. There are those who renounce poverty. Some others work hard to overcome poverty. The remaining groups are those who rely on religion and expect God to help them overcome poverty.

One of the attitudes the inhabitants of Yaoundé demonstrate toward poverty is renouncement. The statement of an interviewee clearly illustrates such stance. "Ah! I do not care. We are poor, so what? I drink my beer when I get the opportunity and I fall asleep." People

²²⁷ Henrietta L. Moore and Todd Sanders, ed., *Magical Interpretations, Material Realities: Modernity, Witchcraft, and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (London; New York: Routledge, 2001), 237.

²²⁸ C. Fisiy, *Palm Tree Justice in the Bertoua Court of Appeal: The Witchcraft Cases* (Leiden: African Studies Centre, 1990).

²²⁹ Moore and Sanders, *Magical Interpretations, Material Realities: Modernity, Witchcraft, and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*, 235.

with this stance are those who are deceived by their poor state of life yet they do not have the motivation to do something about it. They are lethargic.²³⁰

Another attitude the citizens have toward poverty is those who are working hard in order to overcome poverty. They hope that one day things could change. They fight against poverty hoping that one day their living conditions can improve. Those identified in this category use the following expressions as habits: “I try hard,” “That is how we fight against it,” “Fortunately, I am defending myself,” “We have to do all we can do, so that we could find something to eat.” Respondents who are grouped in this classification comprehend life as a battle. Only those who endure and believe they can win could overcome this battlefield.²³¹

The last group of people are those whom rely on religion. Out of those whom rely on the religion, their attitude is once again differentiated into two different reactions. First are those whom do nothing and just hope that God will take care of them. They just assume that by praying, they will be provided with the money and the goods they need. The other category is those who say, “Help yourself and Heaven will help you.” For them, just praying does not help unless they decide to take initiatives to do something about the given situation. You have to pray about your given situation but you also have to work. For those with the previously mentioned reactions awaiting God to do everything, church is inducing drowsiness with words of comforts. For those categorized on the latter, the church is inducing hope and motivation for them to take a stance and make a change.²³²

The religion mentioned by the participants to be a way to react to poverty is Christianity for although they do not mention the term Christianity, they use the term church. Overlooking Megue’s socio-economical study on poverty in urbanity, we could realize how the respondents blame witchcraft, which is closely intertwined with their traditional beliefs, to be a cause of poverty. As a reaction to poverty, they decide to rely on the Christian God. The observation that poverty experienced by the urban population is increasing their religiosity to depend on God is also supported through other researches. Takyi supports that economic conditions in Africa are

²³⁰ Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 424.

²³¹ Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 425.

²³² Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 426.

partly responsible for the growth of religiosity among the Africans. Ghana, being the most religious nations in the world, has experienced how its population turned to God to provide their needs during the time of hardship in the late 1970s and 1980s. It is speculated among scholars that in many postcolonial African countries, the economic conditions have affected the upsurge of the African religiosity, with a remark on Christianity in particular.²³³

4.2.2.2 *Secularization*

The significant transformations are in process throughout many parts of the African continent since its independence from European colonization. There are rise on the level of education, developments of technologies, enlargements of the middle classes, and high levels of urbanization. This section of the thesis will investigate the influence secularization plays on the African religiosity.

Some scholars claim that these modernized societies are becoming more secular and thus less religious. Zukerman defines secularization as the historical process where religion weakens, fades, or loses its hegemonic dominance or public significance.²³⁴ Most sociologists comprehend secularization as the handmaiden of modernisation. The rural-based harmonious and unified society breaks down and the monopolized worldview from the perspective of religion collapses giving room for unbelief to stand as another option.²³⁵ Thus, secularization generally gives the impression to lessen religiosity in societies. The trend of the decreased religiosity could be understood as a worldwide phenomenon. The research done by the Win-Gallup International, which had foregone a study on more than 50,000 people from 57 countries,

²³³ Phil Zuckerman and John R. Shook, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Secularism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 204.

²³⁴ Phil Zuckerman, ed., *Atheism and Secularity*, vol 2 (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, 2010), viii.

²³⁵ Callum G. Brown and Michael Snape, ed., *Secularisation in the Christian World* (London; New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

analyzed that since 2005 world's religiosity dropped by 9 percent while atheism rose by 3 percent.²³⁶

However, secularization in the African continent seems to play a different role than it did on the rest of the world. Instead of religion fading in many parts of the Sub-Saharan Africa, the societies which have adapted modernized and globalized world have not yet been affected on their religiosity and belief systems. Unlike the Western countries which report the decline of faith and the growth of atheism, the opposite phenomenon is happening in many parts of Africa.²³⁷ Studies on Africa have reported increased religiosity and a significant decline of people who claim to be non-religious.²³⁸ The Global Index of Religiosity and Atheism (2012) supports with its data that Ghana and other African nations rank among the most religious countries in the world. 96 percent of Ghanaians consider themselves religious, 93 percent of Nigerians identify themselves religious, and 88 percent of people from Kenya claim to be religious. Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya are among the most religious countries in the world.²³⁹ In the African continent, roughly nine out of ten people say religion is very important in their lives. This is in total contrast when compared to the adults surveyed in the United States for 72 percent of them answered religion is not relevant in their lives or that it was losing influence.²⁴⁰ Such tendency of the African nations is in complete contrast to the global trend which has fewer religious population and increased number of nonreligious population. Whereas the world is becoming less religious, the African continent is rather becoming more religious. Mengue's study introduced on section 4.2.2.1 on poverty also depicts how the contemporary Cameroonian society has a propensity to be significantly religious for they resolve their deficit situation to be caused by witchcraft and they also conclude the solution of the phenomena to be Christianity. Although secularization has influenced the Cameroonian society, the contemporary society

²³⁶ "Global Index of Religiosity and Atheism" (Win-Gallup International, 2012), 6.

²³⁷ Zuckerman and Shook, *The Oxford Handbook of Secularism*, 202.

²³⁸ Zuckerman and Shook, *The Oxford Handbook of Secularism*, 203.

²³⁹ « Global Index of Religiosity and Atheism », 4.

²⁴⁰ Michael Lipka, "Is Religion's declining Influence Good or Bad? Those without Religious Affiliation are divided" (Pew Research Center, 2014), <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/09/23/is-religions-declining-influence-good-or-bad-those-without-religious-affiliation-are-divided/>.

understands the cause and the solution of the phenomena to be strongly intertwined with their religiosity.

4.2.2.3 *Crisis of the Familial Relationships*

The rapid growth of the urban population that went beyond the critical point of the current socio-economic infrastructure of the African cities has led to an uncontrollable situation. Due to the consequences, the urbanity in Africa is undergoing inflation, poverty, unemployment, homelessness, etc. However, the migration from the rural area did not only affect the government and the urban society but also its components who personally had to welcome the visit and migration of their relatives from the rural areas. The urban life in the African cities is comprised of the practice of welcoming the frequent visit of the families who are living in the rural area. A study performed by Gerhard Mey and Hermann Spirik in the urbanized city of Cameroon illustrates how 25 percent of the respondents desire to limit such visits and 20 percent are even willing to alienate from such practice. Close to half of the population living in urbanity are considering limiting their families' visits or even restricting their visits. The interviewees who are considering the devaluation of such custom point out that the practical exchanges between the cities and the villages are highly imbalanced. The rural people take advantages offered from the urbanity without being aware of the fact that such exchanges are imposing significant burdens to their hosts.²⁴¹

The propensity to limit or alienate this type of familial relationship is more characterised among the people who are more educated and have a higher socio-economic status. Such results are paradoxical for we could speculate that someone who has a prosperous life in the city should feel less burdened and more favorable to the familial visit. However, it is not the case in the

²⁴¹ Gerhard Mey and Hermann Spirik, *La famille Africaine en milieu urbain : Enquête socio-économique réalisée à Yaoundé (Cameroun)* (Yaoundé, 1975).

urbanized cities in Africa. The influence of the modern and secularized cultures is impacting the elites in the cities to devalue the tradition and the familial relationships.²⁴²

The urban population severing their familial relationship with those of the village is also linked with the ruptures of their traditions. In 1950, the explosive growth of Douala grandly demanded for laborers. The needs were filled with massive population from the West of Cameroon infiltrating into the city. This significant number of immigrants' arrival could have changed the composition of the religious map of Douala, increasing the portion of the African Traditional Religion since the majority of them were adhering to their traditional belief. However, unlike what was expected, not much happened in the religious map of Douala. There were two major reasons why the religious map of Douala did not change although a large number of immigrants from the west flowed in. First, Douala was far away from their villages where the traditional religious ceremonies had to be performed. Second, meaningful numbers of the incomers were hoping to pursue a different lifestyle than that they used to have in the village.²⁴³ Therefore, we can observe how one of the effects of urbanization is the change of their familial relationship and that change had an impact on their religiosity. If the immigrants were faithfully adhering to their traditional religion it should have changed Douala's religious map, yet it was not the case. This implies that the newly arrived immigrants' religiosity had been absorbed into the existing urbanized religiosity. Their typical forms of practiced and distinctive traditional religions are dissolved into a generalized urban African religiosity. This thesis is taking interest in this form of urban African religiosity.

²⁴² André Franqueville, *Une Afrique entre le village et la ville : Les migrations dans le sud du Cameroun*, Orstom (Paris, 1987), 205.

²⁴³ Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 69.

PART III. Survey on Lay African Christians’ Understanding of the Holy Spirit

Chapter 5: Methodological Strategies of the Survey

The literature review on the African comprehension of the Holy Spirit, while mentioning on the debate of the Africanized Pneumatology, has highlighted how theologians look at the same picture, but draw different conclusions. Looking at the African believers’ comprehension of the Holy Spirit, some interpret it in continuity with the traditional spirits and others conclude that it is in discontinuity with the traditional spirits. The debate that seems to be irreconcilable triggered my attention on what the actual voices on the terrain claim on their understanding of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this thesis had decided to forego a survey that will raise the unheard voices of the terrain.

5.1 Epistemological Postures

This thesis’ survey will be basing its stance on two important epistemological postures in order to perceive the concept of the African Pneumatology. The two epistemological postures are “the Grounded Theory” and “the Theory of Stranger”. These two epistemological stances seemed best to describe the uniqueness and the originality of this project.

5.1.1 The Grounded Theory

The Grounded Theory, introduced by Glaser and Strauss, is a theory made from the result given from the terrain. The theory grasped from the ground would be closely linked to the results of the survey. Therefore, it will be hard for others to refute the theory or to have an outcome

that states the contrary.²⁴⁴ The reason on the selection of the Grounded Theory as an epistemological stance is due to the forerunning theologians whom are in strong disagreement on the way they interpret the given phenomena. Uzukwu and Michael are both Nigerian theologians whom have observed the phenomena on Nigerian churches but have given different interpretations about the occurring situations. We are to note that they have not done any explicit survey in order to support their interpretations. All they have done was a logico-deductive theory of their personal observations, basing solely upon their theological stances and opinions. To quash this discord and to clarify on how the African Christians' perceive the Holy Spirit, this project is bringing light to what the terrain has to say about the matter. Asking lay Christians who are church members of different theological stances, would give us a better idea on how the African Christians actually perceive the Holy Spirit in their faith and would give clues on how to resolve this ongoing debate persisting on the theological field.

5.1.2 The Theory of Stranger

The second epistemological posture that is framing this project is the Theory of Stranger introduced by Georg Simmel (1908). Simmel, questing for objectivity, reinforces it through the Theory of Stranger. Simmel understands objectivity as a combination of proximity and of distance. Being objective for an observation or an interpretation means to be attached and to have interest but to also have a certain distance from the group itself. A stranger researcher's approach will be more objective, more detached from the traditions, and independent from the academic prejudices settled by the predecessors.²⁴⁵ Although this project will first base its stance on the Grounded Theory, it is inevitable for the researcher to proceed into any form of interpretations of the collected data. Being a non-African researcher leads me to have critics on my qualification for the interpretation of the collected data. It is here that the epistemological stance of the Stranger best fits my positioning as a researcher. Thus, objectivity is an unachievable idealization, my stance as a stranger better positions me to be comparatively more

²⁴⁴ Barney Glaser and Anselm L Strauss, *Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 4.

²⁴⁵ Georg Simmel, *Soziologie*, Collection Hoffmann (Leipzig: Duncan und Humblot, 1908), 55-56.

objective than the researchers from the ground. Fansaka Bernard Biniama (2010) remarks how the process of theologizing by the African theologians is influenced by their attachment to the culture and the traditional religion. He states this attachment will lead to captivity in the cultural dogma and to the adoration of the culture.²⁴⁶ Not being attached to the practice of the traditional religion will enable me to have a step back, to be distanced, and cold for the interpretation. On the other hand, my 17 years of youth spent in Cameroon observing these syncretistic phenomena and wondering with curiosity on how to understand the African Christians' perception will be sufficient to demonstrate my affection and proximity towards the African Christians.

5.2 Sample Selection

In order to understand the contemporary urban African believers' perception of the Holy Spirit, a quantitative study and a qualitative study was necessary. Each study needed a sample selection that fitted its own criteria and goal. The following section will describe the sample selection for the quantitative and the qualitative survey.

5.2.1 Sample Selection for the Quantitative Survey

The quantitative study proceeded in two African Independent Churches and two Evangelical Churches. Two hundred respondents, with the quota of 50 volunteers per church, were chosen to represent the congregation and the tendency of the church. The reason two churches from each theological orientations were chosen was to reinforce the validation of the collected data. If two churches with the similar theological orientation exposed similar results, it would depict the particularity theological orientation plays on the understanding of the Holy Spirit.

²⁴⁶ Biniama, *L'incarnation de Jésus-Christ et les traditions abrahamiques en JN 8: Un christianisme africain à la façon de l'ancien testament*, 119.

The results of the quantitative survey will illustrate a person's perception on the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. By the term 'perception', it implies a combined understanding of the existence, dependence, and influence by the spiritual being. This thesis defines the existential acknowledgement from the mind, a relying dependence of the heart, and influential effects on the daily lives as a generalized perception of the spiritual being. The participants will be categorized according to their degree of perception towards the spirits and the Holy Spirit. The degree of perception will be measured by the participants' scale of attachment, frequency, and accord on their answers to the questions.

5.2.2 Sample Selection for the Qualitative Survey

The sample selection for the qualitative study were chosen based on the results of the quantitative survey. The project contacted seven participants per church, who represented different categories of perceptions, for a semi-directed interview. The quantitative results revealed respondents who had 'high' perception on the spirits, some who had 'moderate' perception on the spirits, and some who had 'low' perception on the spirits. Groups of participants representing the different stances were chosen in order to listen on how they comprehend the spiritual beings. They will reveal the lay African believers' process of theologizing concerning their understanding of the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit.

5.3 Access to the Terrain

One of the procedures that had to be accomplished in order to have an easier access to the terrain was the approbation from two African Independent Churches and two Evangelical Churches. Although there were efforts inputted in order to have consents from churches before my arrival on the terrain, there were difficulties and limits contacting churches from abroad just relying on contact information found on internet. Contacting church leaders, meeting them to explain the purpose of my research, and asking for their approval of the survey as representatives of the congregation were the procedures processed after my arrival on the field in order to access the terrain. The quota of fifty volunteering respondents the quantitative study aimed per church

was a hindering restriction for churches of the Independent Churches in Yaoundé were mostly composed of a small number of congregations. Unlike the African Independent Churches, it was easier to find Evangelical Churches for they generally had a larger number of congregations.

5.4 Nature of the Collected Data

5.4.1 Nature of the Collected Data for the Quantitative Study

The nature of the collected data varied upon the quantitative study and the qualitative study. The quantitative study tried to depict the African Christians' comprehensions on the existence of the spiritual beings, the dependence toward the spiritual beings, and the influence of the spiritual beings in the daily lives. Matthew Michael stated that the presence of the traditional spirits was immanent in the lives of the contemporary Africans. Even Africans who had been educated in Western cultures and educations acknowledge the presence of these spirits. Moreover, even Africans who converted to Christianity assumed the existence and activities of these spirits.²⁴⁷ Through quantifications, I first wanted to identify and picture the African Christians' acknowledgement on the existence of the traditional spirits. If the presence of these spirits were prevalent among African Christians, the following steps were to comprehend their reliance toward these spirits and the influence these spirits affected in their lives. The identification of the current state was also proceeded on the African believers' understanding of the Holy Spirit in order to compare and contrast. The data collected from the quantitative study would enable us to visualize in cold figures the understanding of the contemporary urban African Christians concerning the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit in cold figures.

5.4.2 Nature of the Collected Data for the Qualitative Study

The qualitative study focused its attention on the believers' spiritual worlds' process of convergence between the traditional religion and Christianity. Africans had their preconception

²⁴⁷ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 191.

on the understanding of the spirits based upon their traditional worldviews. However as they converted into Christianity there was an introduction of another spirit that is the Holy Spirit. The qualitative study tried to understand how the lay African Christians have dealt and theologized with these two different concepts of spirits. Some have erased the preconception of the traditional spirits and replaced it solely with the newly introduced Holy Spirit. Some have kept the preconception of the traditional spirits and joined the Holy Spirit to the preconception they had. The qualitative study would try to understand this process of theologizing done by the lay African Christians. This section will enable us to present an answer on how the lay African Christians from the ground perceive the spirits and the Holy Spirit, whether they are in continuity or in discontinuity.

5.5 Considered Types of Method

5.5.1 The Sequential Mixed Explicative Method

The ongoing debates regarding the effectiveness of quantitative study and qualitative study have shown the advantages and the limits each study has. While quantitative study quantifies and visualizes a certain given situation with numbers, it has a limit on fully explaining the meaning of the given numbers. On the other hand, qualitative study bases its attention on describing the details of a given situation, yet it has restrictions on showing the full sized picture. In this project, I both need to visualize the full picture and to understand what the picture really means. This had led me to select a method that mixes both techniques. Therefore, the method chosen for this thesis' survey will be the Sequential Mixed Explicative Method.

The Sequential Mixed Explicative Method processes in two chronological phases, in which qualitative study follows the quantitative study. The second phase of the qualitative study is an explicative phase that complements and helps a better understanding of the results shown by the quantitative study.²⁴⁸ By my selection, I am not stating that mixed methods do not have

²⁴⁸ Corbière and Larivière, *Méthodes qualitatives, quantitatives et mixtes: dans la recherche en sciences humaines, sociales et de la santé*, 631.

their limits. However, the Mixed Sequential Explicative Method used in this project is a compelling way to articulate the two methods in collaboration.²⁴⁹ Without the cold figures drawn by the quantitative, we would not be able to understand objectively the varied details explained by the qualitative survey, nor would we be able to understand the picture illustrated by the quantitative without the explanation of the qualitative. Its use in reversible functions and mutual relations would strengthen the articulation of these mixed methods.

5.5.2 The Method of Triangulation

This method of collecting data from the quantitative survey and the qualitative survey will enable to reinforce the scientificity of the method. Jean-Pierre Pourtois (2006) presents the Method of Triangulation to strengthen the validity of the collected data. When information are collected through different methods, people would have more trust in the validity of the collected information and it will enable to apprehend the different aspects of a given phenomenon. Pourtois does not only limit Triangulation in the sphere of the collection of information but to different stages of the research.²⁵⁰ The method of Triangulation also will be used on the stage of analysis. The precedent work on the understanding of the Holy Spirit by the African theologians based their interpretation and analysis solely on their personal subjectivity. Nevertheless, this project gives room for the lay African Christians to participate in the process of interpretation and analysis of the given phenomenon. The lay African Christians would be able to raise their voices to express how they have theologized and dealt with this given situation. I would also join, in the form of the Stranger presented by Simmel, to interpret and analyze the gathered information. The literary works done by the forerunners will not be neglected and they will be able contribute to the dialogue.

²⁴⁹ Marion Selz and Florence Maillochon, *Le raisonnement statistique en sociologie*, Licence (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2009), 77–79.

²⁵⁰ Jean-Pierre Pourtois, « Quelle complémentarité entre les approches qualitatives et quantitatives dans les recherches en sciences humaines? », in *L'analyse qualitative en éducation : des pratiques de recherche aux critères de qualité : hommage à Michael Huberman*, Cairn, 1re édition (Bruxelles: De Boeck Université, 2006), 140.

5.6 Anticipated Limits

This project could face numerous limits such as having the difficulties to access the terrain, the terrain having a completely different outcome than what was portrayed on the academic fields, the ongoing controversy being irrelevant to the lay Christians on the field, and so on. However, if I were to identify the three anticipated limits that could majorly influence the project, it will be the followings. The sensitivity of the subject, the stance as the Stranger, and the probability of the debate being irreconcilable.

5.6.1 Sensitivity of the Subject

The first anticipated difficulty is the sensitivity of the subject. As mentioned formerly, the belief on the ancestors among African people are the core beliefs of the African Traditional Religion. Although there were many claims on the necessity to have an Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit, the disregard by African theologians about this matter up to now leads us to suspect that it is a delicate theme to address.²⁵¹ Allan Anderson (1991) states how African Pentecostal church officially rebukes practicing the rituals to the spirits and ancestors of the traditional religion, yet unofficially it is still persistent and it is very difficult for one to disentangle from such practice.²⁵² Thus, believers live out their faith differently than what has been officially stated. Due to the fact of this theme being a delicate subject to the African Christians, there could be difficulties for the African Christians on the field to truly open up to share personal thoughts and experiences about the matter.

5.6.2 Stance as the Stranger

The second anticipated difficulty is the stance as the Stranger. The stance as a stranger promotes objectivity, by being both distance yet also attached to the situation. Being researcher coming from a different cultural background, clearly illustrates my distance from the

²⁵¹ Jibikilayi, *La triple exégèse de la révélation chez Hans Urs von Balthasar: Principes fondamentaux de la théologie du témoignage et implications théologiques sur le discours christologique africain*, 274.

²⁵² Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 90.

phenomenon. My attachment, on the other hand, could be questioned regardless of my 17 years of youth spent in Africa, for I do not have any empirical experience on the African Traditional Religion nor do I have any empirical experience of the African Independent Churches. However, as mentioned in the Method of Triangulation, I would not be the only one proceeding to the interpretation but the lay African believers and African theologians will also join.

5.6.3 Probability of the Debate being Irreconcilable

The third limit this project could face is the probability of being unable to reconcile the ongoing debate. One of the expectation I am having is the reconciliation of the bipolarized perceptions about the Holy Spirit portrayed by the theologians on the academic field. The reconciliation is anticipated to happen through the voices of the lay Christians whom frequent churches with different theological orientations. Their account on how they have theologized this controversial issue could emerge the common ground on which the believers stand. I hope that the lay African believers could provide hints on how to reconcile the bipolarized stances of the African theologians. However, the result could be that the lay Christians were as much influenced by the church's theological orientation. Their answers could be identical to that of the African theologians and stand at each end of the polarity. They could also be making claims that are strongly influenced by their churches' theological orientations.

Chapter 6: Analysis of the Quantitative Survey

The quantitative study was done on four different churches in which two of them were Evangelical Churches (Evangelical Church 1 and Evangelical Church 2) and the other two were African Independent Churches (Independent Church 3 and Independent Church 4). On the following graphs that will represent each churches stances, an abbreviation of 'EC' would stand for the Evangelical Churches and an abbreviation of 'IC' would represent the African Independent Churches. Though the study first aimed to gather data from 200 respondents that is 50 respondents per church, due to unexpected restrictions such as not having enough volunteers or the distributed questionnaires not being properly filled, only data from 168 respondents were considered valid.

The questionnaire was structured in two parts in which the first part inquired on the personal perception of the traditional spirits and the second part asked on the Holy Spirit. In order to grasp an individual's understanding of these two spiritual beings, the survey asked questions on how they perceived the existence of the spirits, their dependence on the spirits, and influences the spirits had on them. The recognition on the spirits' existence, a personal reliance, and an acknowledgement of the influence the spirit were considered as a general perception of the spiritual being. A respondent who had a higher perception had a tendency to acknowledge more the existence of the spirits, relied more, and was influenced more by them. A person who had a low perception had a tendency to be less acceptant of the spirits' existence, relied less, and was influenced less by them. When using the term perception on the quantitative analysis, it does not connote a person's positive or negative stance towards the spirits. Two people can both quantitatively be acknowledging the existence of the spirits but one could have a positive stance and the other a negative stance. The matter of a believer's positive or negative stance will be dealt later, on the qualitative analysis. Through the quantitative study, we would try to visualize in cold figures on how the lay African Christians living in the urbanity comprehend the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit.

The respondents answered the questionnaires by circling numbers scaling from '-3' to '+3' that best fit their answers. The numbers represented the following: '-3' never, '-2' very rarely, '-1' rarely, '0' I do not know, '+1' occasionally, '+2' very often, '+3' always. So in

example, if the question was, “I feel the presence of the spirits around my surroundings”, the respondents answered by circling one of the numbers mentioned above that best represented their personal opinion. By finding the mean number of the answers, the respondents were categorized with following perception: ‘extremely high’, ‘very high’, ‘high’, ‘moderate’, ‘low’, ‘very low’, ‘extremely low’. The quantification is classified as ‘extremely low’ when the average of the total responses range between -3.00 to -2.50, ‘very low’ is -2.49 to -1.50, ‘low’ is -1.49 to -0.50, ‘moderate’ is -0.49 to +0.49, ‘high’ is +0.50 to +1.49, ‘very high’ is +1.50 to +2.49, and ‘extremely high’ is +2.50 to +3.00.

A person having an ‘extremely high’ perception on the traditional spirits could be considered as someone always acknowledging its existence, depending on, and being influenced by the spirits. On the other hand, a person having an extremely low perception on the traditional spirits could be recognized as someone not acknowledging the existence, never depending on it, and never being influenced by the spirits. People identified as ‘moderate’ would be someone ambivalent or confused on how to perceive the traditional spirits. The stance as ‘moderate’ would further be studied to clarify what the participants might intend to mean by their posture.

6.1 Quantitative Analysis on the Spirits

The first analysis we would draw our attention is the perception on the traditional spirits. As previously mentioned the term perception on the quantitative analysis does not refer to positive or negative stances toward the spiritual beings. Instead, through the term perception we want to depict the reality of the spiritual being in a believer’s life. To investigate on the perception of the spirits, this thesis has subdivided the recognition of the spiritual being into existence, dependence, and influence. Are the African Christians acknowledging the existence of the spirits or not? Are the African believers depending on the spirits or not? Are the respondents recognizing the influence of the spirits in their life or not? In this thesis, the combination of these three subcategories are forming the generalized term perception or understanding. When a believer would have a high perception, they will be admitting the spirits’ existence, dependence, and influence in their lives. When a Christian has a low perception, it will mean that he does not thoroughly recognize the existence, nor depend, nor is influenced by

the spirits. The first quantitative analysis of the spirits is trying to understand this generalized but personal comprehension on the traditional spirits through quantification.

This section will ponder on the perception in detail, by analyzing one's comprehension on the existence, dependence, and influence. The quantitative analysis will then contrast on what the church members understand of the spirits and what the society understands of the spirits. The last part of the quantitative analysis would focus on what could be the influencing variables on an African Christian's understanding of the spirits. The possible variables such as gender, age, region of origin, level of education, years lived as a Christian, and years lived in urbanity were analyzed on whether they could be recognized as factors that influence an African Christian's perception of the spirits.

6.1.1 Perception on the Spirits

The general perception is an overall personalized understanding of the acknowledgement on the existence of the spirits, dependence on these spirits, and the influence these spirits play in one's daily lives. The quantitative expected to find African Independent Churches' Christians to have a higher perception of the traditional spirits and to find Evangelical Churches' Christians to have a lower perception of the traditional spirits for that is what the literatures on the academic field seemed to portray. Matthew Michael, whom has studied in Evangelical seminaries and having been appointed as Dean of an Evangelical theological institute, represents the Evangelicals' stance by defining the traditional spirits as not coming from God and being spirits fallen from God.²⁵³ Akuma-Kalu Njoku mentions how Evangelicals consider the ancestral universe as the domain of the devil.²⁵⁴ Elochukwu Uzukwu stands along with the African Independent Churches' manifesto from 1996 stating, "The renewal of the Holy Spirit is continuous with and greater than the spirits around us."²⁵⁵ The African Independent Churches are more open to the traditional heritage and accepts the traditional spirits to be a pre-revelation

²⁵³ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 99.

²⁵⁴ Njoku and Uzukwu, *Interface Between Igbo Theology and Christianity*, 90.

²⁵⁵ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 160.

and part of the Generalized Holy Spirit.²⁵⁶ Allan Anderson also introduces the favorable stance of the African Independent Churches toward the ancestral spirits.²⁵⁷ However, the pictures depicted by the academic literatures were not the image found on the ground. The following graphs represent each church’s perception on the traditional spirits.

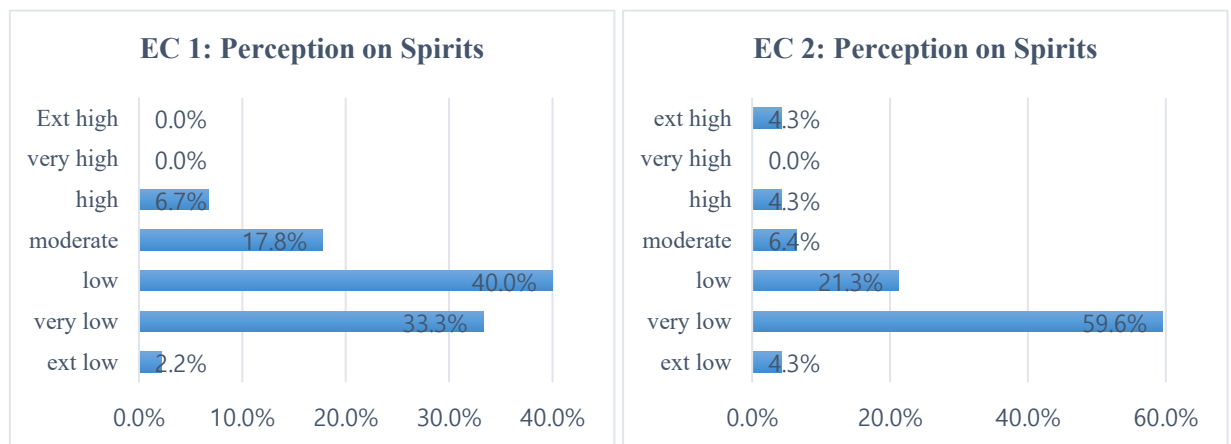


Figure 1: Perception on Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

The churches represented as EC 1 and EC 2 on the graph above are Evangelical Churches whose theological orientation aligns with Matthew Michael’s stance on the traditional spirits. As expected, we have found the largest majority of the church 1 members were categorized ‘low’ (40.0%) and the largest majority of the church 2 members were categorized ‘very low’ (59.6%) on their perception of the traditional spirits. Although the biggest majority on both churches were ‘low’ and ‘very low’, a significant number of people categorized as moderate (Evangelical Church 1: 17.8%, Evangelical Church 2: 6.4%) depicted how some lay Christians were ‘ambivalent’ or ‘neutral’ on how they were understanding the role of the traditional spirits in their lives. Some Christians were even classified as having a ‘high’ perception (Evangelical Church 1: 6.7%, Evangelical Church 2: 4.3%) or even an ‘extremely high’ perception (Evangelical Church 2: 4.3%) on the traditional spirits. These results showed that the largest majority of the lay Christians from the Evangelical Churches have a ‘low’ perception on the traditional spirits. Nevertheless, we cannot disregard the significant number whom are

²⁵⁶ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 179.

²⁵⁷ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 87.

‘ambivalent’ or takes a ‘neutral’ stance on how to theologize the traditional spirits. The congregations’ diversified views on the traditional spirits could be assignments these churches will have to deal.

IC 3 and IC 4 represented in the graph above are African Independent Churches’

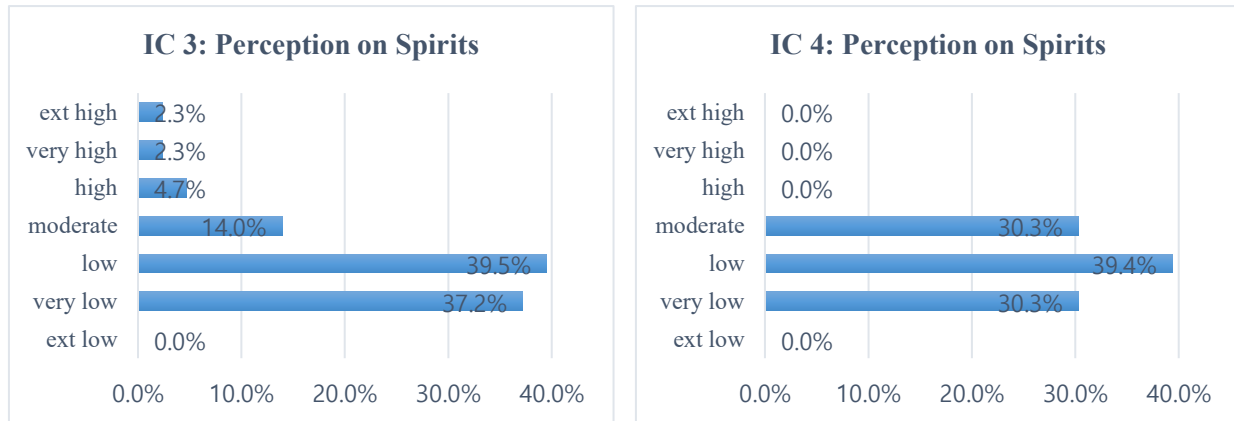


Figure 2: Perception on Spirits (Independent Churches)

perception on the traditional spirits. Surprisingly, when compared to the previously observed Evangelical Churches, we do not see any distinctive traits on their perception on the traditional spirits. What Elochukwu Uzukwu claimed to be the stance of the African Independent Churches do not seem to be the case in the churches in Yaoundé. The largest majority of the lay Christians had a ‘low’ (Independent Church 3: 39.5%, Independent Church 4: 39.4%) perception on the traditional spirits. The perception with the second largest numbers was ‘very low’ (Independent Church 3: 37.2%, Independent Church 4: 30.3%). The majority of the African Independent Church members’ comprehension on the traditional spirits are similar to that of the Evangelical Church members. We get to remark once again the significant number of believers whom are classified as ‘moderate’ (Independent Church 3: 14.0%, Independent Church 4: 30.3%). Moreover, some Christians have a high to extremely high perception on the traditional spirits (Independent Church 3: ‘high’ 4.7%, ‘very high’ 2.3%, ‘extremely high’ 2.3%). The graph from the Independent church shows that the majority of the lay believers in Yaoundé, regardless of their denominations, have a common ground on understanding the traditional spirits. The majority of the surveyed Independent Churches’ members have a low perception on the traditional spirits. However, we are also to note how some significant number of believers have a diversified views on understanding these spirits.

Through this analysis, I was able to realize how the urbanized Christians' perception were not distinct between the Evangelical Churches and the African Independent Churches. The congregations from both theological orientations mostly had a 'low' or a 'very low' perception on the traditional spirits. However, when having a closer look, I was able to identify that the church itself had members with diversified understanding of the traditional spirits. The analysis of the qualitative study will further complement on the reasons why church members from the same theological orientations have diversified understandings on the traditional spirits.

6.1.2 Perception on the Existence of the Spirits

Through the analysis of the general perception on the spirits, we have come to realize that on the field where the survey had been done, there were not much difference between the believers from the Evangelical Churches and those from the African Independent Churches. This image depicted through the survey was discrepant from the illustrations academic field portrayed. We are now to take a step further and to examine in detail the personal perception on the traditional spirits. How do the African Christians understand the existence of the traditional spirits?

The following graphs illustrates the four churches' opinions regarding the existence of the traditional spirits. The congregations were categorized based on their viewpoints on the spirits. Those who acknowledged the spirits to be always present were classified as 'extremely high'. People recognizing the existence of the spirits very often were identified as 'very high'. Christians whom from time to time perceived the existence of the spirits were classified as 'high'. The believers who were not sure on the existence of the spirits were considered as 'moderate'. Respondents who perceived the existence of the spirits rarely were regarded as 'low'. The church members who very rarely recognized these spirits as existing were labeled as 'very low'. Finally, those who thought the traditional spirits do not exist at all were categorized as 'extremely low'.

Surprisingly the perception on the existence of the traditional spirits were 'high' amongst the surveyed Christians. Out of the groups classified, the largest majority in all four churches were Christians with a 'high' perception on the existence of the spirits. Evangelical

Church 1 had 48.9%, Evangelical Church 2 summed 25.5%, Independent Church 3 numbered 30.2%, and Independent Church 4 totaled 30.3% of Christians who recognized highly the existence of the traditional spirits.

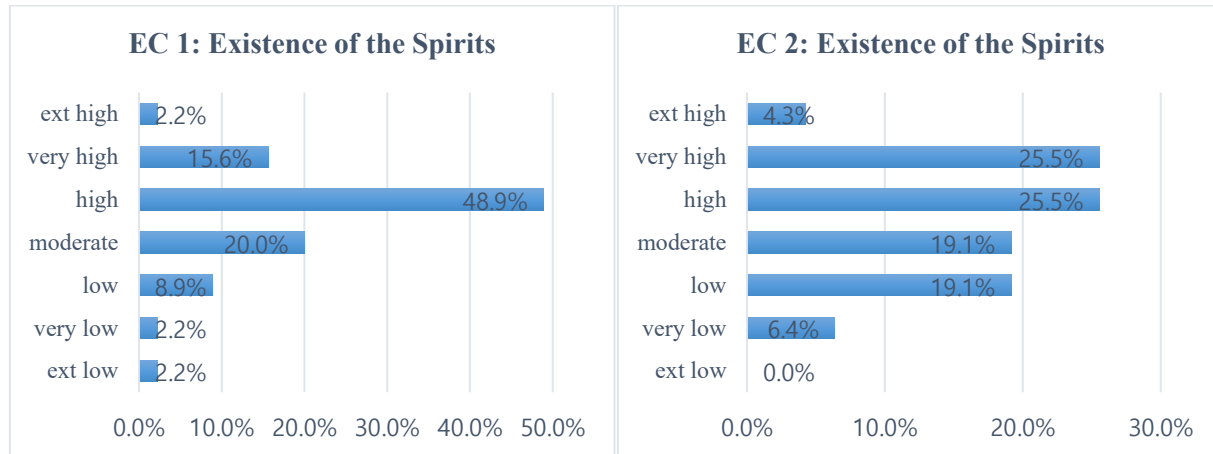


Figure 3: Existence of the Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

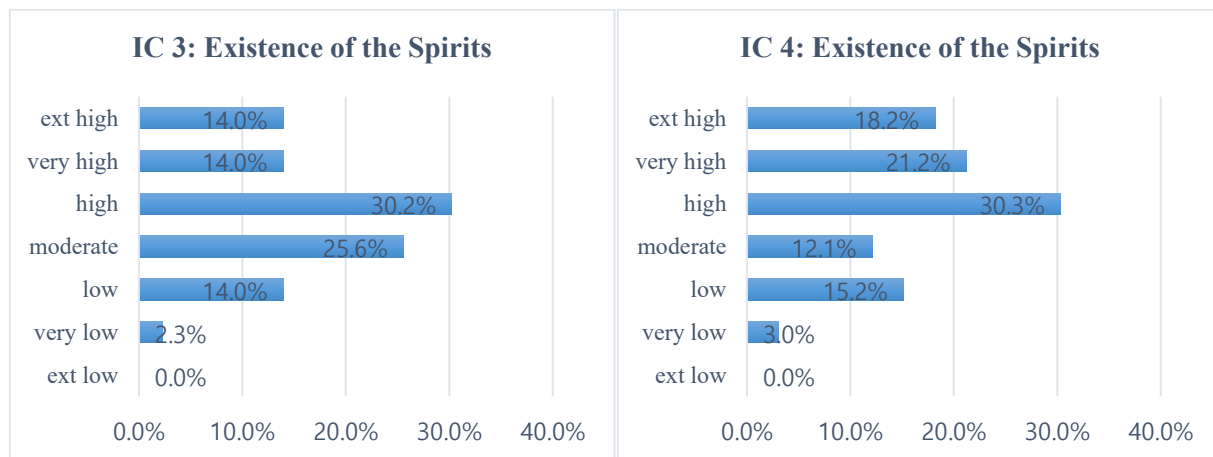


Figure 4: Existence of the Spirits (Independent Churches)

If we were to group these detailed categories on the perception of the spirits into three larger and general groups (high and above as ‘approving’, moderate as ‘ambivalent’, low and below as ‘disapproving’), the African believers’ conception regarding the traditional spirits becomes more clear. Amongst the members in Evangelical Church 1, the majority of 66.7% approved the existence of the spirits, 20.0% are ambivalent on their stances regarding the existence of these spirits, and 13.3% disapproved the existence of these spirits. The congregation of Evangelical Church 2 are grouped as 55.3% approving, 19.1% ambivalent, and 25.5%

disapproving. The majority among the believers from Independent Church 3 are those approving whom number 58.2%, ambivalent are 25.6%, and disapproving are 16.3%. Independent Church 4 depicts a similar statistics having 69.7% of Christians approving the spirits, 12.1% ambivalent, and 18.2% disapproving.

By grouping the detailed classifications on the perception of the spirits, we can clearly see how the African Christians approving the existence of the spirits are the undisputed largest majority with the mean of 62.5%. The lay African Christians living in urbanity acknowledged the existence of the traditional spirits regardless of their theological orientations. While there are differentiation by churches, when finding the mean number of the four churches, the perception following the acknowledgement of these spirits are Christians who are ambivalent (19.2%) on how to view the existence of these spirits. Then followed the believers who disapproved (18.3%) of the existence of the traditional spirits, yet their numbers are as significant as those whom are ambivalent. When analysing the churches individually, Evangelical Church 2 and Independent Church 4 had larger number of Christians disapproving the existence of the spirits than those whom were ambivalent.

6.1.3 Perception on the Dependence on the Spirits

The previous analysis on African Christians' perception on the existence of the spirits has depicted how the large majority of the African Christians approve the existence of the traditional spirits. Then what are their relationships with these spirits which the majority perceive as existing? In order to find their relations with these spirits, there was an inquiry regarding the dependence and the influence of these spirits. The dependence focuses its attention more on how the African Christians react to these existing spirits and the influence emphasizes more on the role these spirits play on the lives of the African believers. This part will first spot its light on the African Christians' dependence on these spirits.

As the following graphs illustrates, the greatest majority of the Christians were extremely lowly depending on the traditional spirits, meaning they have never depended on these spirits. Evangelical Church 1 totaled 55.6%, Evangelical Church 2 numbered 83.0%, Independent Church 3 summed 51.2%, and Independent Church 4 had 54.5% of its congregation members

who were identified as extremely lowly depending on these spirits. This means that average of 61.1% of believers’ surveyed have never depended on the traditional spirits. However, the remaining 38.9% of believers have somewhat had an experience of dependence towards these spirits.

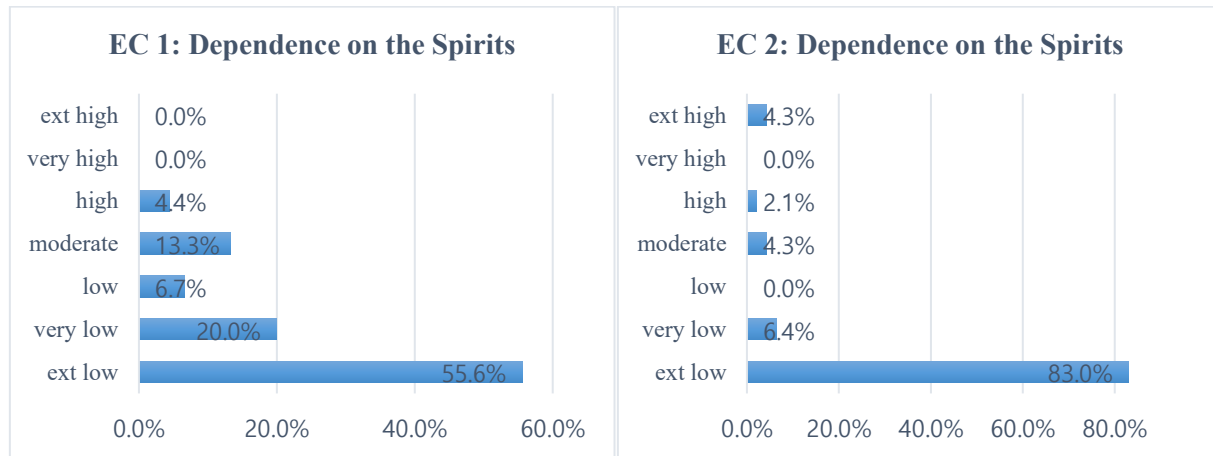


Figure 5: Dependence on the Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

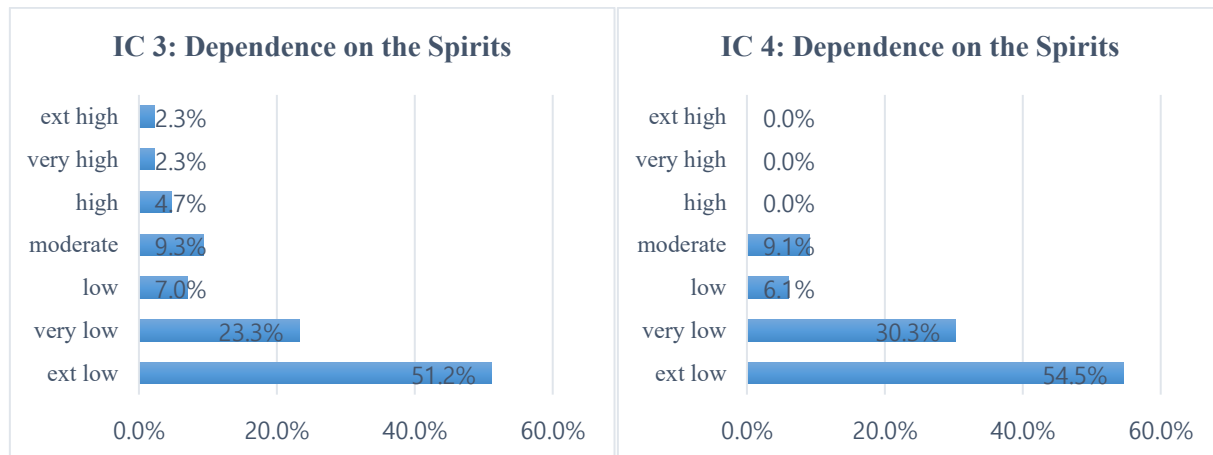


Figure 6: Dependence on the Spirits (Independent Churches)

We need to remark a qualitative difference between the respondents categorized as ‘extremely low’ and those classified as ‘very low’. Respondents categorized, as ‘extremely low’, are people whose answers to the questions have an average of -2.50 to -3.00. The average number ranging from -2.50 and below have been considered as being a number rounding to -3.00 which represented ‘never’ in the answer scale of the questionnaire. Yet, respondents classified, as ‘very low’ are people whose answers have a mean ranging from -1.50 to -2.49.

The numbers in the range mentioned above were rounding up and down to -2.00 that represented 'very rarely' in the answer scale. There is a qualitative difference between never and very rarely. Never means there is not any experience of dependence with the traditional spirits. Nevertheless, very rarely means a recognition of the dependence on the traditional spirits although it was very rare. Through this analysis, I was able to see how though the majority of African Christians (61.1%) never have depended on the traditional spirits, there still were a significant number of 38.9% whom acknowledged experiences of dependence on these spiritual beings, although most of the times it was very rare.

An interesting factor we need to remark and further need to investigate through the qualitative study is on the Christians who have an 'extremely high' stance on their dependence on the traditional spirits. 4.3% of members from church 2 and 2.3% of believers from church 3 got identified as 'extremely high' on their dependence on spirits, which means they always rely and depend on these spirits. Although they are a minority among the churches in which the quest were done, it is still a significant number that cannot be neglected. Although the data of the current quantitative analysis are depicting pictures that refute what Uzukwu, some African theologians, and some African Independent Churches are insisting, this minority found among the churches could lead us to understand such stances better. Through the qualitative study, the voices representing this stance would be exposed and studied.

6.1.4 Perception on the Influence of the Spirits

Another factor that will depict the relationship the African Christians have with the traditional spirits is the influence the spirits have on them. Do the Christians think that the traditional spirits influence and affect them in their daily life? The majority of members from the churches inquired have answered 'very lowly'. 40.0% of church 1 respondents, 29.8% of church 2 congregations, 41.9% of church 3 believers, and 51.5% of church 4 Christians answered 'very lowly'. In exception of church 2 which had as the largest majority 'extremely low' with 57.4%, the remaining three churches' largest majority was 'very low'. When averaging the four churches all together, the largest majority was 'very low' with the mean of 40.8% and then followed 'extremely low' with an average of 34.6%.

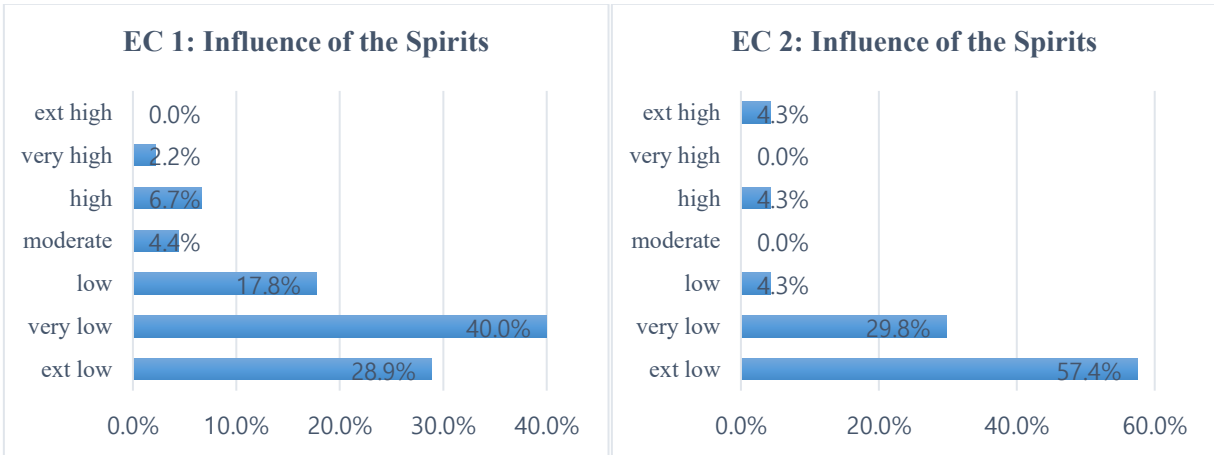


Figure 7: Influence of the Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

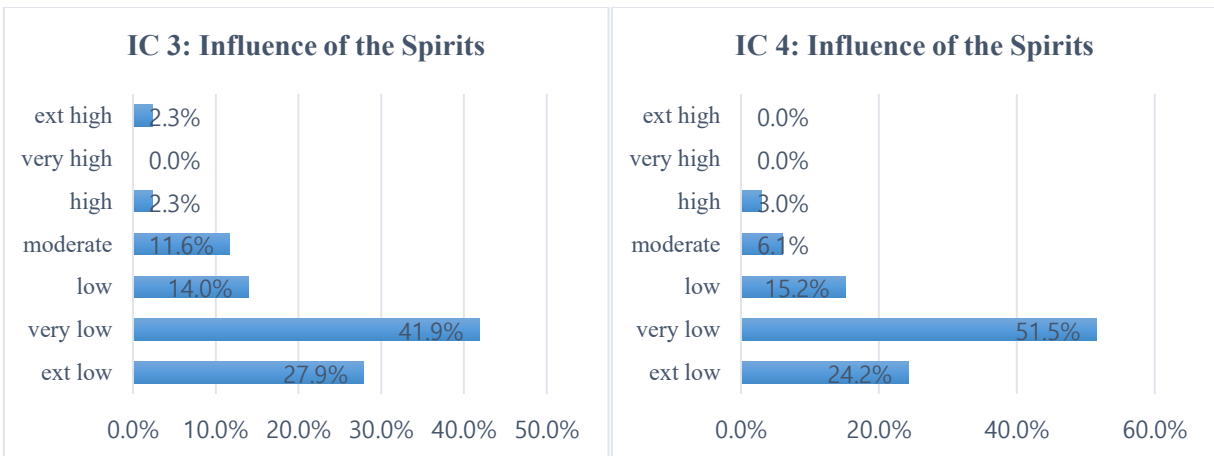


Figure 8: Influence of the Spirits (Independent Churches)

As mentioned previously, there is a qualitative difference between someone who was never influenced by the spirits and those who have somewhat experienced the influence by the spirits. Regarding the matter on the influence by the spirits, only 34.6% of the African Christians answered the traditional spirits have never influenced them, whereas 65.4% confess spirits have effect on their lives although it may be very rare.

Although dependence and influence are both factors that illustrate African Christians relationships with the spirits from the traditional worldview, we can grasp their reactions to these factors are different. The majority of surveyed believers (61.1%) claimed they have never depended on the traditional spirits. Yet, the majority of surveyed Christians confessed (65.4%) they have been influenced by these spirits. Why do most Christians assert they have never relied

on the traditional spirits, but these majority claim they have been affected by these spirits? The probable hypothesis drawn from the quantitative analysis is, though they have not personally relied on these spirits, due to external factors, the spirits of their traditions influence the African believers. Further analysis concerning this matter will be studied when researching the qualitative survey.

6.1.5 Social Perception on the Spirits, their reality and their influence

The analysis above have described vividly of African Christians’ personal perception on the traditional spirits. We would here like to compare them with the social perception regarding these spirits. By the social perception, we are trying to understand how the environment surrounding the participants are viewing these spirits. The following box plots depict church members’ perception on spirits in blue and the social perception on these spirits in orange. The social perception represented in the following graphs are what the Christians of each church have testified basing on what they hear from their families, neighbors, and environment. Since the previous analysis on personal perception with the bar graphs have based on calculating the data with the average, the box plot were chosen for this part of the analysis to clearly view the median and the range of the collected data.

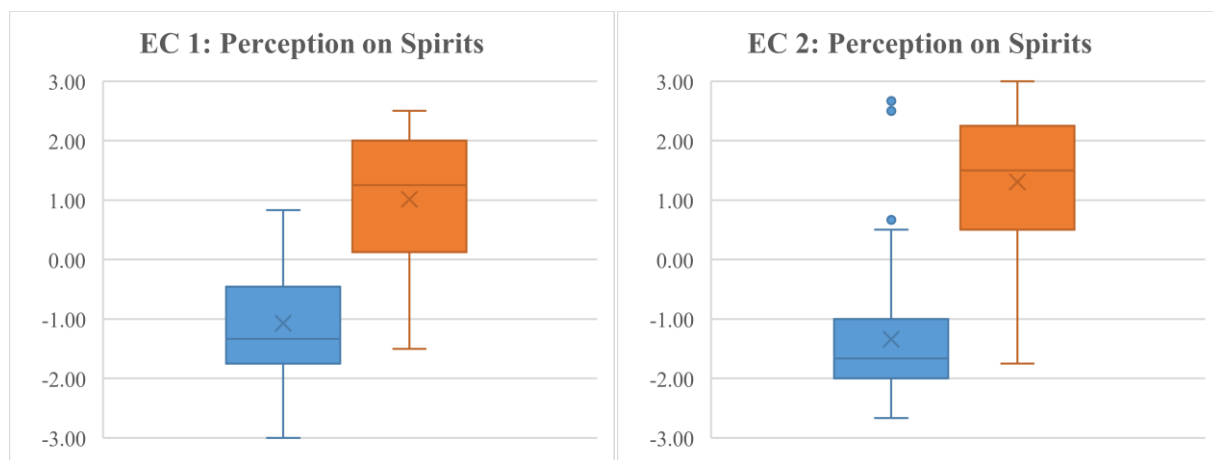


Figure 9: Church’s Perception on Spirits compared to Society (Evangelical Churches)

The box plot for Evangelical Church 1 illustrates personal perception on spirits ranging from -3.00 to +0.83. The median of the personal perception is -1.33 and classified as ‘low’. On

the other hand, the social perception ranges from -1.50 to +2.50 and it has a median of +1.25, which makes it categorized as ‘high’. While the personal perception’s median is ‘low’, the social perception is ‘high’. The church’s perception and the social perception on the spirits are standing at the bipolar ends.

Evangelical Church 2 displays Christians’ personal perception that scopes from -2.67 to +0.50 with the exception of three outliers and it has a median of -1.67, meaning the perception on the spirits are classified as ‘very low’. The social perception scales from -1.75 to +3.00. The median of the social perception is +1.50 meaning the perception on the spirits is classified ‘very high’. The personal perception on spirits beings ‘very low’ and the social perception on spirits being ‘very high’, we can once again remark how church’s stance on the traditional spirits and the society’s stance on the traditional spirits are in complete opposition.

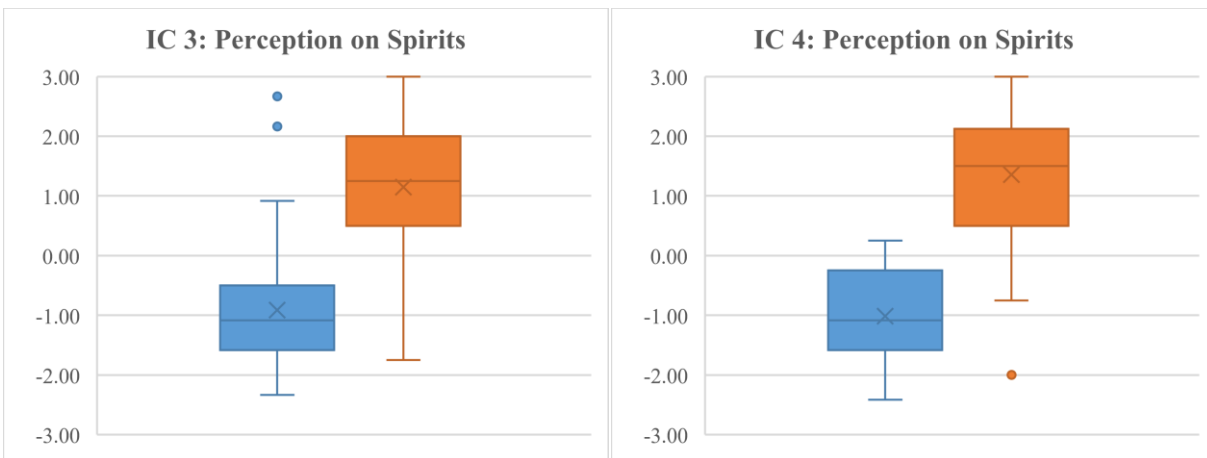


Figure 10: Church’s Perception on Spirits compared to Society (Independent Churches)

Independent Church 3, being an African Independent Church, is not any different from the Evangelical Churches mentioned above. In exception of two outliers, the personal perception ranges from -2.33 to +0.92 and has a median of -1.08. The personal perception of the church members is identified as ‘low’. However, the social perception scales from -1.75 to +3.00 with the median of +1.25. The social perception on the traditional spirits is classified as ‘high’. Church 3 demonstrates an image of church against the society, in which church members’ perception is ‘low’ whereas the social perception is ‘high’.

Independent Church 4 follows the general pattern of the previously mentioned churches. The believers’ personal perception scope from -2.42 to +0.25. The church 4 members’ personal

perception is categorized as 'low' with the median of -1.08. The social perception is very different for it ranges from -0.75 to +3.00 and has a median of +1.50 standing on the category of 'very high'. The church's view on the traditional spirits is 'low' whereas the social stance on these spirits is 'very high'.

By comparing the Christians' account of the society's perception on the traditional spirits with their own personal conception, a clear distinction on the African Christians' view and the society's view of the spirits is exhibited. The members of the churches have a perception from 'very low' to 'low' whereas the surrounding environments of the believers have a perception of 'high' to 'very high'. The results depict how the Christians and the society are in strong disagreement on their perception of the traditional spirits. Here, we have an interesting remark to consider.

The surveyed respondents distances their stances from the society as if the churchgoers' comprehension of the spirits and that of the society is significantly diverged. Yet, the Association of Religion Data Archives claims 58.1% of the Cameroonians to be Christians.²⁵⁸ This means the society that seemed to have a bipolarized perception on the traditional spirits are majorly Christians. How are we to understand this matter? Two hypotheses emerged. First, it could be that these four churches truly have a different stance from the majority of the Cameroonian believers. Such comprehension is probable since these four churches surveyed are newly planted churches, in which the oldest just have a history of 26 years. Second, it could be that the Christians surveyed are not any different from what the society and the other Christians view. They could be giving answers that correspond closer to the Christian orthodoxy. The surveyed believers could have given answers that fit the church's orthodox and official stance on the spirits, whereas their actual stance is closer to what they described at the society's comprehension of the spirits. At the present stage of the quantitative analysis, the results are only shown in cold figures. The analysis in the qualitative stage (section 7.1.4) will give probable explanations regarding this bipolarized view on the traditional spirits between the church and the Cameroonian society.

²⁵⁸ "The Association of Religion Data Archives | National Profiles", accessed 2018. 2. 28, http://www.thearda.com/internationalData/countries/Country_40_2.asp.

6.1.6 Variables on the Perception of the Spirits

One of the curiosity that triggered my attention was the probable factors that could influence the perception of the spirits. What would be the key factors that influence African Christians understanding of the traditional spirits? Some of the factors that could be influential were as following: gender, age, region of origin, level of education, years lived as Christian, and years lived in urbanity. While proceeding the survey, I have asked the respondents to fill out information related to these criteria in order to verify if they could be variables, which influences one's perception on the spirits. To depict if each of the following variables could be a possible influential factors, 100% stacked column charts were used to ease our understanding. Since Independent Church 4 do not represent any members who are classified as having a high perception on the spirits, the section on the variable will mostly analyze data from three churches (Evangelical Church 1, Evangelical Church 2, and Independent Church 3). For these three churches will be mainly analyzed, taking a tendency that emerged just from a church and endorsing it as the influential variable will not build up any reliability. A variable will be acknowledged as a possible influential factor when similar tendencies are found from two churches or more. Although most analysis will be based on three churches that clearly depict its members who have a high perception on the spirits, Independent Church 4 will also be referred partially for the constituent with the low perception of the spirits could bring additional information to our study.

As previously mentioned, the charts in this section that will depict the variables of each churches are 100% stacked column charts. The explanatory notes in each graph will specify the different classifications. The meaning of the abbreviated categorization on the horizontal axis represent the following: 'EL' extremely low, 'VL' very low, 'L' low, 'M' moderate, 'H' high, 'VH' very high, and 'EH' extremely high. The vertical axis of the graph represents each categorization of the horizontal axis in percentage. To enhance our understanding of how to understand the graph, presume an orange bar located on the 'H' horizontal axis, hits 100% on the vertical axis, and 8.3% is written on the orange bar. We are to first refer to the explanatory note that will explain how orange represents female. This orange bar would be representing 8.3% of the church's female believers surveyed. Having its location on the 'H' category of the horizontal axis depicts 8.3% of the female surveyed had a high perception on the spirits. This

orange bar hitting 100% of the vertical axis means that out of the entire participants surveyed; only the 8.3% females had a high perception on the spirits.

One thing to keep in mind once again is on how quantitative analysis only illustrates cold figures of the survey. At the present stage, our objective is to distinguish probable factors that are influencing the African Christians' comprehension of the traditional spirits based upon cold figures. A close attention to explanatory notes at the introduction of each variable is to be regarded with concern for although the graph sometimes gives high percentages; it actually might be representing only a small figure.

6.1.6.1 Gender Variable on the Perception of the Spirits

The first factor presupposed as a variable is gender. The blue bars represent the 57 male participants and the orange bars depict the 111 female participants. Out of the 168 participants, there were no respondents whom were considered invalid. This means all of the surveyed participants have clearly marked their gender.

Evangelical Church 1 depicted 7.1% of male and 6.5% of female participants having a high perception on the spirits. In this church, gender variation does not seem to mark a significant distinction for gender composition for those categorized as high are even. Evangelical Church 2 portrayed 4.5% of male and 4.0% of female as having an extremely high perception on the spirits. Another 9.1% of the male Christians are classified as having a high perception on the spirits. Church 2's illustration distinguishes male participants as an influential variable on the understanding of the spirits for 13.6% of male believers have a high and above perception on spirits. Independent Church 3 also supports gender as being an influential variable for it classifies 8.3% of male extremely high, 8.3% of male very high, and 8.3% of male high on the understanding of the spirits. 3.2% of female Christians constitute a portion on the category as having a high perception on the spirits, yet 24.9% of male believers having a high or above perception on the spirits marks the gender as a variable. Independent Church 4 do not show any church member placed on high perception or above on the spirits, so the data from church 4 is not to be taken into consideration.

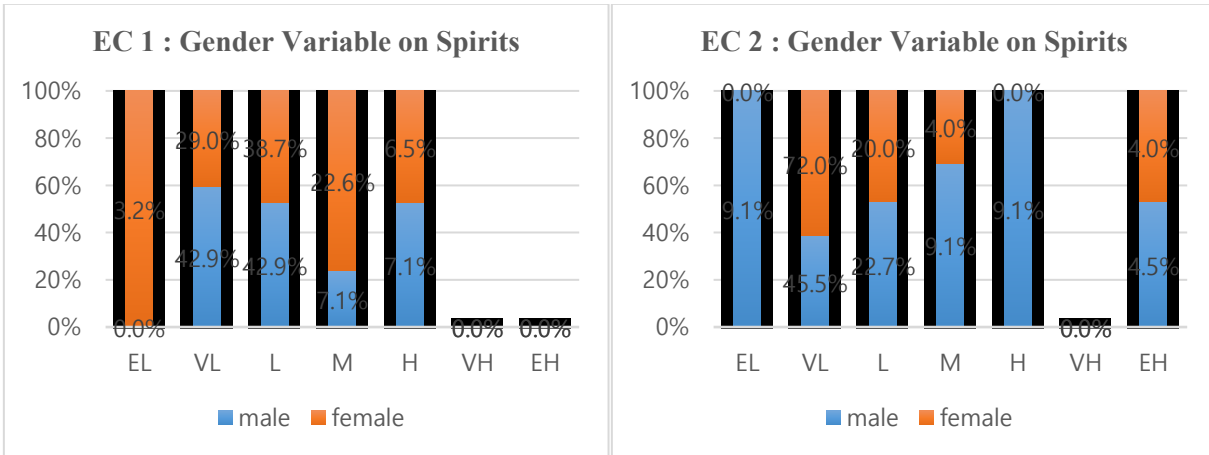


Figure 11: Gender Variable on Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

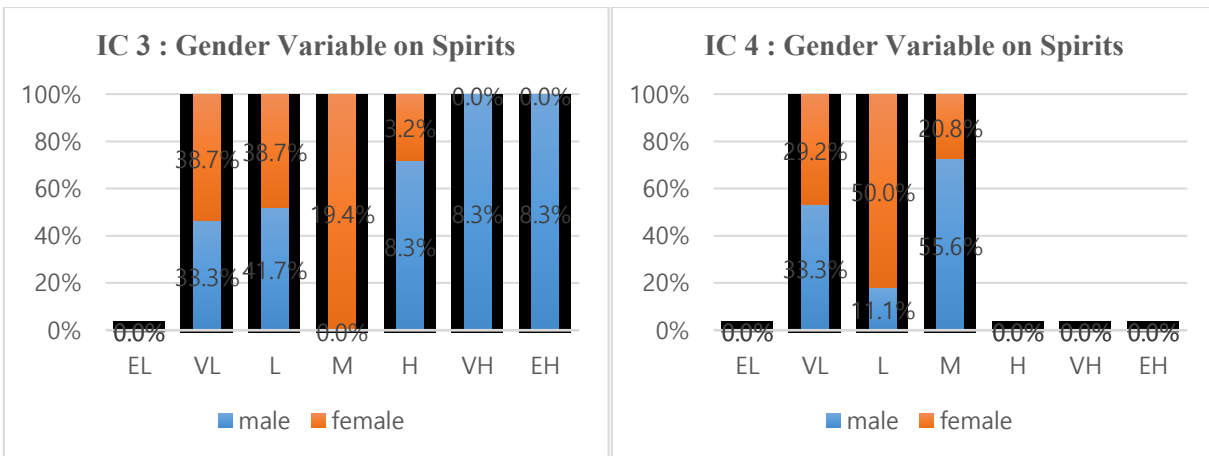


Figure 12: Gender Variable on Spirits (Independent Churches)

Through these results, we can observe how two churches (Evangelical Church 2 and Independent Church 3) highlight males to have a high perception on the spirits compared to females. Evangelical Church 1 does not show any distinction between genders. Having similar tendencies from two churches, we could consider the gender male as a probable influential factor on the perception of the spirits. The reason why gender ‘male’ has been revealed as the probable influential factor on having a higher perception on the traditional spirits are possibly due to the role and responsibilities males have in the traditional religion. In most cases, men are considered as the ones to take the initiative and lead the family into traditional practices. Due to the responsibilities and the expectations African tradition put on the gender, it could have possibly influenced men to be more receptive of the traditional spirits.

6.1.6.2 Age Variable on the Perception of the Spirits

The second factor hypothesized as a variable is age. To apply age as a variable on the perception of the spirits, I have classified and grouped Christians in their teens, twenties, thirties, forties, fifties and sixties. The believers grouped in their teens are respondents who are 18 years or older. The teens who are younger than 18 have been excluded from the research mainly due to the ethical matters which requires minors to have parental consent in order to participate in studies. The constituent of the age variable are 11 teens (18 and older), 43 twenties, 52 thirties, 31 forties, 23 fifties, 5 sixties, and 3 participants were marked invalid for their answers for the age variable were not distinguishable. Here we need to note how there were only five participants representing those aged in their sixties and have to take into consideration when dealing with data that represents the answers of this age range.

Before having the results, I hypothesized older participants would have a higher perception on the traditional spirits, for they would be more familiar and attached to their traditions. However, the results did not back up this hypothesis. Age did not seem to be an influential factor on an African Christian's perception of the spirits, but with the exception of the teens.

Evangelical Church 1 illustrated the constituents who have a high consciousness of the spirits as believers in their 20s (8.3%), 30s (6.3%), and 50s (16.7%). However, we can remark how the believers in this same age range are also standing on the opposite end. 41.7% of Christians in their 20s, 31.3% of members in their 30s, and 33.3% of participants in their 50s have a very low perception of the spirits. Evangelical Church 2 demonstrates how 6.3% of believers in their 30s and 9.1% of Christians in their 40s perceive extremely highly the spirits. Another 9.1% of congregations in their 20s and 9.1% of believers in their 40s have a high consciousness of the spirits. However, we can find all these age ranges in the very low category (54.5% of 20s, 75.0% of 30s, and 54.5% of 40s). 100.0% of African Christians in their sixties whom were classified as having a very low perception and 50.0% of believers in their fifties whom are the only age range identified as having an extremely low perception of the spirits completely refute my hypothesis that aged people would have a higher perception of the spirits.

Independent Church 3's portrayal of those perceiving highly and above of the traditional spirits are all participants in their 20s and 30s. 6.7% of Christians in their 30s have an extremely high perception of the spirits, 12.5% of the congregation in their 20s have a very high perception of the spirits, 12.5% in their 20s and 6.7% in their 30s have a high consciousness of the traditional spirits. Through this chart, we get to presume that members in their 20s and 30s are highly active in their conception of the spirits. Independent Church 4 sketched none of its members as having a high perception of the spirits. Yet, we can note how the participants in their 20s who seem to be highly attached to the spirits are mostly classified very lowly (41.7%) and lowly (41.7%).

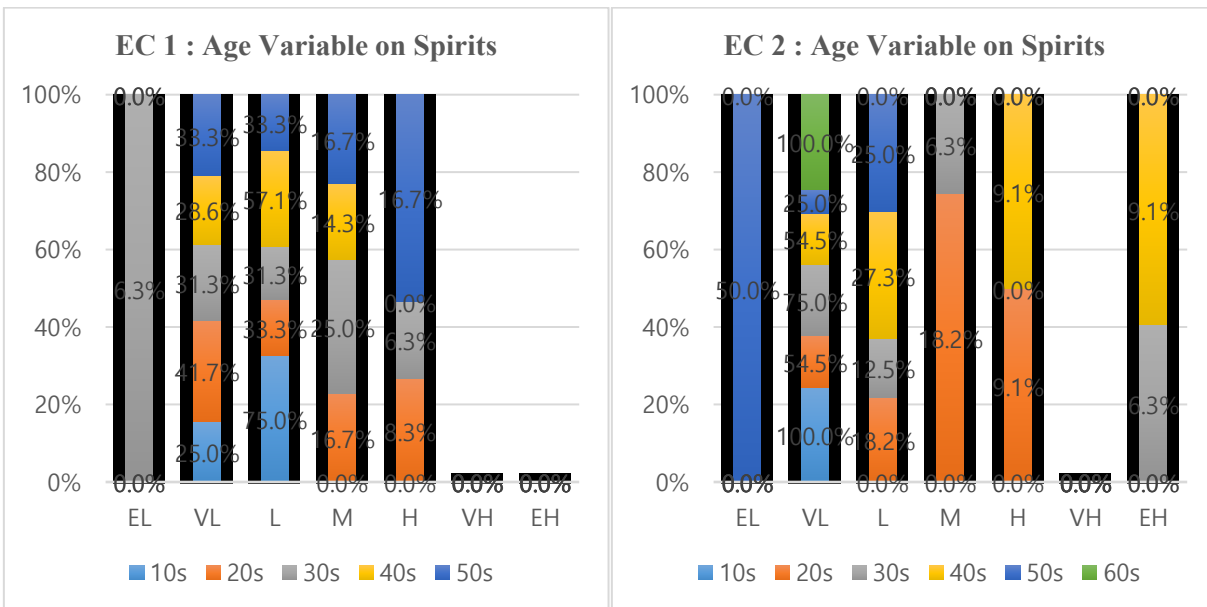


Figure 13: Age Variable on Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

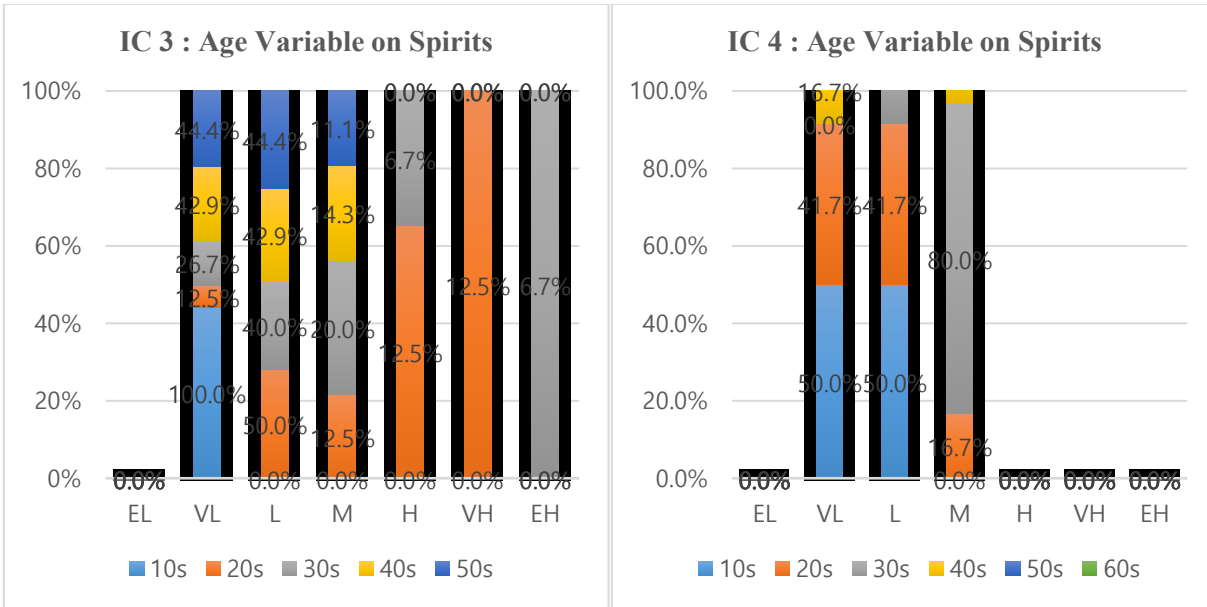


Figure 14: Age Variable on Spirits (Independent Churches)

The investigation with the age variable as the influential factor on the African Christians' understanding of the traditional spirits has completely refuted my hypothesis that older believers will have higher attachments to the spirits. Yet, it rises couple speculations. In three of the churches, we can notice how believers in their 20s and 30s have a high or above attachments towards the spirits. However, these age ranges are equally found at the opposite end of the chart, which lessens the credibility of such observation. Another speculation is on the Christians in their 10s. In all four churches, all the believers in their 10s are classified low or below on their understanding of the traditional spirits. We cannot find a similar tendency on the participants who are in their 20s or older, but an akin propensity is only captured among the teens. Although on age ranges of 20s and older, age did not seem to be an influential variable, teens were revealed as especially having low perception on the spirits on the results of all four churches.

6.1.6.3 Region of Origin Variable on the Perception of the Spirits

The third factor considered as a variable is the region of origin. Since we were not able to distinguish all the 250 tribes in Cameroon, they were englobed into regions. Not all the tribes within a region are identical. However, they share a similar language, culture, and tradition to the extent that throughout the interviews of the qualitative study, participants were repetitively

referring by regions. The different tribes in the center region do not share the same language but when one speaks his tribal language, the other can understand. An analogous propensity is seen among the tribes in the west where these regions are renowned for their belief in their ancestors. The categorization of the regions were subdivided into center, south, west, littoral, north, and east. The participants representing each regions are as following: 74 center, 6 south, 54 west, 19 littoral, 1 north, 3 east, and 11 invalid. We need to remark how there needs to be a consideration when dealing with answers of the participants whom represent north and east due to the small number of participants.

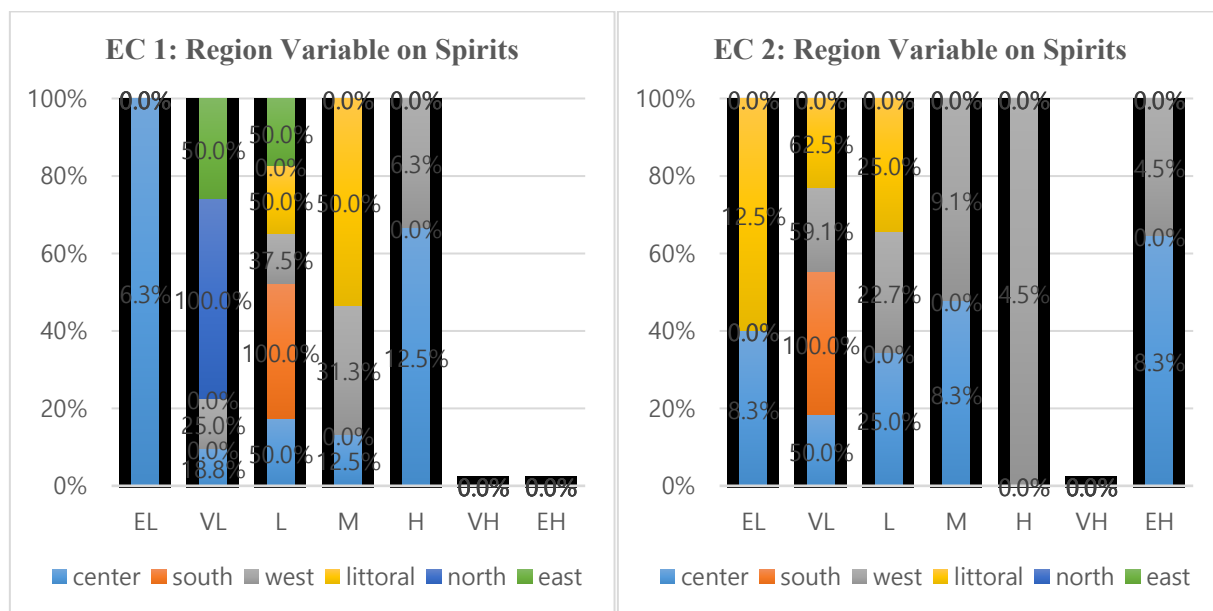


Figure 15: Region Variable on Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

Evangelical Church 1 portrayed the believers with high perception of the spirits to be respondents from the west (6.3%) and center (12.5%). A similar inclination can be grasped in Evangelical Church 2 and Independent Church 3. Evangelical Church 2 illustrated respondents from the west (4.5%) and center (8.3%) to have an extremely high perception of the spirits. Another 4.5% of believers from the west are classified to have a high attachment to the spirits. Independent Church 3 sketched people from the center region to have a high (5.6%) and a very high (5.6%) consciousness of the spirits. 6.7% of congregation members from the west also have a high connection with the spirits. Excluding Independent Church 4, whom does not represent

any Christians with a high attachment towards the spirits, all three churches depict the region of center and west being an influential factor to a Christian understanding of the spirits.

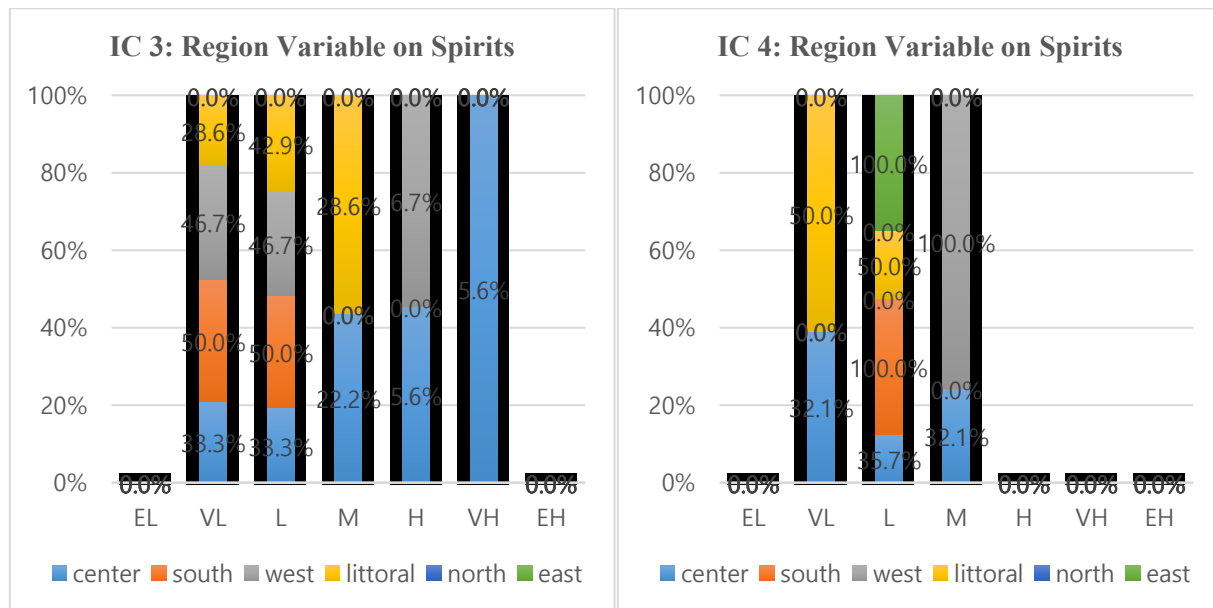


Figure 16: Region Variable on Spirits (Independent Churches)

6.1.6.4 Level of Education Variable on the Perception of the Spirits

The fourth factor considered as a variable is the level of education. The level of education were subdivided into primary (blue), secondary (orange), and university (grey). There were 9 participants representing the primary level of education, 85 representing the secondary level, and 74 representing the university level of education. Before the investigation, I presumed those with the lower education to have a higher attachment to the traditional spirits and those with the higher education to be less affined towards the spirits of the traditions. Oddly, there did not seem to be any distinction between the different levels of education.

Evangelical Church 1 demonstrated that the constituent who have a high perception of the spirits are primary (33.3%), secondary (4.5%), and university (5.0%). Having 33.3% of Christians with a primary education level as having high attachments to the spirits makes it appear as if those with the lower education have a higher bondage to the spirits. However, Evangelical Church 2 disproved such tendency for all the respondents who have a primary level

of education are positioned very lowly on their comprehension of the spirits. On the other hand, those with the secondary education (12.5%) are extremely high and those with the university education (6.7%) are high on their perception of the spirits.

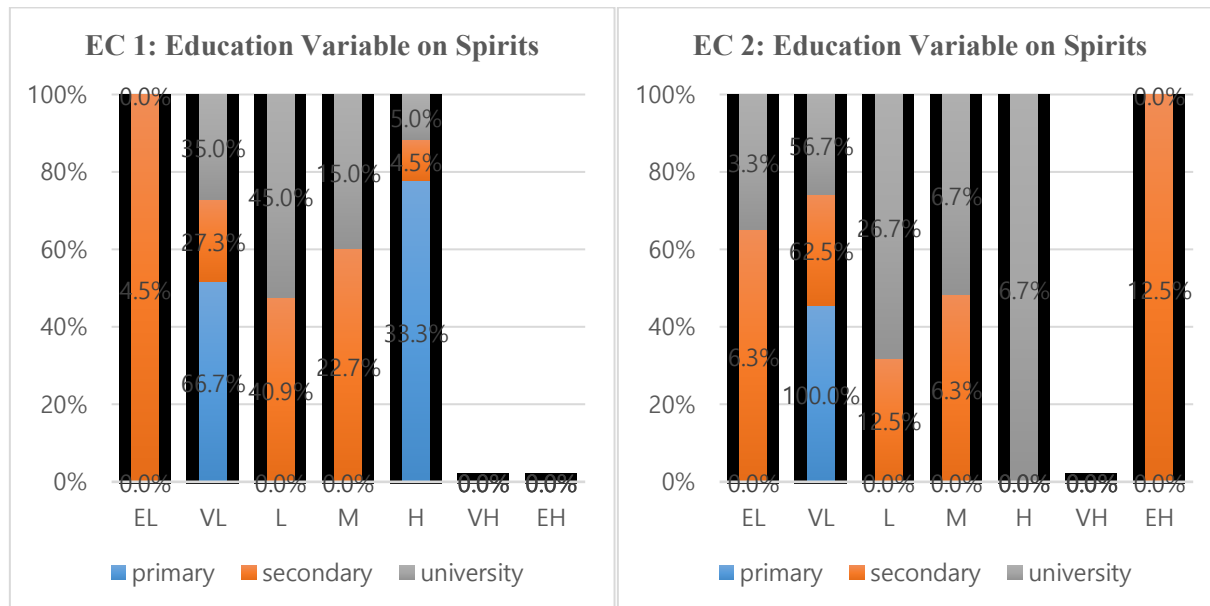


Figure 17: Education Variable on Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

Independent Church 3 also depicted a contrary image to what church 1 seemed to claim. The believers with the primary education are located on the low (50.0%) and very low (50.0%) scale on their comprehension of the spirits. Independent Church 3 characterized Christians with the secondary education as being affined to the spirits. All the believers who are highly attached or above on their perception to the traditional spirits are those with the secondary education. Out of the people with the secondary education, 7.1% are high, 3.6% are very high, and 3.6% are extremely high on their understanding of the spirits. Independent Church 4 is not to be considered for they do not represent any Christians whom are classified as having a high conception of the spirits.

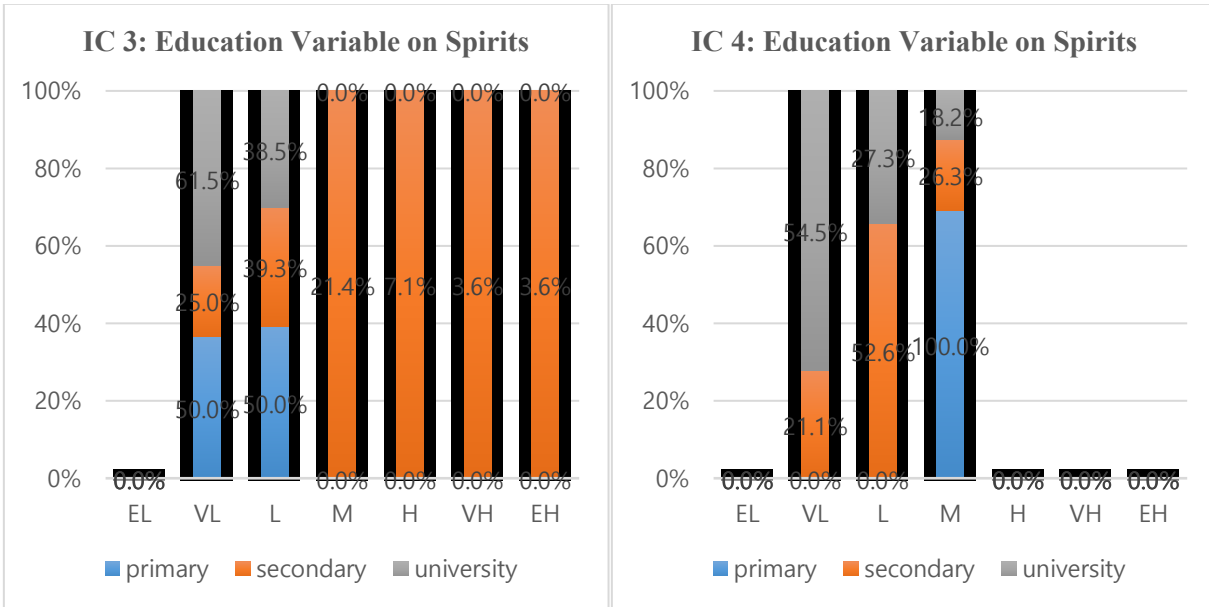


Figure 18: Education Variable on Spirits (Independent Churches)

Based on our observations of education level as a variable, we cannot make any proposal on the education level being the possible variable on the perception of the spirits. Unlike what was hypothesized in the beginning, the believers with the lower education are not any more attached to the spirits. Although we could question on if the 9 participants representing the primary level of education could be considered probing, those with the higher education level such as university depict how they are not less affined to the spirits. This observation thus proves that the level of education could not be considered as an influential variable on the understanding of the spirits among the African Christians. Our analysis is also backed up by what Matthew Michael claims. He claims the presence and activities of the traditional spirits are present even among Africans who are educated in Western culture and education.²⁵⁹ From what he asserts, it is not the kind and level of education that is going to influence an African's perception on the spirits. The results of the four churches surveyed, while having the level of education as a variable, they identically repudiate the level of education to be an influential factor on the understanding of the traditional spirits.

²⁵⁹ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 191.

6.1.6.5 Years Lived as Christian Variable on the Perception of the Spirits

The fifth factor, as a variable, is years lived as a converted Christian. I hypothesized that people who have lived longer as Christians would have lower attachments towards the traditional spirits. Moreover, people who are newly converted would have higher attachments towards the spirits of their traditions for they would be more familiar. The believers were divided into six subdivisions as 0 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, 21 to 25 years, 26 years and above. There were 47 participants who had lived 5 years or less as Christians, 48 who had 6 to 10 years, 36 who had 11 to 15 years, 18 who had 16 to 20 years, 8 who had 21 to 25 years, 8 who had 26 years or above, and 3 who were invalid.

The constituent of Evangelical Church 1 who have a high perception of the spirits are those who have 5 or less years lived as a Christian (16.7%) and those with 6 to 10 years experience as Christians (7.7%). Evangelical Church 2 seems to draw a similar portray for believers classified as extremely high are 0 to 5 years (12.5%) and 6 to 10 years (11.1%) lived as Christians. Yet, such speculation seems to be refuted for believers of 26 years and above are positioned as high (16.7%). African Christians whom had lived for 26 years and more as a churchgoer still have a high perception on the spirits.

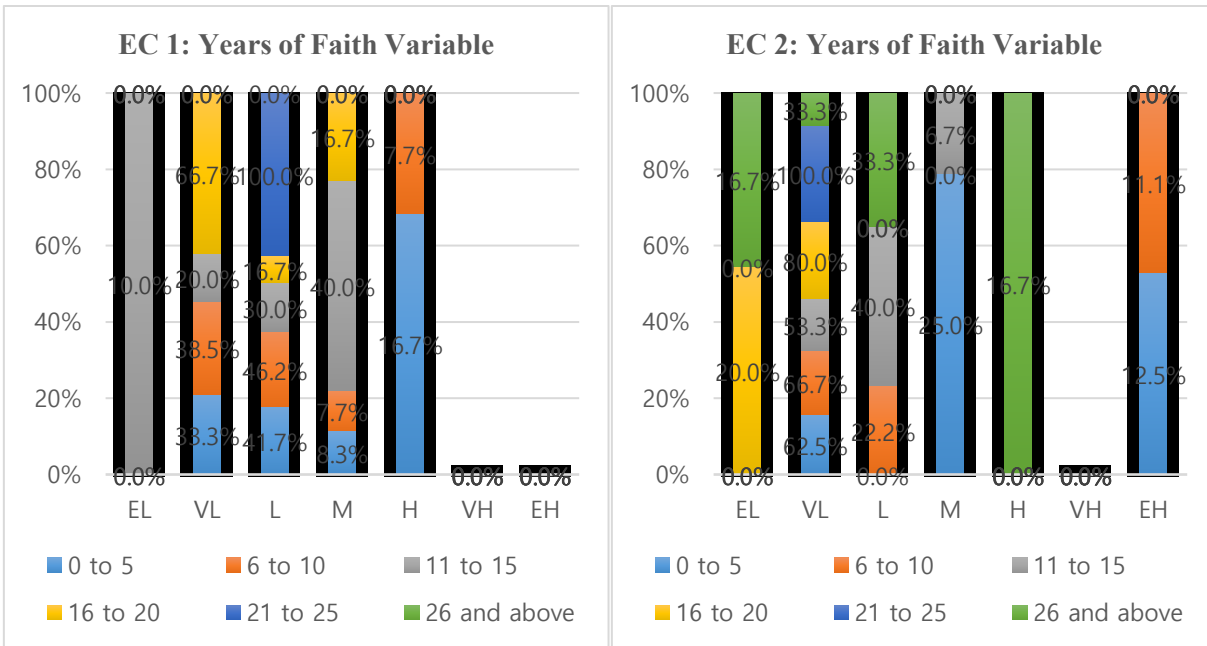


Figure 19: Years of Faith Variable on Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

Independent Church 3 seemed to add to the fore mentioned speculation for all the believers who are classified as high and above on their understanding of the spirits range from 10 years and below on their journey as Christians. The believers from church 3 with high and above perception on the spirits are: 6.7% of those 6 to 10 years as extremely high, 6.7% of those 0 to 5 years as very high, 6.7% of those 0 to 5 years, and 6.7% of those 6 to 10 years as high. Independent Church 4 are not to be considered for they do not represent believers with high perception on the spirits.

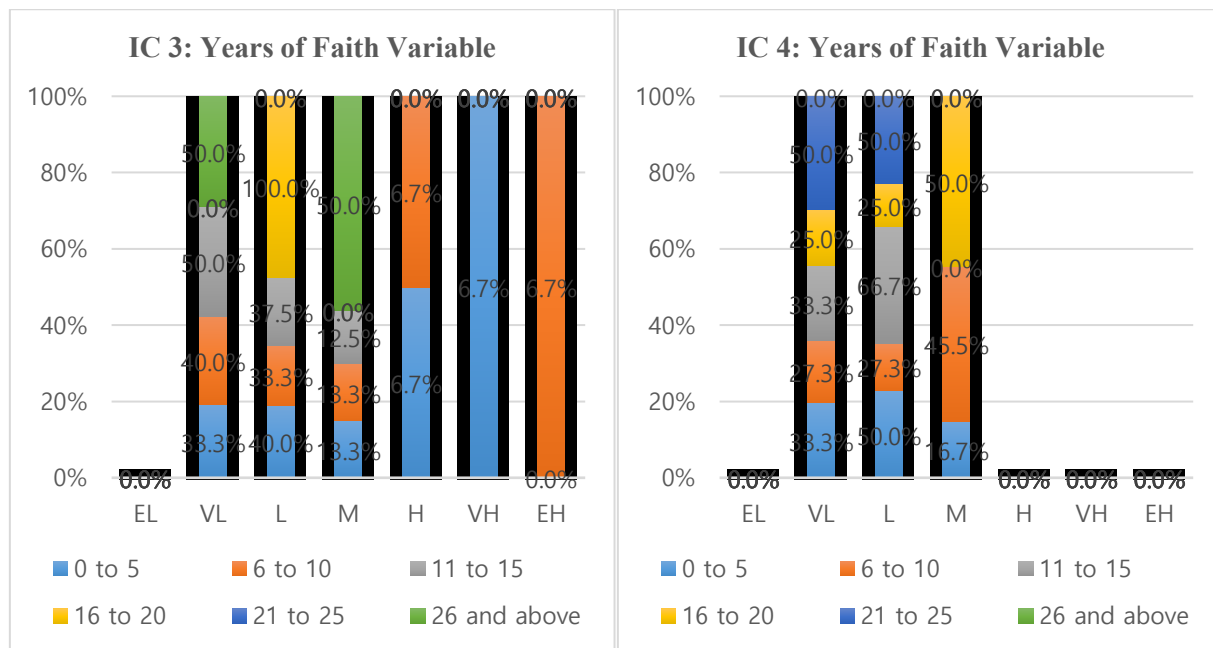


Figure 20: Years of Faith Variable on Spirits (Independent Churches)

Through the results, we have observed a similar tendency amongst the three churches which represent believers with high perception on the spirits. African Christians who have less than 10 years of journey as Christians have an inclination to be highly attached towards the traditional spirits. However, Evangelical Church 2 depicts 16.7% of believers who had lived as a Christian 26 years and above to have a high perception on spirits. Yet, this figure needs to be taken into consideration for it only represents the tendency of one participant. With the exception of one believer from church 2, we can conclude that the Christians who had less than 10 years of journey as a Christian tend to be highly attached to the spirits. It is a propensity similarly observed from the results of all three churches.

6.1.6.6 Years Lived in Urbanity Variable on the Perception of the Spirits

The sixth factor selected as the possible influential factor to the perception on the spirits is years lived in Yaoundé. I presumed the longer you live in the urbanity, the influence from the traditions of the cultures back in the village would lessen. The results inclined toward this hypothesis to be probable. The years lived in Yaoundé were subdivided into five categories as: 0 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years, 21 to 30 years, 31 to 40 years, and over 41 years. There were 41 participants who lived in Yaoundé from 0 to 10 years, 49 from 11 to 20 years, 38 from 21 to 30 years, 27 from 31 to 40 years, and 13 from 41 years and above.

Evangelical Church 1 members who have a high perception on the spirits are composed of those 0 to 10 years (12.5%) and 11 to 20 years (7.7%) in the urbanity. A similar tendency is shown amongst the believers in church 2. Believers who have a high attachment to the spirits were 0 to 10 years (25.0%) and 11 to 20 years (6.7%). Christians with extremely high attachments were those who had lived from 11 to 20 years (13.3%) in Yaoundé.

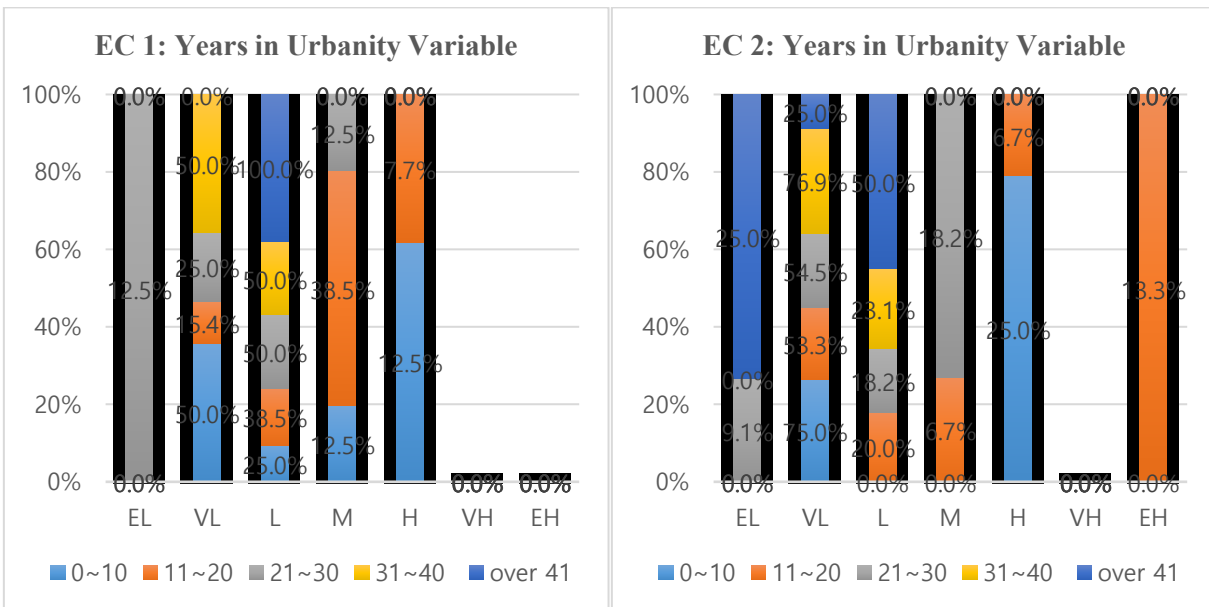


Figure 21: Years in Urbanity Variable on Spirits (Evangelical Churches)

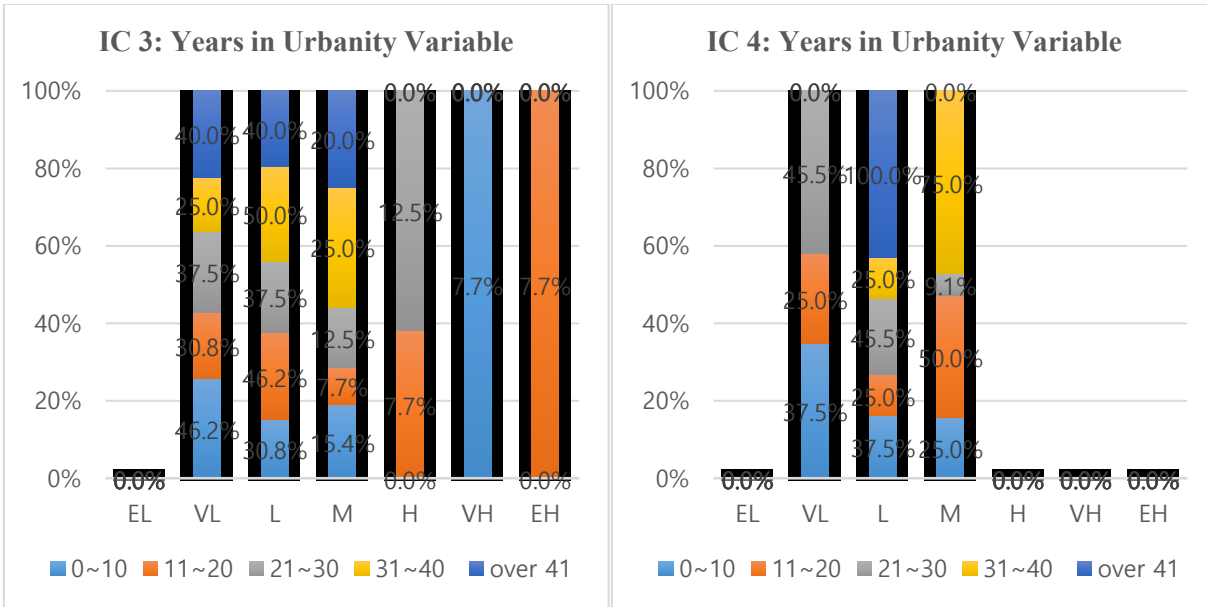


Figure 22: Years in Urbanity Variable on Spirits (Independent Churches)

Independent Church 3 has an identical propensity with those extremely high (7.7% of 11 to 20 years), very high (7.7% of 0 to 10 years), and high (7.7% of 11 to 20 years and 12.5% of 21 to 30 years). Once again, Independent Church 4 is not to be considered for it does not represent any Christians with high perception on the spirits.

Through the examination, we can realize how people who have lived for 20 years or less in Yaoundé are more inclined to be attached towards the traditional spirits. Whereas those who have lived longer in the urbanity are less affined to the spirits of the traditions. The perception towards the spirits is diminished as years lived in the urbanity increases, yet it is not a dynamic phase but a slow and gradual phase. Such analysis could be linked to section 4.2.3.3, which talked about how some well settled urban dwellers have a tendency to alienate their relationship with the family in the rurality and this has an influence with their traditional beliefs for the traditional rituals are mostly practiced in the villages.

6.1.7 Conclusion of the Quantitative Analysis on the Spirits

Through the quantitative survey undergone in four churches in Yaoundé, I have aimed to find cold figures that will enable us to visualize the actuality of the phenomena spoken by the

African theologians. This study has contributed to the academic fields for it has supplemented data representing the African Christians living in the urbanity of Yaoundé. It depicted through numbers how the contemporary African Christians are perceiving the spiritual world inherited through their forefathers.

Unlike what seemed to be a severe field of discrepancy among the theologians supporting the Evangelical theological orientations and those supporting the African Independent Churches' theological orientations, this did not seem to be the matter of discord in the churches studied in Cameroon. What Elochukwu Uzukwu stated of the African Independent Churches' understanding of the Holy Spirit and of the traditional spirits did not seem to be the case among the lay African Christians in Cameroon. The four churches surveyed in Yaoundé, all showed a low perception on the spirits regardless of their theological backgrounds.

Although lay African Christians had a low perception on the spirits, the majority of 62.5% approved of its existence. The remaining Christians were almost equally divided amongst those who were ambivalent on how to view the existence of these spirits (19.2%) and those who disapproved of their existence (18.3%). Admitting their existence did not mean they relied and depended on them for the majority of 61.1% claimed they have never depended on the traditional spirits. However, it is surprising to see that though the majority have not relied on these spirits, a majority of 65.4% of the African Christians confessed the traditional spirits had influenced them. Though African Christians do not depend on the spirits, they are affected by the spirits regardless of their personal intentions, probably by factors coming from outside.

One thing we are to note on the personal perception of the believers on the spirits is that they are varied. Although the church members attend the same church, some believe the spirits exist, some are ambivalent, and some disapprove of their existence. This varied understanding of the spirits is probably the influence of the society. The church leaders of all four surveyed churches have claimed to acknowledge the existence of these spirits although they are evil. Even though the general tendency on the perception of the spirits by the church member is standing on the opposite end to what the society believes, the varied perceptions of the spirits formed in the society seemed to have a decisive effect on African Christians' understanding of the spirits.

The analysis proceeded on the factors that could influence an African Christian's perception of the traditional spirits. The research undergone has enabled us to distinguish certain probable factors that influence an African Christian's perception on the spirits. Male had a higher tendency to be affined to the spirits. Age did not show any clear distinction amongst those in their 20s and above, but with the exception of teens who had considerately low conception of the spirits than the rest of the age range. The region of origin was also an important variable for people from the west and center region had the tendency to be more highly placed on their attitude towards the spirits. Another factor that was significant was years lived as a Christian. Those who had more than 10 years of faith had lower perception of the traditional spirits. Lastly, we were able to observe how the more years a person lived in urbanity; the lesser were their attachments towards the traditional spirits. However, this was a gradual process for ones who had lived over 20 years in Yaoundé had lower conceptions of the spirits. Gathering all these influential variables lead us to speculate that a male from the region of center or west with less than 10 years of faith who had lived less than 20 years in urbanity would be more likely to have a stronger attachment to the traditional spirits. These influential variables leaves us with the impression that unlike how some African theologians have claimed the traditional spirits to be an indispensable religiosity for the African Christians, it rather could be a dispensable matter for the contemporary believers whom live in urbanity. The younger generations they are (such as teens), the more years of faith they had (more than 10 years), and the more years they lived in urbanity (more than 20 years) will make them less affiliated to the traditional spirits. The fact that the perception of the traditional spirits is susceptible to plural influential factors will be taken into considerations, especially on chapter 8 where the raised voices from the ground will have an opportunity to dialogue with the African theologians.

All the above-mentioned information are results given from the ground through the quantitative survey. Unlike the fore running African theologians, this thesis first tried to perceive what seemed to be a muddled phenomenon with more objectivity and numbers. On the next phase of study, chapter 7, I will try to complement the given results by bringing explanations and meanings to the cold figured results.

6.2 Quantitative Analysis on the Holy Spirit

The second analysis of the quantitative study will be on the Holy Spirit. It is obvious and very likely that the Christians will have a high perception on the Holy Spirit. However, the purpose of this thesis is to look at the phenomenon from what the ground, the lay African Christians, have to say. Therefore, this part of the quantitative analysis will try to depict the cold figures the African believers are drawing on their understanding of the Holy Spirit. If there are necessities to be reminded on the details of the quantitative survey and informed once again on how to read the graphs that will appear in this section, refer to the introduction of this chapter.

As fore mentioned, some African theologians claim there are differences on how African Christians view the Holy Spirit. The African Independent Church understands the Holy Spirit while encompassing the traditional spirits of the African cultures.²⁶⁰ The Evangelical Church tries to alienate their understanding of the Holy Spirit in relation from the African traditional worldview, grounding more on what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit.²⁶¹ Such dichotic view on the Holy Spirit that seemed to differ by theological orientations were refuted through the quantitative analysis on the spirits. The quantitative depicted that the different theologically oriented churches surveyed in Yaoundé did not differ on their perception of the traditional spirits. Yet, the quantitative analysis on the Holy Spirit could be another phase where we could once again verify on whether the understanding of the Holy Spirit varies based on the churches' theological orientations. When inquiring on the traditional spirits, people could recognize they are being asked on a matter that is questioned from Christian belief and could give answers which seems ideal as an affiliate of Christianity. However, questioning them about their understanding of the Holy Spirit could make the respondents to loosen their inhibition and to express the Holy Spirit they are experiencing in their daily life.

²⁶⁰ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 179.

²⁶¹ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 191.

6.2.1 Perception on the Holy Spirit

The first quantitative analysis on the Holy Spirit will focus on the general perception. How do an African Christian perceive the Holy Spirit? By the term ‘perception’, it subsumes an African believer’s acknowledgement of existence, dependence, and influence. Once again, we are to note that the churches represented in abbreviation ‘EC’ represent Evangelical Churches and the churches in abbreviation ‘IC’ are African Independent Churches.

Evangelical Church 1, represented as EC 1, is composed of 60.0% of believers whom have an extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit, 35.6% of respondents whom have a very high perception, and 4.4% whom are moderate on their understanding of the Holy Spirit. Evangelical Church 2, depicted on the graph as EC 2, constituted of 78.7% of Christians that are extremely high on their perception and 21.3% whom are very high. Independent Church 3, marked as IC 3, is formed of 62.8% of believers whom are extremely high, 34.9% whom are very high, and 2.3% whom are high on their perception on the Holy Spirit. Independent Church 4, indicated as IC 4 on the graph, has 57.6% of respondents whom are extremely high, 36.4% whom are very high, and 6.1% whom are high on their perception of the Holy Spirit.

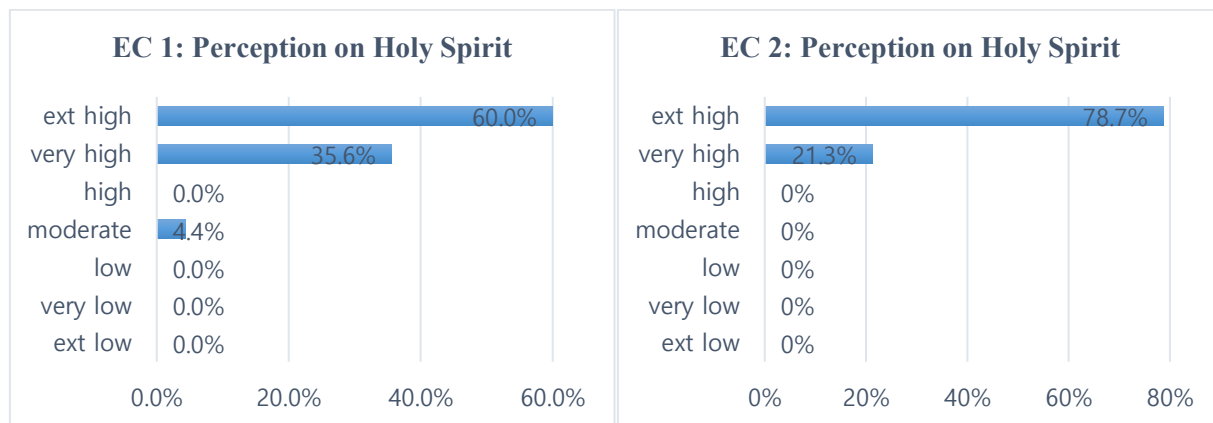


Figure 23: Perception on Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

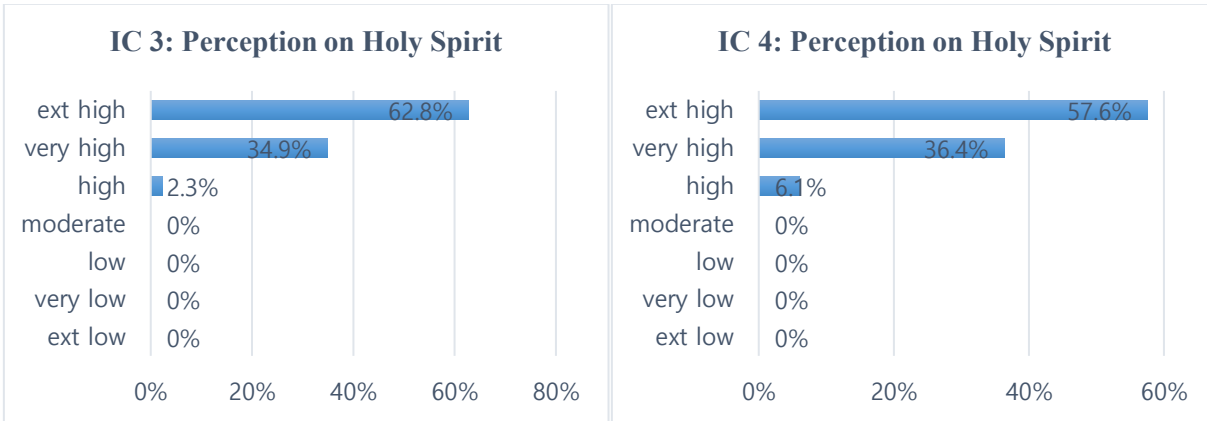


Figure 24: Perception on Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

One thing to remark at this point is that the great majority of the respondents are in close contact with the Holy Spirit in their daily lives. As fore mentioned the degree of perception is quantified by ‘extremely high’ standing for always, ‘very high’ meaning very frequent, and ‘high’ referring to occasionally. Most surveyed believers always or very frequently perceive the activity of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The result itself seems to show the acknowledgment of the frequent activity of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the surveyed African Christians.

In order to proceed to a comparative analysis between the surveyed churches, more attention will be focused on the group of believers who stated to have an ‘extremely high’ perception of the Holy Spirit. A qualitative difference is to be noted between the believers who always perceive the Holy Spirit and those who very frequently perceive the Holy Spirit. Those stating always to perceive the Holy Spirit in their lives are people who do not feel the moment of absence of the Spirit, whereas the Christians who say they very frequently perceive the Holy Spirit imply that there are moments when they feel the absence of the Spirit.

Focusing our attention to those grouped as having an extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit, we can see that the sequential order is Evangelical Church 2 (78.7%), Independent Church 3 (62.8%), Evangelical Church 1 (60.0%), and Independent Church 4 (57.6%). Evangelical Church 2 has definitely the largest proportion of Christians who claim to have an extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit for it has 15.9% more than Independent Church 3 that follows it next. The respondents from Evangelical Church 2 definitely seem to acknowledge the high activity of the Holy Spirit compared to other churches studied. We can also presume that the theological orientations do not influence a distinctive difference on the perception of

the Holy Spirit for there are not any observable discrepancy in the quantification of the general perception. Evangelical Church 1, Independent Church 3, Independent Church 4 depict similar proportions of believers who are positioned as extremely high on the perception of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, all four churches similarly share the extremely high perception as the largest majority among its members.

6.2.2 Perception on the Existence of the Holy Spirit

A subcategory of the general perception is existence. Are the African believers endorsing the existence of the Holy Spirit? Through the quantitative analysis of the traditional spirits, we have realized that the majority of the African Christians approved the existence of the traditional spirits although they mostly refuted their dependence on these spirits. In this section, we would like to quantify the recognition on the existence of the Holy Spirit by the African believers.

Evangelical Church 1 is composed of 73.3% of believers who are classified extremely high, 15.6% of Christians that are categorized as very high, 8.9% of respondents who are scaled high, and 2.2% that are grouped as moderate. Evangelical Church 2 is constituted of 80.9% of Christians who are extremely high and 19.1% of believers that are scaled very high. Independent Church 3 is formed of 72.1% of respondents who are grouped as having an extremely high perception of existence on the Holy Spirit, 18.6% that are labeled very high, and 9.3% who are scaled high. Independent Church 4 has 66.7% of participants that have extremely high perception on existence, 24.2% who are very high, and 9.1% who are classified as high.

The gathered data that subdivided into seven categories were grouped into three groups as approving, moderate, and disapproving on the existence of the Holy Spirit in order to compare with the results from the traditional spirits. The result of 99.45% of the African believers approved the existence of the Holy Spirit, 0.55% of the Christians were ambivalent, and 0% of the churchgoers disapproved of its existence. Although the 62.5% on the approval of the traditional spirits may seem quite elevated, when compared to the approval on the existence of the Holy Spirit, the acknowledgement of its existence was absolute.

We here once again remark how Evangelical Church 2 has the largest proportion (80.9%) of Christians that are scaled extremely high and it is the only church in which all the believers

are ranged in the scale of extremely high or very high. The remaining churches illustrates similar tendencies for they show a similar proportion of believers scaled from extremely high, very high, and high. In average, 73.25% of African believers of the churches studied state they always perceive the existence of the Holy Spirit.

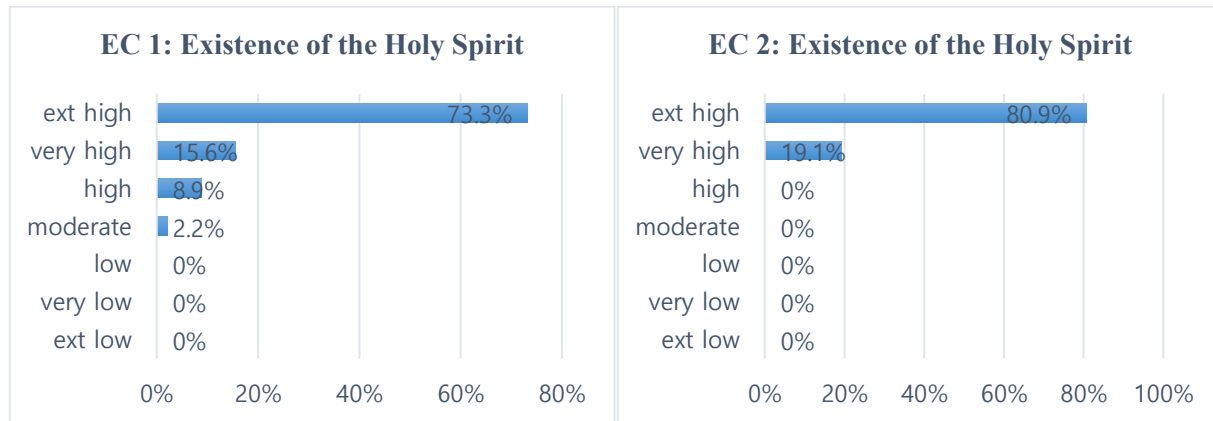


Figure 25: Existence of the Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

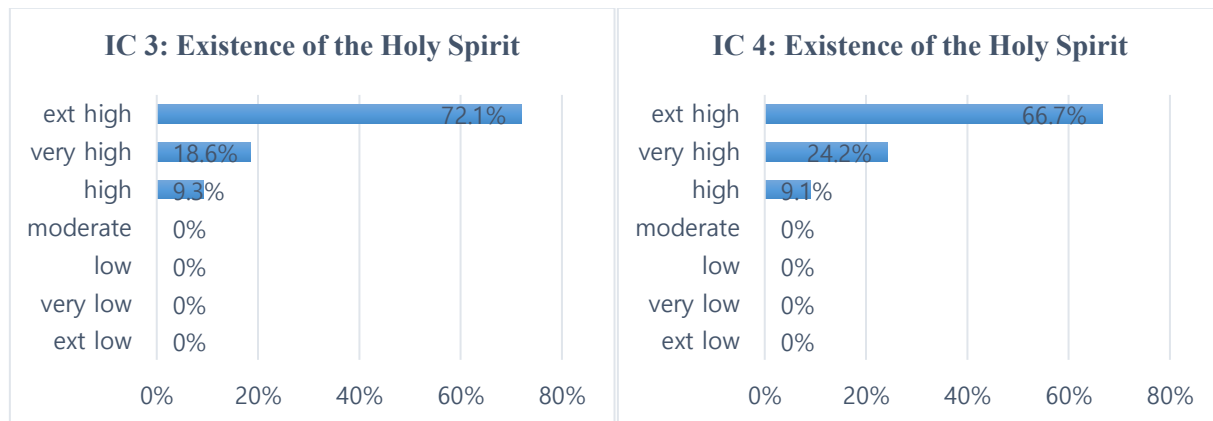


Figure 26: Existence of the Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

6.2.3 Perception on the Dependence on the Holy Spirit

Another subcategory of the general perception is dependence. Through the quantification of the dependence, I have tried to depict the reliance of the African Christians on the Holy Spirit in cold figures. One could wonder what difference there is to the quantification of the existence, yet there is a clear difference. Although the believers might recognize the

existence of the Holy Spirit, the acknowledgement does not directly imply that the believers rely on the spiritual being. There could be those who do rely on them and yet those who do not rely on them.

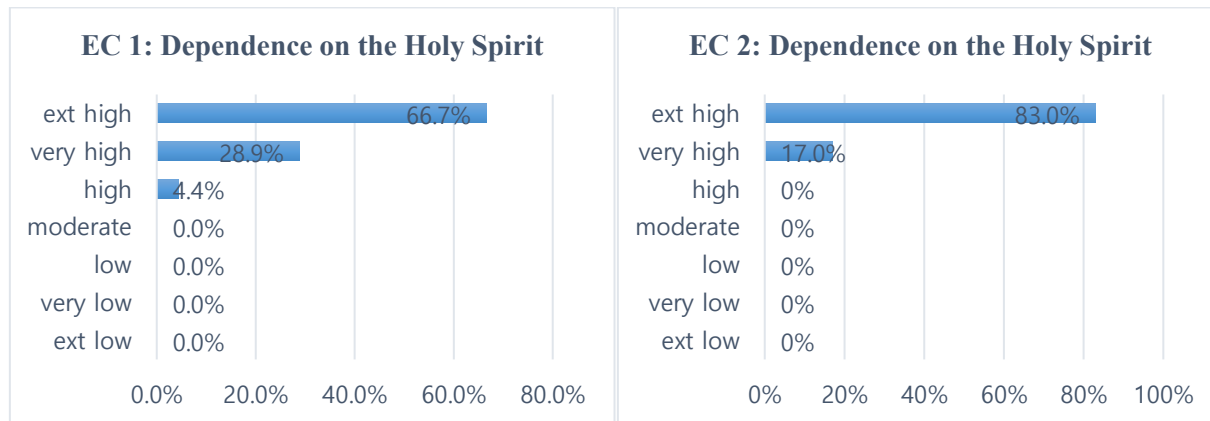


Figure 27: Dependence on the Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

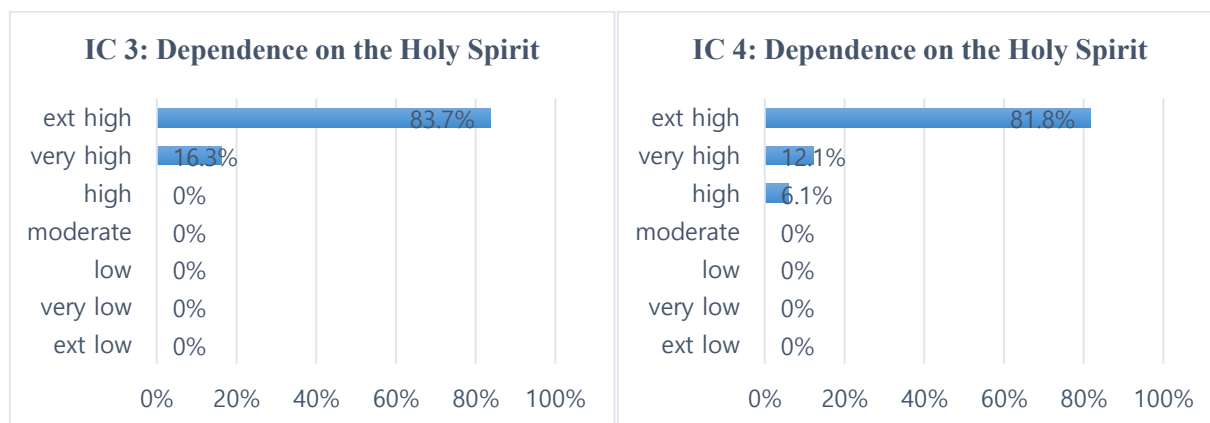


Figure 28: Dependence on the Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

Evangelical Church 1 is comprised of 66.7% whom are extremely high, 28.9% whom are very high, and 4.4% whom are high on their dependence on the Holy Spirit. Evangelical Church 2 is formed of 83.0% of believers that have an extremely high dependence on the Holy Spirit and 17.0% of those whom are grouped as very high. Independent Church 3 is constituted of 83.7% of Christians who are extremely high and 16.3% of respondents who are very high on their dependence. Independent Church 4 has 81.8% of Christians that have an extremely high dependence, 12.1% who are very high, and 6.1% that are high on their dependence on the Holy Spirit.

We can remark through this quantification that Evangelical Church 2 and Independent Church 3 which have different theological orientation depicts very similar tendencies on the believers' attitude toward their dependence on the Holy Spirit. They both have a similar proportion of believers who are identified as extremely high (Evangelical Church 2 83.0%, Independent Church 3 83.7%) and very high (Evangelical Church 2 17.0%, Independent Church 3 16.3%). Although church 1 and church 2 are both Evangelical churches, the quantification on the church members' dependence portray a disparate propensity. Results from the dependence lead us to presume that theological orientations do not distinctively influence an African Christian's dependence on the Holy Spirit.

The cold figure illustrated by the quantification on the dependence is surprising. The African Christians who have claimed they always perceive the existence of the Holy Spirit were 73.3% of Evangelical Church 1, 80.9% of Evangelical Church 2, 72.1% of Independent Church 3, and 66.7% of Independent Church 4. However, the believers who are claiming they always depend on the Holy Spirit are 66.7% of Evangelical Church 1, 83.0% of Evangelical Church 2, 83.7% of Independent Church 3, and 81.8% of Independent Church 4.

We can realize that with Evangelical Church 1 in exception, the respondents from the remaining churches claim higher dependence than they acknowledge the existence. 2.1% of Evangelical Church 2 believers have higher proportion of dependence, 11.6% of Independent Church 3 Christians have higher proportion of dependence, and 15.1% of church members from Independent Church 4 have higher proportion of dependence than existence. How could the dependence be higher than the acknowledgement on the existence of the Holy Spirit? Such phenomena would be hard to respond without referring to the African tradition. It is very likely that the spiritual dependence of the contemporary African believers that exceed their recognition of existence is due to the inheritance from the African spiritual worldview. Before the respondents believed in Christianity, the spiritual worldview that fore existed created an atmosphere of reliance towards the spiritual beings. When believers with this spiritual reliance went to church, they started acknowledging the existence of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, not all who had this reliance had a personal experience to recognize the Holy Spirit, yet this tendency to have a spiritual dependence remained. Thus, this influence from the traditional beliefs resulted in shaping highly dependent African believers. They depend more than they

acknowledge its dependence. Such phenomena could be considered as a particular characteristic found in surveyed African believers.

Unlike the other three churches, members from Evangelical Church 1 had a higher proportion of believers who acknowledged the existence of the Holy Spirit than those who stated they always depended on the Holy Spirit. Having more believers that recognized the existence than those who depended seem to be more reasonable and rational for it is odd for someone to depend on something they have not even conceded its existence. The quantification Evangelical Church 1 has shown on the Christians' perception of existence and dependence of the Holy Spirit could probably be an image that is more commonly found among churches in Western cultures.

6.2.4 Perception on the Influence of the Holy Spirit

Another subcategory of the general perception is the influence. Through the perception on the influence of the Holy Spirit, I have tried to quantify the frequency the Holy Spirit is affecting the lives of the respondents. Evangelical Church 1 is composed of 75.6% of those who are extremely high, 20.0% who are very high, 2.2% that are low, and 2.2% who have a very low perception on the influence of the Holy Spirit. Evangelical Church 2 has 76.6% of believers classified as extremely high and 23.4% of respondents who are very high. Independent Church 3 has 72.1% of members that are extremely high, 25.6% who are scaled very high, and 2.3% that are grouped as having a high perception on the influence of the Holy Spirit. Independent Church 4 is constituted of 66.7% of Christians that are extremely high, 27.3% whom are very high, and 6.1% of respondents who have a high perception on the influence.

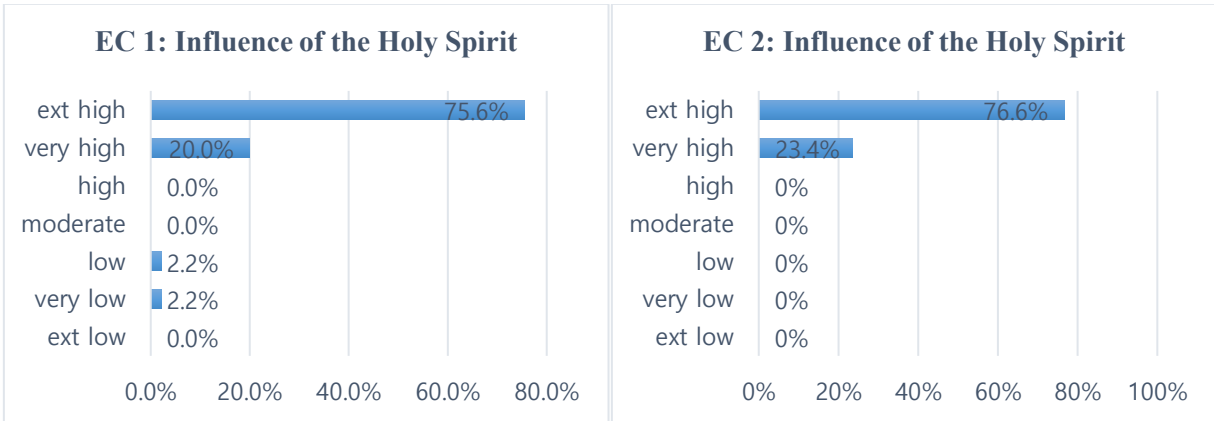


Figure 29: Influence of the Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

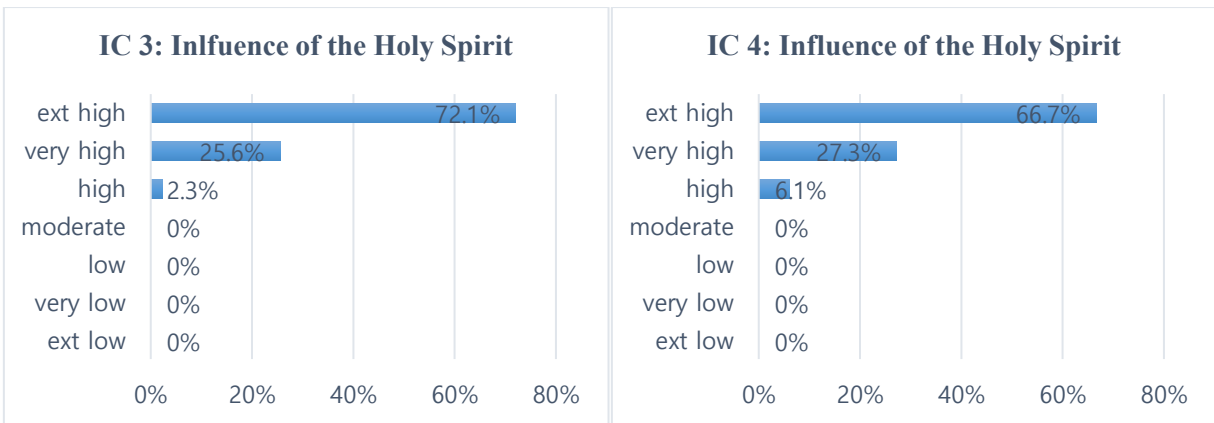


Figure 30: Influence of the Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

When analyzing the data given on the influence of the Holy Spirit, there do not seem to be any evident disparity between churches and denominations. All four churches seem to have a similar tendency on their answers on the influence of the Holy Spirit. Evangelical Church 1 shows some exception for we surprisingly observe those who are classified low (2.2%) and very low (2.2%) on the influence of the Holy Spirit. However, they do not seem to be a significant number we need to take into account, for each of 2.2% represents one person.

Although the quantification on the influence itself does not seem to illustrate any particularity, when analyzing the given data from the influence in comparison to the quantification on the dependence, it starts conveying some messages. Evangelical Church 1 has lower proportions of church members who always depend (66.7%) on the Holy Spirit than those who always recognize the influence (75.6%) of the Holy Spirit. This means the congregation

members from this church are being influenced more by the Holy Spirit than what they expect. The Christians in this church are experiencing the influence of the Holy Spirit more than they have personally expected, probably due to outer factors such as worship services and prayer meetings.

However, the remaining churches have a different orientation. They are not experiencing as much influence from the Holy Spirit as what they are expecting by depending on them. Evangelical Church 2 members who are confessing they always experience the influence of the Holy Spirit is 76.6% whereas those always depending on the Holy Spirit is 83.0%. Independent Church 3 believers' perception on influence classified as extremely high are 72.1% whereas the perception on dependence rated extremely high are 83.7%. Independent Church 4 Christians who always depend on the Holy Spirit is 81.8%, which is significantly higher than the members always acknowledging the influence being 66.7%. This implies that 6.4% of the believers from Evangelical Church 2, 11.6% of Christians from Independent Church 3, and 15.1% of Independent Church 4 members are not being met with their expectations of the Holy Spirit to work in their daily lives. This phenomenon of an unfilled spiritual expectations could be highlighted as another particular characteristic of the surveyed African believers. This is a very interesting point we need to keep in mind to excavate further through the qualitative study.

6.2.5 Social Perception on the Holy Spirit, their reality and their influence

Up to now, we have analyzed the African Christians' personal perception on the Holy Spirit by analyzing the general perception and its subcategories that are subdivided into existence, dependence, and influence. We are to take this generalized personal perception of the Holy Spirit and contrast it to what the society perceives of the Holy Spirit. This social perception is based on what the surveyed Christians' account of their environment. In order to quest for this social perception, the questionnaire has asked on the society's perception on the existence, dependence, and influence of the Holy Spirit.

The blue bars on the following box plots depict church members' personal perception on the Holy Spirit and orange bars represent the social perception on the Holy Spirit. The box plot were chosen in order to have a distinguished view on the range of the given data and to

contrast its medians. We can also identify some outliers that have a very different perspective than what the majority perceives.

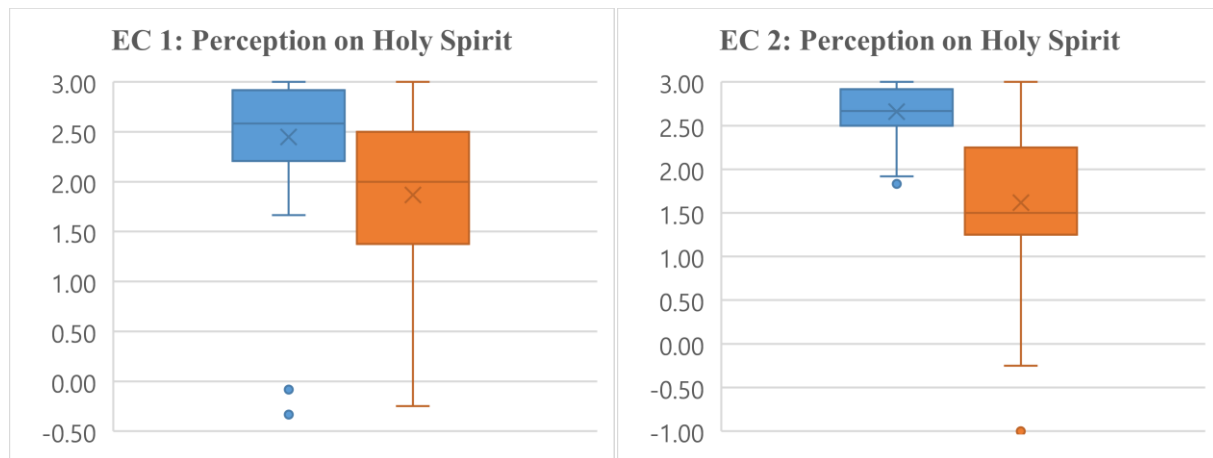


Figure 31: Church's Perception on Holy Spirit compared to Society (Evangelical Churches)

The participants from the Evangelical Church 1 has a personal perception ranging from +1.67 to +3.00. There are two outliers (-0.33 and -0.08) that differentiate from the main body stream of the church. The median of church 1 is +2.58 and is classified as 'extremely high' on its perception on the Holy Spirit. The social perception of the Holy Spirit ranges from -0.25 to +3.00. The social perception's median is +2.00, thus scaled as 'very high'. We can note that the personal perception of the church members and the social perception on the Holy Spirit are not in disagreement. They rather have a similar tendency on how they understand the Holy Spirit.

Evangelical Church 2 respondents have a personal perception ranging from +1.92 to +3.00. They have one outlier scaling +1.83. The median of the church 2 Christians are +2.67 and is labeled 'extremely high'. The social perception ranges from -0.25 to +3.00, with an outlier of -1.00. Its median is +1.50 and is grouped as having a 'very high' perception on the Holy Spirit. Here again, the social perception and the congregations' perception on the Holy Spirit does not contradict, instead they seem to illustrate a similar image.

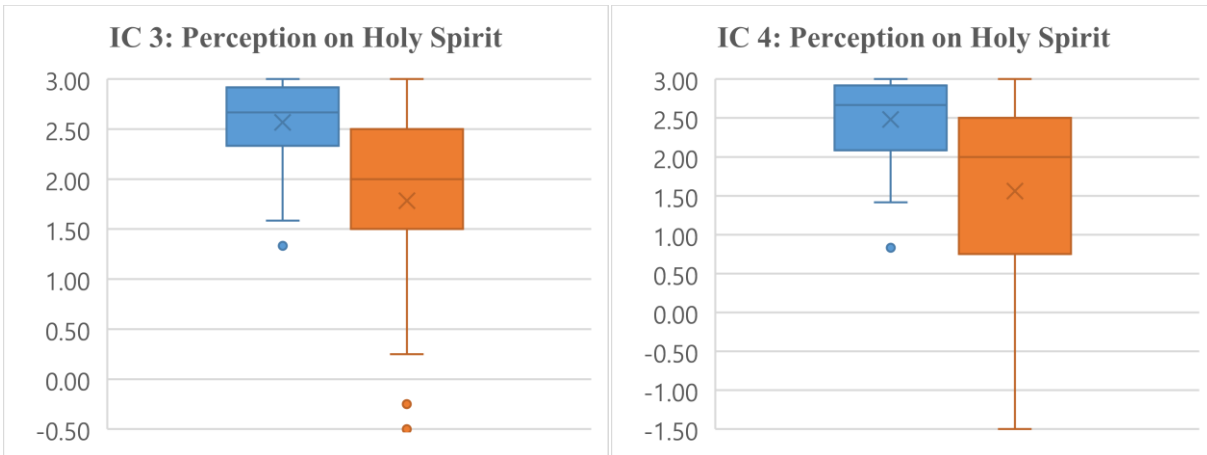


Figure 32: Church's Perception on Holy Spirit compared to Society (Independent Churches)

The Christians of the Independent Church 3 has a personal perception ranging from +1.58 to +3.00 with an outlier of +1.33. It has a median of +2.67 and it is tagged 'extremely high'. The social perception ranges from +0.25 to +3.00 with outliers of -0.50 and -0.25. It has a median of +2.00 and it is classified as 'very high'. We can observe a similar analysis done to the previous two churches identically in this church. They way the church comprehends the Holy Spirit and the way the Cameroonian society views the Holy Spirit goes along.

Independent Church 4 congregations' personal perception on the Holy Spirit ranged from +1.42 to +3.00 with an outlier of +0.83. It is identified as having an 'extremely high' perception due to its median that is +2.67. The social perception ranges from -1.50 to +3.00 and is tagged as having a 'very high' perception on the Holy Spirit with the median of +2.00. Similarly as the previous churches, we get to perceive how the Christians' perception of the Holy Spirit and the society's understanding of the Holy Spirit is identically oriented.

A common propensity is found in all four churches. All four churches had personal perceptions that were classified as 'extremely high' whereas their accounts of how the society perceived of the Holy Spirit were all categorized as 'very high'. Although there was a difference on the degree of classification between 'extremely high' and 'very high', such difference of degree could be minimized when we contrast to the results we have obtained when analyzing the traditional spirits. The personal perception and the social perception on the traditional spirits were in total discord. Evangelical Church 1's personal perception on the traditional spirits were

‘very low’ whereas the social perception were ‘high’. Evangelical Church 2 had a ‘very low’ personal perception when its social perception was ‘very high’. Independent Church 3 had a ‘very low’ personal perception while the social perception was ‘high’. Independent Church 4 was identified as having a ‘low’ personal perception when the social perception was ‘very high’. Through these results, we clearly see how the personal perception and the social perception of the traditional spirits were in total disagreement. The personal perception of the traditional spirits stood on the low spectrum while the social perception stood at the high spectrum. However, the personal perception and the social perception on the Holy Spirit have an akin propensity.

6.2.6 Variables on the Perception of the Holy Spirit

The quantitative analysis up to now have depicted how African Christians surveyed understood the Holy Spirit. At this phase, we are going to investigate on what could be some factors that influenced the believers’ understanding of the Holy Spirit. The variables considered as a possible influential factors were gender, age, region of origin, level of education, years lived as Christian, and years lived in urbanity. 100% stacked column charts were used in order to visualize given data and to analyze if these considered variables are really affecting the African believers’ understanding of the Holy Spirit. The analysis on this section will take a closer attention to the groups classified as ‘extremely high’ for they will be the people always acknowledging the existence, dependence, and influence of the Holy Spirit. It will be easier to visualize what are making the African believers attached to the Holy Spirit when we are focusing our attention to those whom are confessing they always perceive the Holy Spirit in their lives. When identical propensities are found on three churches or more, they will be presumed as possible influential variables.

6.2.6.1 Gender Variable on the Perception of the Holy Spirit

The first factor considered as an influential variable is gender. The bars in blue represents the 57 male participants and the bars in orange illustrates the 111 female participants. When

analyzing the traditional spirits, the gender male emerged as a possible influential factor for two churches, Evangelical Church 2 and Independent Church 3, depicted males as being higher on their understanding of the traditional spirits. Surprisingly, the perception of the Holy Spirit also seems to be affected with gender, for male have a higher tendency to acknowledge the work of the Holy Spirit.

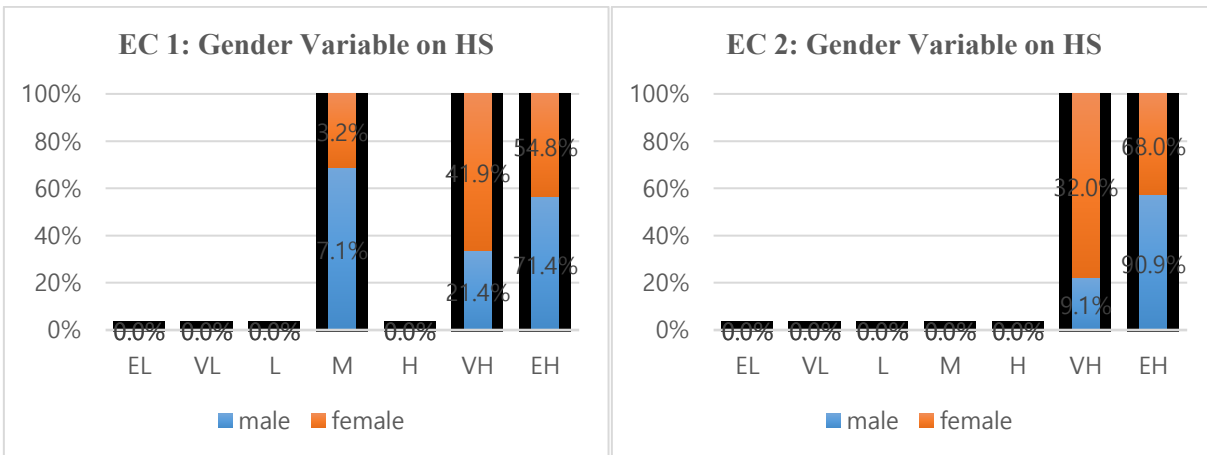


Figure 33: Gender Variable on Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

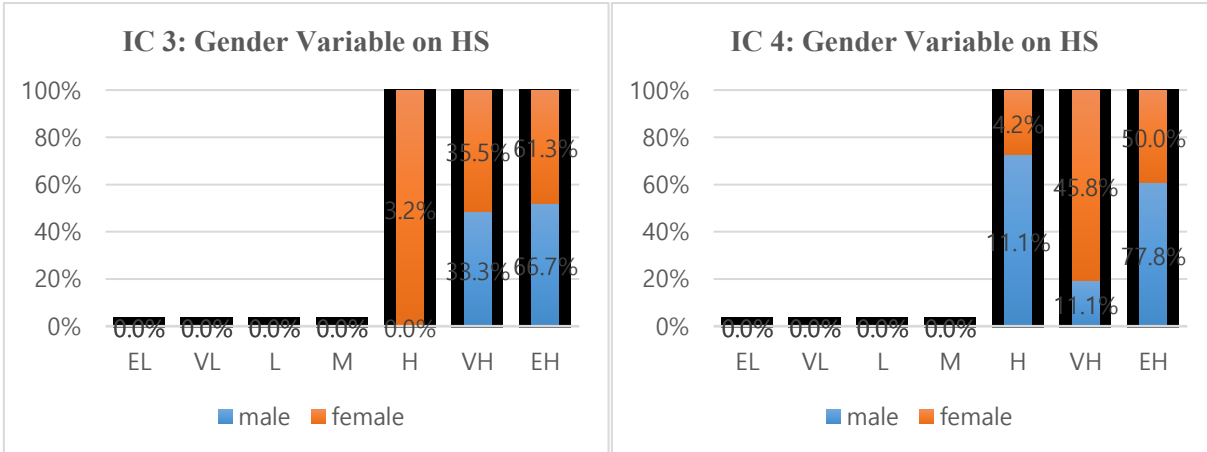


Figure 34: Gender Variable on Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

Evangelical Church 1 depicts 71.4% of male and 54.8% of female participants as having an extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit. The constituents of Evangelical Church 2 portrays 90.9% of male and 68.0% of female to have extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit. Independent Church 3 members state that 66.7% of male and 61.3% of female always perceive the Holy Spirit. Independent Church 4 draws 77.8% of male and 50.0% of female as

having an extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit. Through these results, we can realize that all the data from four churches puts the gender male as a variable factor that highly perceives of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it could be assumed that the gender male is an influential variable on the understanding of the Holy Spirit. However, we get to question this variable to be the influential factor for the number of participants of the survey shows that the number of male participants are half of the female participants (57 males and 111 females). In a service of the church surveyed, I recall how the pastor during the sermon pointed out how there were significantly more female attendants than male. This leads us to speculate that only the few male who had a significant spiritual experience of the Holy Spirit were attending church, whereas female believers continually attend church although some of them did not have a strong spiritual experience in their lives.

6.2.6.2 Age Variable on the Perception of the Holy Spirit

The second factor that could be an influential variable to the perception of the Holy Spirit is age. The age groups were subdivided into teens, twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, and sixties. There were 11 teens, 43 twenties, 52 thirties, 31 forties, 23 fifties, and 5 sixties. For the analysis of this section, the information given by three participants whose ages were not identifiable were ignored. When analyzing the given data, there is a need to take into account that only five participants represented those in their sixties.

The analysis of this section will focus on the believers scaled as 'extremely high'. It will put the age group in order from those who have the largest proportion to those with the smallest proportion. While analyzing, the age group that will repetitively rank as having the largest proportions of Christians who have an 'extremely high' perception of the Holy Spirit will be presumed to be the age group that is most attached to the Holy Spirit.

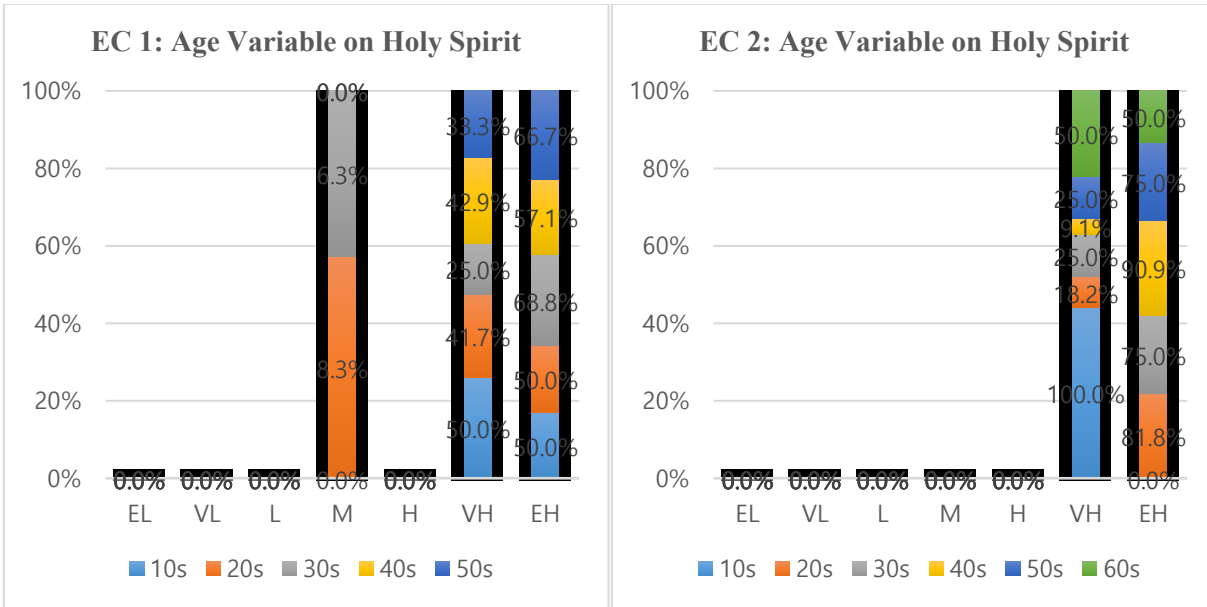


Figure 35: Age Variable on Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

Christians who always perceived the Holy Spirit from Evangelical Church 1 were grouped of 68.8% of those in their thirties, 66.7% of those in their fifties, and 57.1% of those in their forties, 50.0% of those in their twenties, and 50.0% of those in their teens. The two age groups that show higher proportion than the other age groups are those in their thirties (68.8%) and fifties (66.7%). They show 10% higher proportion than the age groups that follow next, which is those in their forties with 57.1%. The believers from Evangelical Church 2 who always perceive the Holy Spirit are formed of 90.9% of those in their forties, 81.8% of those in their twenties, 75.0% of those in their fifties, 75.0% of those in their thirties, and 50.0% of those in their sixties. The age group that exceptionally shows the highest proportion of believers with extremely high perception are those in their forties with 90.9%.

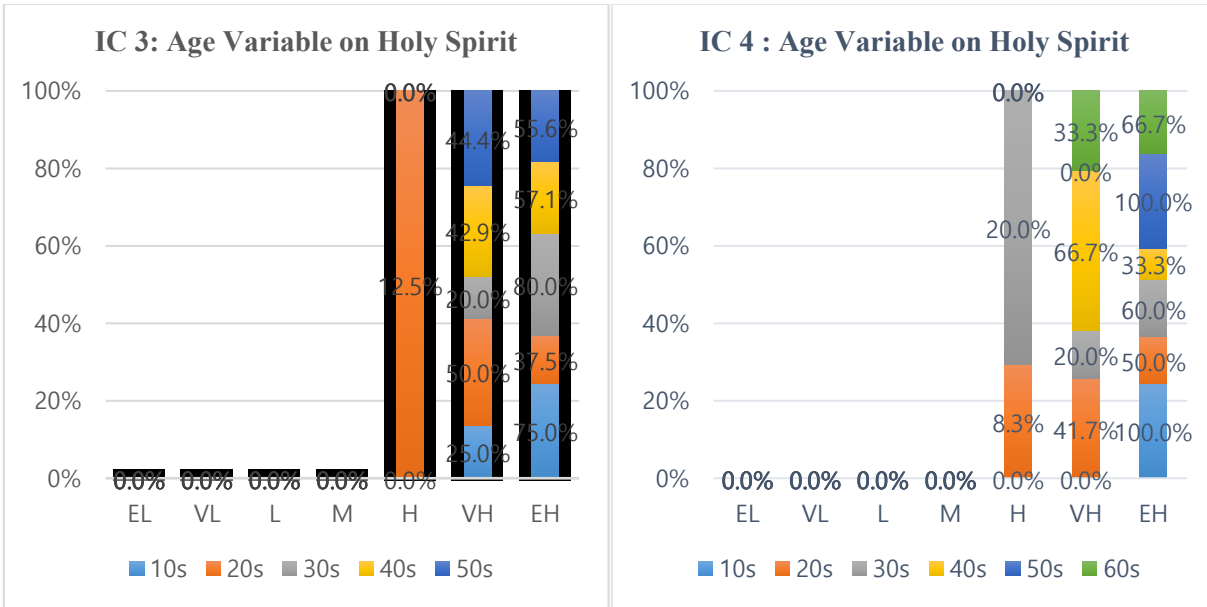


Figure 206: Age Variable on Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

Christians from Independent Church 3 always perceiving the Holy Spirit are constituted of 80.0% of those in their thirties, 75.0% of those in their teens, 57.0% of those in their forties, 55.6% of those in their fifties, and 37.5% of those in their twenties. Age groups that have distinguishably higher proportions of believers extremely highly perceiving the Holy Spirit are those in their thirties (80.0%) and those in their teens (75.0%). Independent Church 4 members who identify as having an extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit are those in their fifties 100.0%, those in their teens 100.0%, those in their sixties 66.7%, those in their thirties 60.0%, those in their twenties 50.0%, and those in their forties 33.3%. Age groups, which have the highest proportion of Christians with extremely high perception, are those in their fifties (100.0%) and those in their teens (100.0%).

There are age groups that show particularity compared to other age groups in each church. Thirties (68.8%) and fifties (66.7%) in church 1, forties (90.9%) and twenties (81.8%) in church 2, thirties (80.0%) and teens (75.0%) in church 3, fifties (100.0%) and teens (100.0%) in church 4. Although there are age groups that are mentioned twice, it does not draw any similar particularity on other churches. In exception of those in their sixties, all age groups are referred at least once as the age groups that have the highest perception of the Holy Spirit. Therefore,

age variable could not be considered as an influential factor on the understanding of the Holy Spirit.

6.2.6.3 Region of Origin Variable on the Perception of the Holy Spirit

The third factor, which could be an influential variable, is the region of origin. When identifying the data from the 168 respondents by their tribes, it will be almost impossible to distinguish their tendencies. Considering the tribes in Cameroon numbers up to 250 tribes, I have tried to group these tribes according to their regions in order to have a clearer distinction. Although we cannot claim that all the tribes in the regions are identical, they share enough similarities in order to englobe them in region to enhance this study. The tribes were grouped according to their regions: center, south, west, littoral, north, and east. The constituents of the regions are 74 center, 6 south, 54 west, 19 littoral, 1 north, 3 east, and 11 invalid data. The eleven respondents were considered as invalid information for this section due to their response of origin being unidentifiable. Throughout the analysis, there needs to be a special attention paid when interpreting answers given for north and east due to the small numbers of participants. It will be imprudent to generalize the data given from these two regions as a general tendency of the region.

Amongst the members of Evangelical Church 1, those who compose the proportions classified as having extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit are those from the north with 100.0%, those from the littoral 100.0%, those from the west with 81.3%, and those from the center with 50.0%. The results given portrays the regions from north (100.0%) and littoral (100.0%) as having a distinctively high perception on the Holy Spirit compared to other groups. Yet, we are to take into account that there were only one participant representing the north, so we cannot generalize this given answer as representing the Christians from the north. Christian from Evangelical Church 2 whom showed they always perceived the Holy Spirit in their lives were group from the littoral (100.0%), the region of west (77.3%), and the region of center (75.0%). As the analysis on church 1 had portrayed, church 2 also portrays the Christians from the littoral as having an extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit.

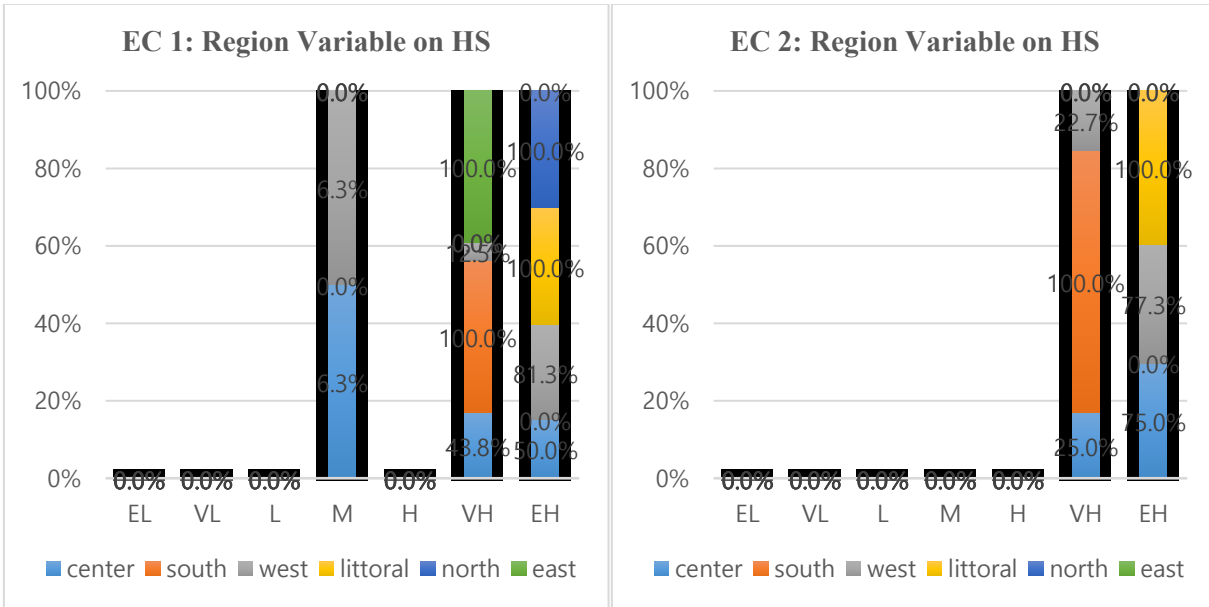


Figure 37: Region Variable on Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

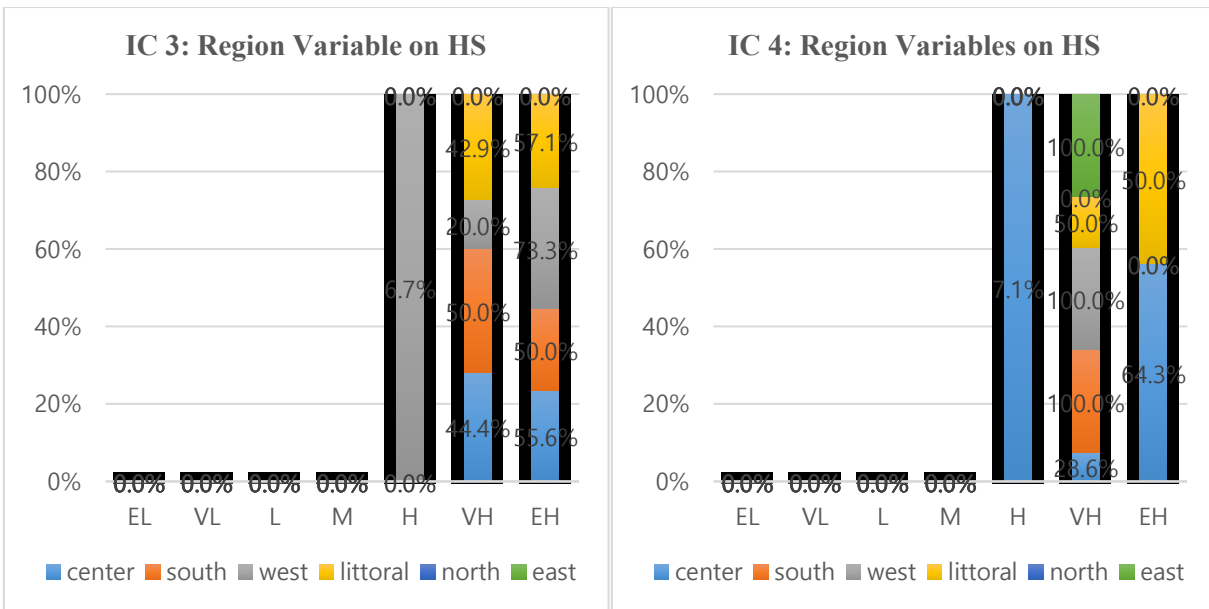


Figure 38: Region Variable on Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

The believers from Independent Church 3 that were classified as having an extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit were those from the west (73.3%), those from the littoral (57.1%), those from the center (55.6%), and those from the south (50.0%). The results drawn from this church depicts the region of west (73.3%) as having a high acknowledgement of the Holy Spirit compared to other regions. Independent Church 4 illustrates the components of its

members who have a high perception on the Holy Spirit as those from the center (64.3%) and those from the littoral (50.0%). The data given from church 4 draws those from the center (64.3%) as having the highest perception on the Holy Spirit.

Through the results given from all four churches surveyed, we can see how they do not portray a similar propensity. Evangelical Church 1 supports the tribes from the north (100.0%) and the littoral (100.0%), Evangelical Church 2 insists on the tribes from the littoral (100.0%), Independent Church 3 claims on the tribes from the west (73.3%), and Independent Church 4 votes for the tribes from the center (64.3%). As mentioned before, we are not to consider the data given for the region of the north for its participant was of small number to consider this given data as valid. The tribes from the littoral is portrayed twice as the region having the highest proportion of believers who always perceive the Holy Spirit, but the fact that this is only supported from two churches, we cannot presume this region to be an influential variable on the understanding of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we can conclude that the region of origin is not an influential factor on the perception of the Holy Spirit for believers in Cameroon.

6.2.6.4 Level of Education Variable on the Perception of the Holy Spirit

The fourth factor hypothesized as a possible influential factor is the level of education. The levels of education were distinguished in blue (primary level of education), orange (secondary level of education), and grey (university level of education). 9 participants represented those who had the primary level of education, 85 respondents stood for those who had the secondary level of education, and 74 believers whom participated in this interview had university level of education.

The Christians from Evangelical Church 1 who were scaled as having an extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit were those with primary level of education (100.0%), those with secondary level of education (68.2%), and those with university level of education (45.0%). The image portrayed by this church gives an impression that the believers with lower level of education have higher attachment to the Holy Spirit. The lower your education is, the more you are attached to the Holy Spirit. However, such presumption is refuted through the analysis of the following churches. The components of Evangelical Church 2 with extremely high

perception on the Holy Spirit are those with the secondary level of education (87.5%) and those with the university level of education (76.7%). In this church, no believers with the primary level of education claim always to perceive the Holy Spirit in their lives, thus refuting the presumption made from the analysis of the previous church.

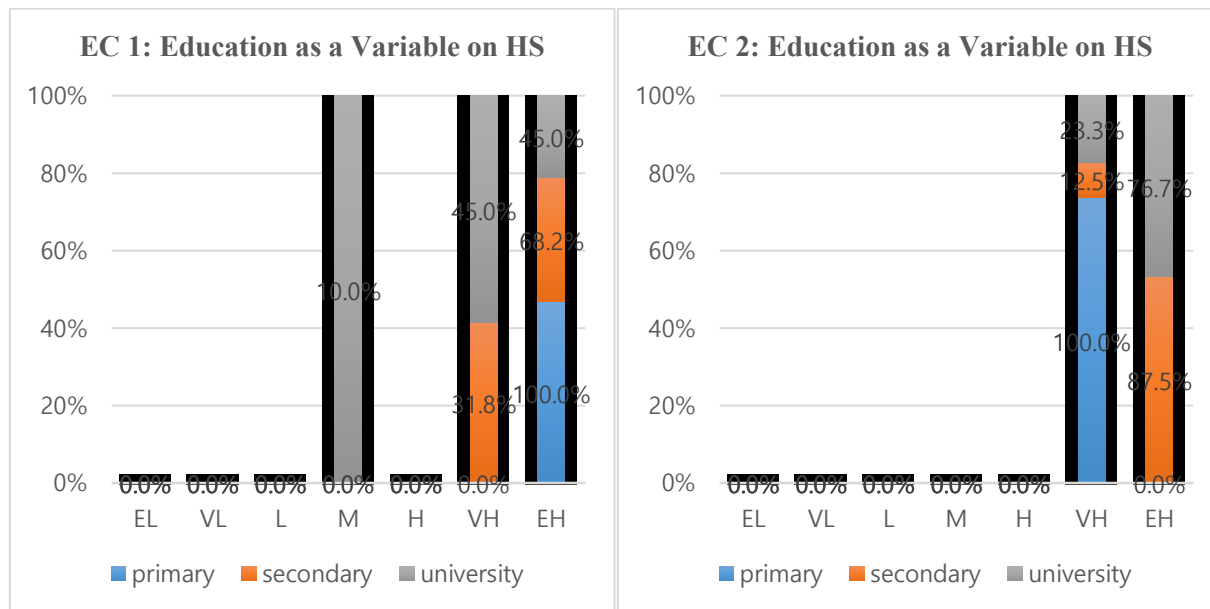


Figure 39: Education Variable on Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

The members from Independent Church 3 that have an extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit are those with the secondary level of education (64.3%), those with the university level of education (61.5%), and those with the primary level of education (50.0%). Here again, we cannot claim the lower education you have the more attached to the spiritual beings people become. Independent Church 4’s components with extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit are those with primary level of education (100.0%), those with university level of education (81.8%), and those with secondary level of education (36.8%). Although the believers with the primary level of education are portrayed as having the highest proportions of respondents who always perceive the Holy Spirit, we are surprised to see how the proportions of Christians with university level of education more than doubles those with the secondary level of education.

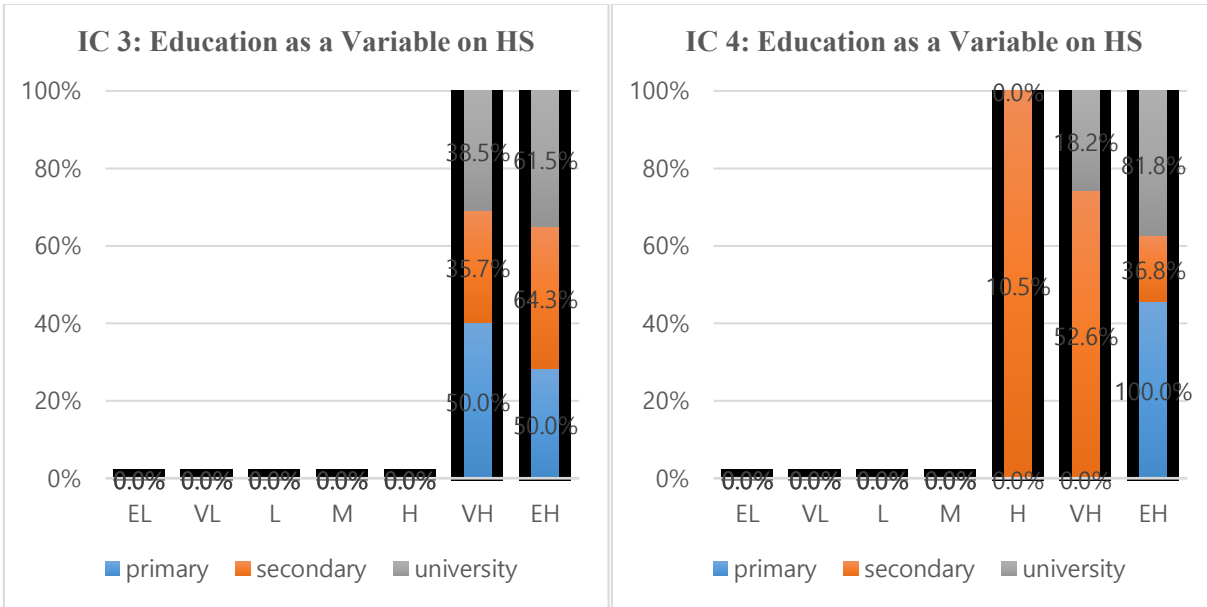


Figure 40: Education Variable on Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

When we align the level of education that ranked as having the highest proportions of believers who always perceive the Holy Spirit, we are given with the following data. Primary level of education (100.0%) for Evangelical Church 1, secondary level of education (87.5%) for Evangelical Church 2, secondary (64.3%) and university (61.5%) level of education for Independent Church 3, and primary level of education (100.0%) for Independent Church 4. If we are to presume people with less education to have a higher attachment to the spiritual beings, analogous propensity needs to be repetitively seen in churches. However, it was not the case. Primary level of education ranked top twice in Evangelical Church 1 and Independent Church 4, yet in Evangelical Church 2 and Independent Church 3 higher level of education ranked above those with primary level of education. Therefore, we can conclude that for the surveyed African Christians, the level of education is not an influential variable on their understanding of the Holy Spirit.

6.2.6.5 Years Lived as Christian Variable on the Perception of the Holy Spirit

The fifth variable, which could be a possible influential factor, is the years lived as a Christian. The years were divided into six groups from 0 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, 21 to 25 years, 26 years and above. 47 respondents had lived 0 to 5 years as

Christians, 48 participants lived from 6 to 10 years as a believer, 36 members had 11 to 15 years of faith, 18 had lived 16 to 20 years as church goers, 8 had 21 to 25 years of faith, and 8 had been going to church for 26 years and above. Data from three people were considered invalid for I was not able to distinguish their answers given for their years of faith. Before the investigation begun, I had a presumption people with longer the years of faith will have a higher attachments to the Holy Spirit.

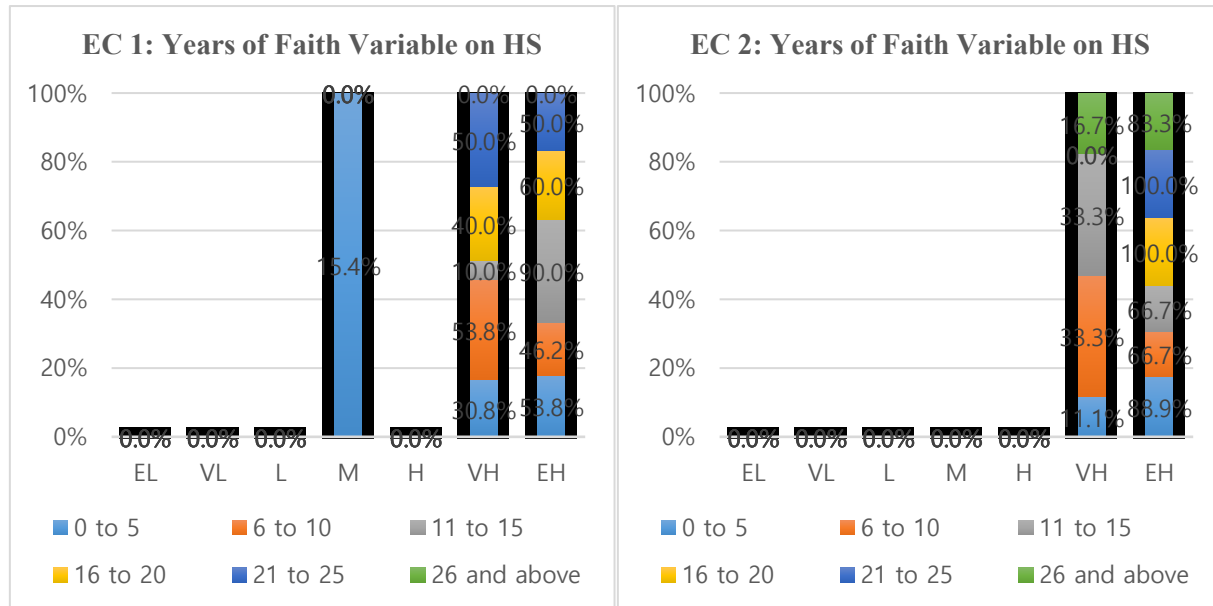


Figure 41: Years of Faith Variable on Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

The data given from Evangelical Church 1 of its constituent who are labeled with an extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit were as following. 90.0% of believers who had 11 to 15 years of faith, 60% of those from 16 to 20 years, 53.8% of Christians from 0 to 5 years, 50.0% of participants with 21 to 25 years of faith, and 46.2% of respondents who had 6 to 10 years of faith. For the fore mentioned hypothesize to be proven right, the bar graph representing those with extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit needed to be larger on the upper part and smaller on the parts below. For the graph has put them in the order with longer years of faith on the upper part and less years of faith on the lower part. However, the illustration given from church 1 shows the largest proportion to be the bar in the middle (90.0% of believers from 11 to 15 years of faith), and the upper bar representing those with most years of faith and the lower bar representing the least years of faith having a similar proportions. Christians whom had 21

to 25 years of faith have 50.0% and believers with 0 to 5 years of faith have 53.8%. This means the years a person had been going to church does not define how attached they are to the Holy Spirit.

Members from Evangelical Church 2 composing those with extremely high perception of the Holy Spirit are those with 21 to 25 years of faith (100.0%), 16 to 20 years (100/0%), 0 to 5 years (88.9%), 26 years of faith or above (83.3%), 11 to 15 years of faith (66.7%), and 6 to 10 years of faith (66.7%). The results from church 2 partially seem to support the hypothesis for the proportions on the upper part of the graph representing the extremely high perception seems to be larger with 100.0% (21 to 25 years), 100.0% (16 to 20 years), and 83.3% (26 years and above). They distinctively show a larger proportion than the groups represented on the lower part of the graph. However, we once again refuted with the group whom had 0 to 5 years of faith that have a proportion of 88.9%, which is higher than the groups that had the longest years of faith (83.3% with 26 years of faith and above).

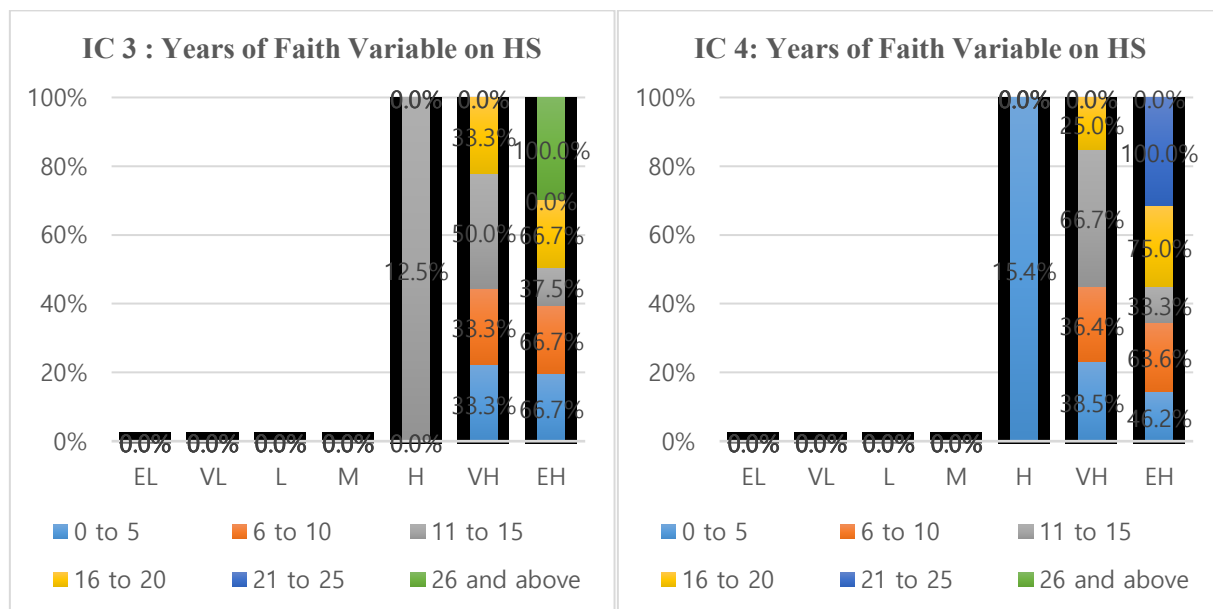


Figure 42: Years of Faith Variable on Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

Independent Church 3 portrays its members with extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit as 26 years and above (100.0%), 16 to 20 years (66.7%), 6 to 10 years (66.7%), 0 to 5 years (66.7%), and 11 to 15 years (37.5%). The age group with the most years of faith distinctively have the largest proportions with 100.0%. Three age groups have identical

proportions with 66.7% (16 to 20 years, 6 to 10 years, 0 to 5 years). Moreover, the middle group with 11 to 15 years of faith have the lowest proportions of believers who always perceive the Holy Spirit with 37.5%. Through this result, we cannot claim the longer you had believed the more attached to the Holy Spirit you are for the middle group (11 to 15 years) have the lowest proportions of believers who are identified as 'extremely high' perception.

Those who are marked as having an extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit amongst the believers of Independent Church 4 are 21 to 25 years (100.0%), 16 to 20 years (75.0%), 6 to 10 years (63.6%), 0 to 5 years (46.2%), and 11 to 15 years (33.3%). Although we once again observe how the upper parts have a larger proportions of believers noted as extremely high on their understanding of the Holy Spirit (21 to 25 years: 100.0% and 16 to 20 years: 75.0%), the middle part of the graph representing 11 to 15 years of faith have the lowest proportions with 33.3%. Those on the lower part of the graph depict a higher attachment to the Holy Spirit than the middle part of the graph (6 to 10 years: 63.6%, 0 to 5 years: 46.2%).

Through the quantitative analysis on the years of faith as a variable on the understanding of the Holy Spirit, we cannot conclude the hypothesis stating the longer the years of faith, the more attached to the Holy Spirit you become. For this hypothesis to be proven correct, the results drawn by the churches needed to portray a larger proportion on the upper part of the graph and less proportion on the lower part of the graph. However, three churches (church 2, church 3, and church 4) have portrayed results in which the middle part (11 to 15 years) of the graph represented the smallest proportions of believers out of all the year range.

Although we cannot conclude the longer you have believed the higher perception you have on the Holy Spirit, we still can notice some similar tendencies through these results. The Christians with the most years of faith have a tendency to be highly attached to the Holy Spirit compared to the other groups. Evangelical Church 2 showed three groups with the most years of faith to have an extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit: 83.3% of 26 years and above, 100.0% of 21 to 25 years, and 100.0% of 16 to 20 years. Independent Church 3 claimed 100.0% of respondents with 26 years and above of faith always perceived the Holy Spirit. Independent Church 4 stated 100.0% of participants with 21 to 25 years of faith always recognized the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. In exception of church 1, the remaining church illustrated those with the longest year ranges of faith to have larger proportions of believers whom extremely

highly perceive the Holy Spirit. Although we cannot presume the perception of Holy Spirit increases gradually as the years of faith increased, when we cut in the graph in half and compare the bipolar end of the timeline, there is a noticeable distinction of perception. Those grouped as having the longest years of faith have higher perception than those who have recently believed.

This does not mean that recent believers have a low perception of the Holy Spirit, instead a symbolic number of Christians whom recently believed (0 to 5 years of faith) also have a considerable understanding of the Holy Spirit. In all four churches surveyed, those with 0 to 5 years of faith were never the minority on the proportion of believers classified as having an extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit. This means that considerable ratio of recent believers highly perceived the Holy Spirit.

If I am to conclude if the years of faith is an influential variable on the understanding of the Holy Spirit, I could answer with a partial no and a partial yes. Church members who are grouped among the oldest attendant of church have more tendency to highly perceive the Holy Spirit than those grouped as recent believers. Yet, the answer to this question is also a partial no, for we cannot say that the perception of the Holy Spirit increases gradually and in a sequential order.

6.2.6.6 Years Lived in Urbanity Variable on the Perception of the Holy Spirit

The sixth variable selected as a probable influential factor on the understanding of the Holy Spirit is years lived in urbanity, which in the case of the survey was Yaoundé. The years lived in urbanity were divided into five groups. Those who lived in urbanity from 0 to 10 years, those who lived from 11 to 20 years, those that had lived from 21 to 30 years, those who had settled from 31 to 40 years, and those that lived in Yaoundé for 41 years or more. 41 respondents had lived in Yaoundé between 0 to 10 years, 49 participants lived between 11 to 20 years, 38 people surveyed lived between 21 to 30 years, 27 of them lived between 31 to 40 years, and 13 Christians answered they had been living for 41 years or more.

Evangelical Church 1 members whom confessed they always perceive the Holy Spirit were composed of those who lived in urbanity from 11 to 20 years (69.2%), 31 to 40 years (57.1%), 21 to 30 years (57.1%), 0 to 10 years (56.3%), and for 41 years and more (50.0%). The

group that shows the most ratio of believers extremely high on their perception of the Holy Spirit are those who live in urbanity between 11 to 20 years. The result given from church 1 does not show any particular tendency. The respondents from Evangelical Church 2 state their believers who have extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit are those that lived in urbanity for 41 years and more (100.0%), 21 to 30 years (81.8%), 11 to 20 years (80.0%), 31 to 40 years (78.6%), and 0 to 10 years (50.0%). Those with the highest attachment to the Holy Spirit were members of church who lived in urbanity for 41 years and more with 100.0% of them confessing they always perceive the Holy Spirit in their lives. This given result seems to imply the longer years in urbanity gives a higher perception on the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, such presumption cannot be finalized for three of the remaining groups have similar ratio of attachment to the Holy Spirit.

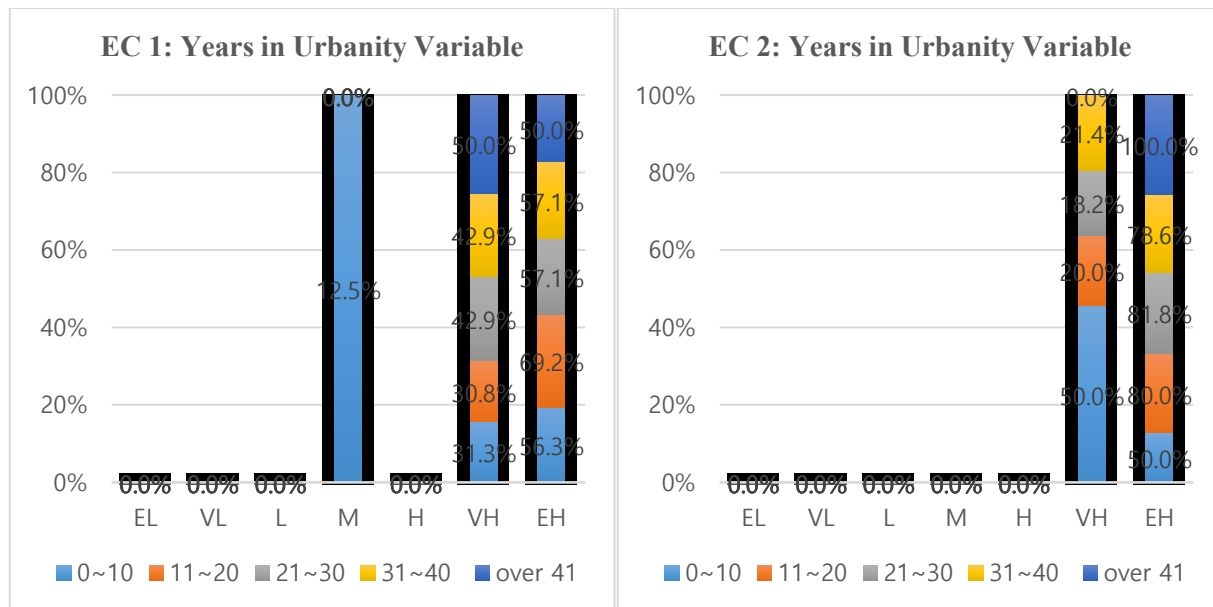


Figure 43: Years in Urbanity Variable on Holy Spirit (Evangelical Churches)

Independent Church 3 Christians who always perceived the Holy Spirit were those that had lived in urbanity between 11 to 20 years (76.9%), 21 to 30 years (75.0%), 31 to 40 years (60.0%), 0 to 10 years (53.8%), and 41 years or more (25.0%). The groups that have the highest proportions of those with extremely high perception on the Holy Spirit are 11 to 20 years (76.9%) and 21 to 30 years (75.0%). The results of this graph does not convey the readers any particular messages. Members of Independent Church 4 whom constituted the extremely high perception

on the Holy Spirit are those whom lived in Yaoundé from 31 to 40 years (75.0%), 11 to 20 years (62.5%), 0 to 10 years (62.5%), and 21 to 30 years (54.5%). The group with the highest ratio of believers always perceiving the Holy Spirit were those that lived in urbanity from 31 to 40 years with 75.0%. Once again, the data of this church does not draw any particular correlations between the attachment of the Holy Spirit and years lived in urbanity.

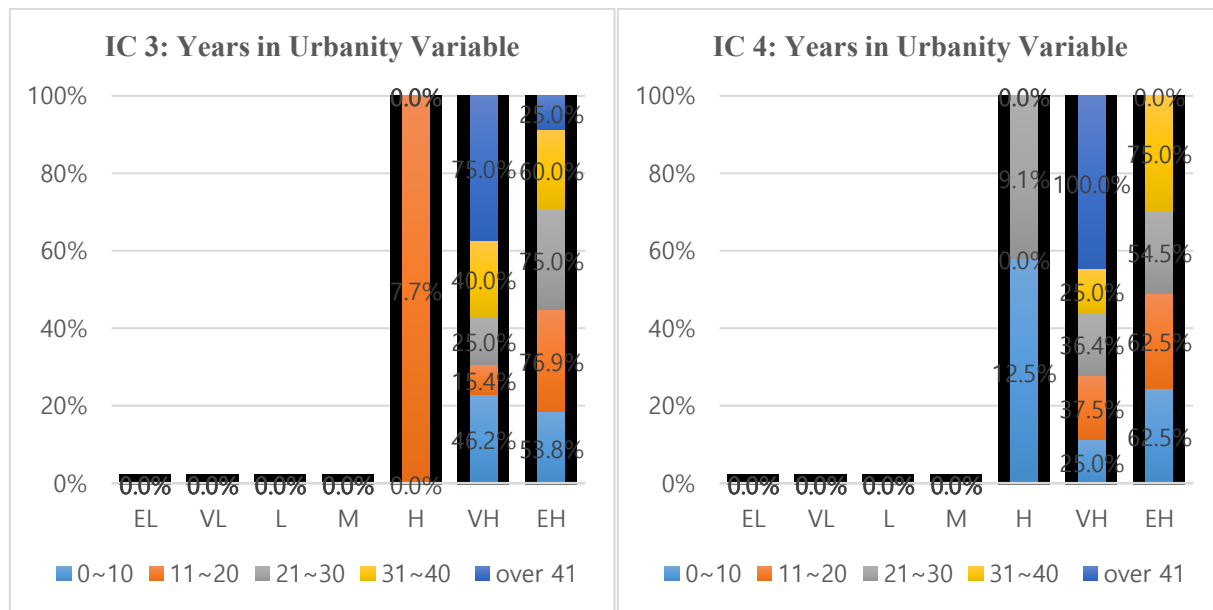


Figure 44: Years in Urbanity Variable on Holy Spirit (Independent Churches)

Through the results given, we cannot draw any conclusion that the years lived in urbanity could be an influential factor on the understanding of the Holy Spirit. Thus, years lived in urbanity is not an influential factor on the understanding of the Holy Spirit. This is a different outcome from the analysis on the understanding of the traditional spirits, for the attachment of the traditional spirits was affected by the years a person lived in urbanity.

6.2.7 Conclusion on the Quantitative Analysis on the Holy Spirit

The quantitative analysis on the Holy Spirit covered the African Christians' understanding of the Holy Spirit from different perspectives. It covered the African Christians' general perception of the Holy Spirit, their acknowledgement on the existence of the Holy Spirit, the believers' dependence on the Holy Spirit, and the recognition on the influence of the Holy

Spirit in their daily lives. It also contrasted the surveyed Christians' understanding with the social perception and searched for variables that could be probable influential factors on their comprehension. The quantitative analysis has brought many significant insights on how the African believers surveyed are perceiving the Holy Spirit. Through this analysis, we have come to better comprehend some particular characteristics' surveyed African believers understand the Holy Spirit. Let us once again recapitulate the findings excavated through the quantitative analysis on the understanding of the Holy Spirit.

The analysis on the African Christians' general perception of the Holy Spirit has made us confirm that different theological orientations do not bring distinctive variations on the understanding of the Holy Spirit. Speculations among the African theologians were drawn that the understanding of the Holy Spirit differed amongst the African Independent Church and the Evangelical Church. Elochukwu Uzukwu claims one of the greatest contributions of the African Independent Church is their creative Pneumatology that incorporates a Generalized Holy Spirit.²⁶² This term Generalized Holy Spirit has its root in the African Independent Church where they subsume the characteristics of the traditional spirits under the one Holy Spirit.²⁶³ Matthew Michael, an Evangelical theologian, reproaches the African Independent Church's view saying they have a problematic understanding of the Holy Spirit by associating the traditional spirits to the Holy Spirit. He states African Church needs to find ways to overcome this problematic conception of the Holy Spirit.²⁶⁴ These opinions at each end of the polarity seem to segregate African Christians' understanding of the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits according to their theological orientations. However, the quantitative study, on the general perception of the traditional spirits among the Cameroonian Christians living in urbanity, has shown in cold figures that the African believers of different theological orientations do not differentiate on their understanding of the traditional spirits. This picture depicted has been completed through the quantitative analysis on African Christians' understanding of the Holy Spirit, for there were not any particular distinction that prevailed due to the theological

²⁶² Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 179.

²⁶³ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 176.

²⁶⁴ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

orientations. Instead, there were distinctions caused by the different characteristics of the members within the church itself. However, no traits distinguished the churches because of their theological orientations. Such results lead to the conclusion that for the four churches studied in Yaoundé, in which two were Evangelical and two were Independent, the denominations were neither influential factors that formed particular traits on the believers' understanding of the traditional spirits nor of the Holy Spirit.

An interesting discovery found through the analysis on the dependence of the Holy Spirit is that the African Christians' reliance on the Holy Spirit was higher than they acknowledged the existence of the Holy Spirit. In exception of Evangelical Church 1, the remaining church shared this identical propensity. Evangelical Church 2 had 2.1% higher dependence than the Christians acknowledged its existence (existence 80.9%, dependence 83.0%). Independent Church 3 had 11.6% higher dependence than their recognition on the existence of the Holy Spirit (existence 72.1%, dependence 83.7%). Independent Church 4 had 15.1% higher dependence on the Holy Spirit than they approved of its existence (existence 66.7%, dependence 81.8%). The percentage given for the existence and the dependence are the ratio of believers in the church which always perceive the existence of the Holy Spirit and those who always depend on the Holy Spirit. How can someone claim to depend more on a spiritual being than one acknowledge of its existence? My personal hypothesis of such phenomena is that it is a particularity of the surveyed African believers. The African spiritual worldview that fore existed before one has converted to Christianity has created a heart of dependence towards the spiritual beings in the heart of the African believers. Therefore, after their conversion, although not all of them truly have acknowledged the existence of the Holy Spirit, their hearts of dependence towards the spiritual beings remained. The qualitative analysis on the Holy Spirit will ponder on this dependence and the expectations surveyed African believers have toward the Holy Spirit. Some anticipations are similar to what they formerly had to the traditional spirits and some are different.

The quantitative analysis on the influence of the Holy Spirit had also made us observe an interesting factor. When contrasting the proportions of Christians who always perceive the influence of the Holy Spirit in their lives and the ratio of believers who always depend on the Holy Spirit, we found that three churches (Evangelical Church 2, Independent Church 3, and

Independent Church 4) had higher dependence than influence. This means that the Christians in these three churches depended more on the Holy Spirit than they actually recognized the influence of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives. Evangelical Church 1 was an exception for their respondents claimed they experienced more influence of the Holy Spirit than they actually depended on the Holy Spirit. The issues found on these three churches could lead to a negative effect. Although they depend on the Holy Spirit, since they do not experience enough influence of the Holy Spirit as they had hoped, it could result in a shift of dependence towards other spiritual beings to fill their needs. Further investigation on the qualitative analysis (section 6.2.3) on the Holy Spirit will try to observe with more attention regarding this matter.

The analysis on the social perception of the Holy Spirit had surprised us, for the results showed that what the society perceived of the Holy Spirit was very similar to how the Christians understood the Holy Spirit. The general perception on the Holy Spirit of all four churches was classified as extremely high, whereas the social perception which was accounted by all four churches was rated as very high. When taking into account the data given from Association of Religion Data Archives that states 58.1% of Cameroonians to be Christians²⁶⁵, the result of the social perception being similar to that of the church is not too surprising. However, we get to recall on how the social perception on the traditional spirits significantly differed from that of the church on the quantitative analysis of the traditional spirits. The personal perception of the churches members all ranged from low to very low, whereas the social perception were scaled from high to very high. This means the perception on the traditional spirits of believers and the society were in total contradiction, standing at both ends of the polarity. However, this same society's attitude for the Holy Spirit stands in line with that of the believers. Why does the same society in which the majority are Christians have different reactions to the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit? It would have been more reasonable if they had similar stances to that of the church on both matters. This suspicious and contradictory phenomenon will further be studied on the qualitative analysis on the traditional spirits on section 7.1.4.

Variables that could be considered influential factors on the comprehension of the Holy Spirit were investigated. The results showed that only the gender of male was a factor that

²⁶⁵ « The Association of Religion Data Archives | National Profiles ».

enhanced African Christians' attachments towards the Holy Spirit. However, this variable was questioned due to the significantly low number of male believers who attended church services when compared to the females. If male gender was the influential factor on perceiving the Holy Spirit, there should have been more male churchgoers than female. However, the ratio of participants who had joined the survey depicts how male participants are only half of the female participants (57 males and 111 females). During a service of the church surveyed, the pastor preaching mentioned how there were notable number of female believers compared to the males. The fact that there actually are significantly less male believers who go to church, leads us to question the gender male to be the influential factor on comprehending the Holy Spirit. Years of faith also showed some correlations towards the perception of the Holy Spirit. However, it was not in a sequential order that more years of faith brought higher perception of the Holy Spirit. Yet, it still showed some distinction of attachment amongst the church members who were among the ones with the most years of faith when compared to the recent believers. To resume the variables that influence the attachments to the Holy Spirit, we cannot conclude a variable to be the influential factor on one's comprehension of the Holy Spirit in exception of the years of faith that could receive partial credit. Whereas the believers' comprehension on the traditional spirits was influenced by different influential factors, the understanding of the Holy Spirit was comparatively less influenced. The above-mentioned discoveries are to be taken into considerations while we head to the following chapters on the qualitative analysis.

Chapter 7: Analysis of the Qualitative Survey

The quantitative analysis has revealed in cold figures the speculations that were made on the African Christians' understanding of the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. Unlike what seemed to be on the academic field, the Christians in Yaoundé from different denominations did not show any differentiation on their understanding of the traditional spirits and of the Holy Spirit. The difference was not due to the influence of the theological stances, but it was rather a matter of each church members' personal tendencies. Regardless of the denominations, some churches shared similar attitudes on these spiritual beings. These illustrations of the phenomena displayed by the quantitative study enlightened us with different insights. By raising the volume of the voices which were unheard on the academic fields, the lay African Christians, this thesis will try to make explicit the meaning of the illustrations revealed by the quantitative survey.

Following my methodology of the Sequential Mixed Explicative Method, the qualitative study was done sequentially after the quantitative study. With the results of the quantitative that showed the respondents' posture on their understanding of the traditional spirits, selections were made throughout different stances in order to hear what African Christians with different attitudes towards the traditional spirits had to say. Throughout the selections of respondents for the semi-directed interviews, not much attention was paid on the believers' stance on the Holy Spirit for the largest majority of the African Christians who were surveyed had a similar point of view scaling from 'very high' (31.5%) to 'extremely high' (65.5%) on their perception of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the selections were made based on their varied stances on the traditional spirits.

The semi-directed interview had 26 participants in total, 7 believers from each church, with the exception of the Independent Church 4 who had 5 respondents. The first part of the semi-directed interviews inquired on how the society, the church, and the respondents understood the traditional spirits. The later part of the interview focused on investigating the personal comprehension of the Holy Spirit and the personal process of incorporating the collision of the two spiritual worlds, the traditional spiritual world and the Christian spiritual world.

Throughout the qualitative analysis, I would be quoting and referring to the content of the interviews. Thus, to guarantee the confidentiality of the interviewees, they will be mentioned with a particular identification that resembles the following: EC1_1. “EC1” will represent that this interviewee is affiliated to the Evangelical Church 1. This first part of identification could vary as EC2, IC3, and IC4, which would be codes that distinguished the churches that had participated in the survey. The following number “1” is a code for personal identification. Since there were 168 respondents who participated on the quantitative survey, all participants were given a number from 1 to 168. When referring to the interviewee and their content of the semi-directed interview, their classification of perception from the quantitative analysis would be mentioned, for the additional information of the readers. This would enable the readers to join in the process of analysis. Although the categorization of the respondents was mostly based upon the quantitative results, this section being a qualitative analysis stressed more on the content of the interview when their quantitative classification came into contradiction with the content of their interviews.

The qualitative analysis pondered on the content and the theme expounded by the participants having as the basic ground, the results acquired from the quantitative study. Therefore, if we were to analyze the high perception of the existence of the Holy Spirit, it first focused on what the participants who were already classified to have high perception of existence through the quantitative result had to say. Their voices were gathered and contrasted according to the contents and themes that arose throughout the interview. However, when the quantitative result and the content of the interview did not go along, this section highlighted with more importance the content of the interview for this section is a qualitative analysis.

7.1 Qualitative Analysis on the Spirits

This part of the study will analyse questions that were raised through the quantitative analysis on the traditional spirits. The quantitative analysis had enlightened plural interesting images, which depicted the African Christians’ perception of the traditional spirits. However, if we do not get to understand thoroughly the message African believers wanted to convey through

these images, these exotic illustrations will not be of much signification to the readers. It will only be images shared and understood amongst the African believers.

Plural questions that emerged while admiring the portrayals on African Christians' understanding of the traditional spirits were the following. Most intriguing was the diversified and varied understanding of the traditional spirits among the believers of the same church. Although churches of different denominations did not show a distinctive perception on understanding the traditional spirits, members of the same church were observed to have diversified understanding of the traditional spirits. Some African believers surprisingly showed extremely high dependence on the traditional spirits and some believers even acknowledged the active influence of the traditional spirits in their lives. The bipolarized view on the traditional spirits between the church members and the society that is mostly Christians were also outlandish. To cover these various curiosities raised, the qualitative analysis will cover the diversified views on the existence, dependence, influence, and the bipolarized view on the traditional spirits.

7.1.1 The Diversified views on the Existence of the Spirits

The respondents' understanding on the existence of the traditional spirits was very divergent. Such varied understanding was noticed on the quantitative study, for it portrayed how 62.5% of the respondents approved the existence of the traditional spirits, 19.2% were ambivalent or not sure of its existence, and 18.3% disapproved the existence of the spirits. The majority recognized the existence of the spirits, yet a significant number stated they were not sure or ambivalent of their existence, others claimed they did not exist at all.

7.1.1.1 Respondents Approving the Existence of the Spirits

The majority of 62.5% of the 168 Cameroonian Christians interviewed answered they approved the existence of the traditional spirits. However, this does not mean that all the respondents who approved of its existence had an identical stance regarding the spirits. Although they all agreed on the existence, some were hostile toward the spirits, others were

confused, and the remaining were favorable. The qualitative study cannot lead us to a quantification, yet the impression received throughout the semi-directed interview is that the negative stance was considered the norm, some were moderate, and occasionally came those who had positive attitude towards the traditional spirits. Throughout this section of the thesis, we will try to grasp the varied attitudes Cameroonian believers have on the traditional spirits. The qualitative analysis will ponder on the subjective point of view the respondents have towards the traditional spirits, in order to better comprehend what this cold figure of 62.5% of the surveyed African believers approving the existence of the traditional spirits means.

7.1.1.1.1 Hostile Stance

First, we will hear the voice of the participants who accept the existence of the traditional spirits and have a negative stance towards them. The interviewee EC1_1, categorized as ‘very high’ perception on the existence of spirits, recounts how she and her husband used to depend on these traditional spirits.

“The witchdoctor whom we used to consult told how it was because of someone who had put a curse on us that our business were not doing well, it was because of our grandfather, it was because of our mother’s family, it was because of our father’s family, etc. The more we went to consult the witchdoctor, the more he asked for money. We got to realize that consulting the witchdoctor and depending on the traditional spirits were useless. After we became a born-again Christian, we have decided not to visit the witchdoctors anymore.”

She in another occasion states the traditional spirits to be satanic.

EC2_54, identified as having a ‘high’ perception on the existence of spirits, accounts of how he used to be very ill:

“I used to be very sick. All my body and hands shivered everyday, all my body was rigid and I walked like a robot. To cure this sickness I tried everything with my mother. We went to hospitals in Bafoussam, Bertoua, and Douala; but the doctors found nothing wrong with me. Some suggested to my mother to try the traditional witchdoctors. When I went to meet the witchdoctors, they said a family member was trying to sell my soul. We had to cast off the evil spirits and protect me through the traditional rituals. However, nothing changed and I even felt as if it was getting worse. One day, an aunt saw my state and told me this was not an ordinary illness. We needed to go meet a pastor. Since I was in the village, she brought me to Yaoundé so that I could see the pastor of her church. Pastor André told me that I needed to be in prayers at all time. In addition, since then I started praying with Pastor André everyday. I slept at a room in the church and at 2AM, he woke

me up for prayers until 8AM in the morning. He told me to read the Word of God during all day long. He insisted that the Word of God was God himself. When I heard this, I had the faith that the Word of God will heal me. Praying 6 hours at night and reading the Bible all day long was not easy. One day while we were praying, the pastor grounded me saying it is not him who can cure me but God. While being grounded, it felt as if the Holy Spirit was talking directly to me. After prayer, I took the Bible and started reading. I probably read 30 chapters that day. I suddenly felt a spirit within me and I sensed healing. I went to the pastor and told him that I feel that God is living in me. He told me to persevere reading the Bible. I started feeling the healing more and more. My neck that was rigid was no more, my hands that shivered all the time no more shivered. The frustration, fear, and evil thoughts that revolved around my mind was going away little by little. The total healing came during a dream. I dreamed I was lying on the ground before Jesus' feet. I tried to stand up but could not move at all. I reached out my hand and touched Jesus' feet. Jesus seeing me held my hand and helped me rise up. As soon as I woke up, I went to report this dream to the pastor and he told me, 'Jesus has totally cured you. You were dead but now you are totally delivered and cured.' Since then I started coming to this church."

He states the spirits to be evil spirits which had caused his severe sickness that were not found even by the doctors.

IC3_116, classified 'extremely high' on the perception of existence, narrates of his experience of the spirits as he was a kid.

"When I was a kid, I had a friend whom we always used to walk to school together. This kid already knew the dark spiritual world but I was still innocent. However, we were very close. At times, when I used to take a rest, this kid often use to come to me and annoy me. I once asked him why he liked disturbing and annoying me so much. He replied it was because he wanted us to be in the same spirit. It was not the kid himself who was annoying me but the spirit that controlled him. Another time, my mother once told me to get water from the well at night. While I got some water and on my way back, I saw something very frightening. I saw a man in the shape of a tree whom suddenly appeared before me and then disappeared."

The respondent believes the spirits possess people and control them to annoy others. They sometime suddenly appear to frighten people and disappear. They are there to destroy and to haunt people.

IC4_153, 'extremely high' on the existence of spirits, states the spirits to be evil and recalls of her two experiences linked with the spirits.

"I have got to personally experience the works of the evil spirits in my life. What marked me the most, are their manifestations against my family. My husband always used to be brutal and violent. I thought it was his personal character. After I believed in Christ, I met a pastor whom told me that my husband was violent not of his own will, but due to the

works of the evil spirits. A while later, I went to visit a person who made me grow in faith. I told him how my husband does not want me to assist church reunions and the person replied that I needed to tie these spirits. That is when I have realized the things my husband was doing were not of his own will but the evil spirits working through him. I also had another problem with the spirits when I had my children. 4 months after my children were born; they all became sick, started coughing and vomiting. I met a priest who was an exorcist, but he asked me too much money that I could not afford. That is when a friend of mine told me about this pastor who does not receive any money and just teaches Christians how to free themselves by declaring the Word of God. Since I prayed with the pastor, my child found health and I did not have any health problems with any of my children.”

The interviewee claims the spirits to be the people who died and came back to life. She believes these ancestral spirits all come from the evil spirits and thus are evil. They are the ones who made her husband brutal and violent. They are the ones who made her children sick.

Although the majority of the surveyed Cameroonian Christians’ were approving of the existence of the traditional spirits, through the semi-directed interview, we have come to understand why a significant number of them were having a hostile view towards these spirits. They understand these traditional spirits as spirits who destroy, haunt, cause sickness, and are satanic. Although the qualitative analysis cannot be quantified, the impression I have got throughout the semi-directed interview was that the hostile demeanor towards the spirits was a dominant phenomenon. The interviewee EC1_21 supports my impression for he states, “When us Africans talk about the spirits, we generally refer to the evil spirits.” Some expressions participants of the semi-directed used while referring to the traditional spirits were satanic, Satan, sons of Satan, bad, evil, liars, destroy people, harm people, attack people, bring sufferings, bring curse, manifest negatively in people’s lives, and make people sick. The majority of the believers’ whom participated in the interview seem to have a hostile attitude toward the traditional spirits.

7.1.1.1.2 Neutral Stance

Second, we will hear the voice of the respondents who believe in the existence of the traditional spirits and have a neutral stance towards them. This neutral stance is subdivided into two groups: there are those who are indifferent and those who think both positively and negatively of the spirits. Those who have an indifferent attitude are believers who are neither

hostile nor sympathetic toward the traditional spirits. Those who were later mentioned are participants who claim that there are bad and good spirits.

The interviewee identified as IC4_145, categorized as 'very high' on existence of spirits, accounts how he has believe in the existence of traditional spirits since he was a kid until now, he still does. He tells of his recent experience with traditional spirits:

"I recently had this experience about the spirits; it was two or three weeks ago. I was in my room and woke up around one or two o'clock in the early morning and was not able to sleep anymore. I have decided to read the Bible. Suddenly, I have felt the presence of this spirit. It entered through the door and got out the window. It was something I have experienced directly. I felt this force, and I thought this must be a spirit or spirits."

We get to realize how the respondent does not imply any negative nuance while mentioning his experience of the spirit. The respondents who had negative opinion towards the spirits referred to the spirits as evil spirits or bad spirits. However, participant IC4_145 does not show his hostile nor sympathetic stance on the spirits. His neutral stance is maintained throughout the whole interview. While commenting on his personal thought of the traditional spirits he says, "I understand that these traditional spirits could help us just for the material good or the terrestrial existence, but when concerning on the life above, they are incapable of doing anything." He credits the capability the spirits have on this world. At the latter part of the dialogue, he mentions their differences to be, playing different roles. The only time he mentions the spirits with a negative subtlety is when he explains his church's stance on these spirits. He accounts how the church tells the believers not to entrust in these spirits for they cannot give eternal life and mostly cause sufferings on people's lives. While speaking about his personal belief, we cannot grasp any sense of enmity nor sympathy. The observation leads to presume that this participant has a neutral stance on the traditional spirits.

Interviewee IC3_129, who has a 'very high' perception on the existence of the spirits, also has a neutral stance on the spirits. She thinks the traditional spirits could be evil and could be good. It depends on the power they have been entrusted. She accounts of her experience when she used to go consult the spirits with her mother: "When my mother used to bring us, she often used to tell me that she is not going to kill someone but just heal and to save us so that we may be great women in the future. So she used to bring us so that we could have a better life later on." Hearing what she said, I got curious if this same spirit could kill and could heal. She

answered: “There are two kinds of spirits, evil spirits and good spirits. When we go consult, we do not know which one is which. All these spirits are ancestors regardless of their nature, regardless of whether they are good or evil.” Another question emerged on how some became good and some became bad spirits. The respondent answered, “As I have mentioned, it depends on the power you have been entrusted to, good or evil. Some have received the power to cause epilepsy and others to cure headache. These spirits are not always unkind.” Through the interview, we get to realize how she views that there are both evil and good spirits. Differently to those who have a negative stance towards the spirits, she comprehends the traditional spirits to be good and bad. The fact that the spirits could be good or bad, affect the interviewee’s stance regarding the spirits to be neutral.

7.1.1.1.3 Favorable Stance

Lastly, we will hear the voice of a believer who acknowledged the existence of the traditional spirits and have a positive stance towards them. Interviewee EC2_84, who is scaled ‘very high’ on the existence of the spirits, has been found to have a favorable stance towards the spirits through the content of her interview. For she is a churchgoer, she does not plainly state that she has a favorable stance on the traditional spirits. However, the analysis of her dialogue depicts how she is spirit-friendly. The respondent and her family have a close tie to the traditional spirits for she accounts of her mother’s burial was closely linked to the traditional rituals. After the death of her mother, the family realized their life were not working out well. In the traditions, there are certain places they can burry their dead. If the corpse are misplaced, the spirits get angry and hinder the life of the descendants. The oldest sister, whom suspected this to be the case, went back to the village to consult what was going wrong and found out that the spirits of the village were unhappy due to the corpse being misplaced. They had to unearth the corpse and bury her to another place where the spirits were willing. The familial background that is strongly tied to the traditional spirits seems to influence how she views the spirits. She accounts how spirits possessed her for around 5 years. When I asked what kind of spirits they were, she answered:

“I am not sure... It is true that somehow in the traditional spirits, there are those that are good and those that are bad. There are those that exist for the good, to arrange things but

others are there to spoil. They truly exist, since we are in Africa, they truly exist. When speaking of my case, I am not sure... However, I can say that my life was pretty well before I met God. Then suddenly there is a combat, there is a disagreement between... Yes, it is a bit that.”

The interviewee seems to be confused and unable to diagnose the identity of the spirits that possessed her. Nevertheless, we can draw a clear line that the spirits she had experienced is not the Holy Spirit for she says they are spirits she experienced before she met God. Her nostalgic expression on how her life was pretty well before she met God exposes how she had and still has a positive stance toward the spirits.

When asked about the similarities or the differences good and bad spirits have, she answers:

“If I want to make a difference of the spirits according to what I have experienced. I think that the visions I had through the spirits were for the good, for my help, and for the good of my family.”

We can clearly perceive how she has a positive stance towards the spirits, for she understands the spirits as those who are for the good and help. The following question was on the relations the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits could have. The interviewee answers: “Yes, the Holy Spirit is also for the good, but I cannot see any link between these two.” Her stating the Holy Spirit to be also good implies on how she perceives the traditional spirits to be good. Her favorable attitude towards the spirits is expressed once again. Through the analysis of the interview, we can realize that the participant EC2_84 has a tendency to have a favorable attitude toward the traditional spirits. Although she also claims the spirits are good and bad, as the surveyed believers who were identified as having a neutral stance, the interviewee throughout her interview puts more weight on her positive stance towards the traditional spirits.

7.1.1.2 Respondents Moderate on the Existence of the Spirits

After the largest majority of the Cameroonian believers’ who approved the existence of the traditional spirits, followed those who were moderate on their understanding of the spirits’ existence. The term moderate stance, englobes the believers who are confused about spirits and those who are ambivalent on how to define these spirits. Although being confused and being ambivalent seems to be similar, there is a distinction between these two. A confused person is

puzzled on how to understand the existence of the traditional spirit. They are not sure if the traditional spirits exist or not. An ambivalent person has personally defined the existence of the traditional spirit, but they face an opposite stance from the church. Therefore, they have not made their final decision on how to understand their existence.

EC1_36, classified as having a 'high' perception on existence, clearly states she does not believe the spirits to exist when asked on what she thinks about the traditional spirits. She says:

“For me, they do not exist. Even before I became Christian, I was not into the adoration of the skulls even though my family and my surroundings were. When I became a Christian, my attention was focused more on what the Word of God meant and the guide given by the ministers. Nowadays, regarding these two spiritual worlds diametrically standing at each opposites, I have realized that the God I serve is the only true God and suddenly all these spirits did not exist for me. When I used to face difficulties, they were not able to do anything for me, yet God was able. Now, I pray for the conversion of my family.”

The interviewee having grown up in a tradition friendly surroundings emphasises twice in her answer that she believes the spirits to be non-existent. However, when she was later asked on if there could be some similarities between these spirits and the Holy Spirit, she mentions how the traditional spirits could also talk to you as the Holy Spirit does. She confesses that through these voices of the spirits talking to her, she had realized that other spiritual beings other than the Holy Spirit do also exist. The interviewee contradicts herself throughout her speech. She first claimed the traditional spirits to be inexistent, and then mentioned how she realized the existence of these spirits. The participant seemed to be confused on how to perceive the existence of the spirits. For her, they are existent and inexistent.

IC3_97, identified as 'moderate' on the existence of spirits, is asked on who the traditional spirits are. She responds:

“Personally, I think these spirits are just myths that people have made up. A witchdoctor will tell you that you need to be purified because of such and such things that had happened in your life, but in the end, you would realise that there is no change in your life. I think the traditional spirits are myths and if they were true, then they should be evil spirits whom are present to manipulate this world.”

While answering a question on who these traditional spirits are, the interviewee gives the answer that they are myths and if they are real, they are evil spirits. The answer implies they are unreal but could also be real. Her stating the spirits are myths implies the spirits are unreal. However,

the participant opens up a possibility that they could be real and if they do exist, then she defines them as being evil spirits. When further the respondent is asked on the similarities or the differences the traditional spirits have from the Holy Spirit, she gives a detailed account that the spirits are there to bewitch, to do evil, and to destroy. When a spirit is in you, it makes your life incomprehensible. It disturbs your life and disables you from making your proper choices in your life. It makes you miserable. This vivid account of the influence the traditional spirits have on the life of a human being, induce us to believe the interviewee believes in the reality of the traditional spirit. If they were really myths as she stated in the beginning of the survey, it will be hard to have such a vivid explanation of a being she believes to be inexistent. Although the interviewee stresses more on the non-existence of the spirits through her explicit verbal expressions, we could realize that she also believes the spirits to be existent and influential through the content of her speech. She is confused on her comprehension on the existence of the spirits.

The respondent IC3_102, scaled as ‘moderate’ on the existence of the spirits, explains how she used to believe the ancestral spirits to be real before her conversion:

“Before I got to know God, I thought the spirits were real because I dreamt a lot of my mother whom had passed away. In my dreams, my mother gave instructions on what plants I had to gather to heal my child who was sick. Before I really used to believe in the spirits and until now, I do not think my belief is over. I am still doubtful if the spirits are really true.”

The interviewee confesses how she really used to believe on how these dreams were revelations given from the spirit of her mother. Although she now is a Christian, she has doubts that this revelation is not over and that the spirit could be still true. However, in the latter part of the interview she states, “In my family, I am the only one who tries to make people understand that these spirits do not exist but the majority of my family still believes these traditional spirits do exist.” She now claims that she believes the spirits to be inexistent. Such view corresponds to what she had claimed on how her church understands the traditional spirits. She says her church does not accept the existence of the spirits. The respondent seems to be ambivalent on the existence of the spirits for she confesses both that the spirits are real and unreal throughout her interview.

Through the analysis of the interviews done, we get to realize how some Cameroonian Christians of the Evangelical and the Independent Church have confused and ambivalent perception on the existence of the traditional spirits. EC1_36 claimed the spirits to be non-existent but later in her answer she confesses how she understands these spirits to exist. IC3_97 explicitly stated she believes the traditional spirits to be myths but then accounts how these spirits could have a strong impact on one's life. IC3_102 confessed how although she is a believer, she still thinks to a certain extent that these spirits could be real. Yet, she also mentions how she is trying to persuade her family that these spirits are unreal. A close analysis of the semi-directed interview has brought light into the veiled spiritual worldview of the 19.2% Christians surveyed who were moderate on the existence of the traditional spirits. They are confused and ambivalent on how to comprehend the spiritual world inherited from their ancestors.

7.1.1.3 Respondents Disapproving the Existence of the Spirits

Out of all the categorization, the minority are the believers who disapprove the existence of the spirits. Although they are least in number, they still represent a significant number, for they represent close to a fifth of the whole participants. Those disapproving the existence of the spirits are 18.3% that is only one percent less than those who are moderate (19.2%) on their understanding of the spirits' existence.

EC1_18, classified as 'extremely low' on the existence of the spirits, states that the spirits do not exist for her when asked about her personal perception on the existence of the traditional spirits. There seems to be a collision between her personal belief and that of the church for she accounts on how her church believes these spirits to be real. However, regardless of the different perspective the participant had to that of the church, she stood firm on her personal belief that the spirits are inexistent for her quantitative result had proved of her personal perception to be 'extremely low' on the existence of the traditional spirits.

EC2_72, who had a 'very low' perception on the existence of the spirits, also believed the traditional spirits do not to exist. When asked on his understanding of the spirits and their existence, he answered:

“For me these spirits do not exist because I do not think a patriarch could die and not love his descendants whom are left in this world. They should rather participate in the well-being of their children. Nevertheless, when I say the traditional spirits do not exist, it is something personal. My neighbors whom are from the Bamiléké tribe go to villages to consult the skulls of their parents. They say it truly exist but for me, I always said these are all invented stories.”

This participant believes the spirits do not exist. He states it has to relate to a personal experience to admit the existence of these spirits, but he has never had any experience whatsoever with the spirits. This has made him to conclude that the spirits do not exist.

IC3_113, identified as ‘moderate’ on her comprehension on the existence of the spirits, claim the inexistence of the spirits throughout her interview. When asked on how she comprehends the existence of the spirits, she answers that she thinks them to be non-existent for she has not found any passages in the Bible that mentions about the traditional spirits. Although some youths she had met outside of church told her these spirits are true, being born in a Christian family, she thinks such comprehension is based on one’s personal belief. At the latter part of the survey, I asked if there could be similarities on the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. Many people, who partially acknowledged the existence of the spirits but have claimed the spirits not to exist, reveal a certain attribute of the spirits they have thought of in this section. Here again, the interviewee answers, “I do not think there are any similarities between the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. Thus, the difference is that the Holy Spirit exists but the spirits do not.” Realizing how she steadfastly claims the inexistence of the spirits from the beginning of the interview to the end, the respondent proves her firm belief that the spirits are inexistent.

7.1.2 The Diversified views on the Dependence of the Spirits

The diversified views of the African Christians on their understanding of the traditional spirits do not only limit themselves to the perception of their existence but even to their comprehension on the dependence. The quantitative study has drawn a cold figure that 61.1% of the respondents surveyed were identified as ‘extremely low’ on their comprehension of dependence on the spirits. This implies these participants were claiming they had never depended on the spirits. However, the remaining 38.9% confessed they somewhat have depended on the spirits. This group includes the believers classified from ‘very low’ to

‘extremely high’. When observing the diversified views on the dependence of the spirits, it was analyzed how some claimed there should be no dependence, some seemed confused or ambivalent, and some claimed you could also depend on the spirits. Since claiming personal dependence on the spirits as a Christian is a delicate matter, this section has focused on the implicit content of the interviews and on accounts of other African Christians.

7.1.2.1 Respondents Disapproving Dependence

Respondents who disapprove the dependence on the spirits are subdivided into two subcategories. There are believers who assert active disapproval and others who claim a passive disapproval. Participants stating an active disapproval are believers who themselves think it is not acceptable for Christians to rely on the traditional spirits. Respondents who are positioned on passive disapproval are those who perceive the spirits as being partially good but they have become reluctant on depending on these spirits due to the consequences.

7.1.2.1.1 Active Disapproval

The impression received throughout the interview was that the Christians from Evangelical and Independent Churches who had active disapprovals on the reliance of the spirits were the largest majority. This stance was conceived as a common sense regardless of churches. Through the analysis of the semi-directed interview, we would enlighten why the Christians surveyed are having an active disapproval regarding the dependence on the spirits.

EC2_68, identified as ‘extremely low’ on the dependence, positioned himself as actively disapproving the spirits. When asked about his personal understanding and stance on the spirits, he answered:

“Before, I used to believe that these spirits protected me. So I also used to go join when there were traditional rituals. Nevertheless, I started finding the concept of spirits a bit ridiculous for how can a father of someone would want to do evil to his own son. How can someone that died of an illness, whom was not able to protect himself, cure another? How can someone believe the cause of evil comes from the father whereas he is the one who has brought me to this world, has sacrificed his whole life for us, and then decides to kill me? Considering all these matters, I have found the concept of spirits so ridiculous.

Thus, my relationship with Jesus Christ does not even allow me to believe that these spirits could even influence me.”

Through the content of the interview, we get to realize how the participant has himself considered the value of the traditional spirit and has resolved that the concept of the spirits does not make sense at all. His rationality and his faith in Christ has created a value that there is no need to rely on the spirits. He himself truly believes it is useless to depend on the traditional spirits.

IC4_153, categorized as ‘very low’ on the dependence, says she did not truly know the presence of the spirits until she become a Christian. She says, she had been influenced by the spirits, but realized it was the work of the spirits only after she was taught at church:

“In my family, my husband was always brutal. I thought it was due to his personal character. When I had believed in Christ, I had met a pastor. One day, he tells me that he has seen a vision and it is regarding my husband. I asked him about the vision he has seen, and he told me it was on the brutality of my husband. He told me how he was not being violent on his own; the spirits caused it. Apart from that, he was also very resentful. It is because he had the spirits. Another day, I went to an elder who has led me to faith. I told him how my husband does not want me to participate in church meetings. The elder tells me that we need to tie the spirits. That is when I realized that the traditional spirits really existed and how my husband was not behaving on his own.”

She believes Christians suffer because of the presence of these evil spirits. This matches the qualitative analysis on the existence for she was identified as approving the existence of the spirits but having a hostile stance towards the spirits. For she has this negative perception on the spirits, she firmly thinks the role of the church is to cast away the evil spirits and to be the hospital for the believers. Since she comprehends the traditional spirits as evil and harmful, she finds no reasons to rely on these spirits. Thus, she actively disapproves the reliance on the traditional spirits.

7.1.2.1.2 Passive Disapproval

Another subcategory of believers who disapprove the dependence on the spirits is those classified as ‘passive’. They do have a similar stance and state a Christian should not depend on the spirits. However, they are not disapproving the dependence out of their own will. This

disapproval is not caused by personal resolution but by outside factors such as the teachings of the church.

Participant IC4_138, who has an 'extremely low' perception on dependence, believes there are traditional spirits that do good. She states, "There are good spirits in the traditions. They could give you healing and could even help you out. However, you need to consider that they could make you lose your eternal life." She acknowledges the positive influence and work the spirits could do in the life of the human beings. However, a thing to consider is that these spirits cannot give eternal life. When I asked why these spirits were not able to give eternal life, she replied, "Because Lord Jesus says he is the way, the truth, and the life. Moreover, he says no one would be able to be saved except through him. He is the only one whom has shed his blood on the cross for the humanity. These spirits have not shed their blood to save humanity." Since these spirits could also provide earthly goods, it makes the participant think that it is acceptable to depend on the spirit. Nevertheless, a factor that restricts the respondent from actually relying on these spirits is the possibility of losing eternal life. Although she acknowledges the spirits ability to provide goods, she restrains herself from joining the spirits for they could make one lose eternal life.

IC4_145, classified as 'very low' on dependence, similarly has a passive disapproving stance regarding the dependence on the spirits. When asked what the church's stance is regarding the traditional spirits, he says:

"Generally the church tells that these spirits are spirits we should not entrust for they would not be able to give us eternal life, just as Christ had promised us. Because beside the life that Christ is giving us, there is no other life. What I have personally analyzed concerning the spirits is that these spirits can only help us for the material goods or for our terrestrial existence, but when it concerns the life above, they are incapable of doing anything."

The interviewee perceives the spirits as being able to have a positive influence on the lives of the human beings, but a factor that restricts him from joining these spirits is eternal life. Since Jesus is the one giving eternal life, he has to depend on Christ alone.

Although the subcategory of disapproval seems to be similar and vague to draw a line, there is a clear distinction between the two. Participants EC2_68 and IC4_153 do not want to

depend on these spirits at all. They find this concept of spirits irrational and evil. They are not tempted in any ways to rely on these spirits. They are considered as actively disapproving the dependence on the traditional spirits. Nevertheless, respondents IC4_138 and IC4_145 have a distinguished comprehension on the dependence of the spirits. They also agree that it is not right for Christians to entrust on the traditional spirits, yet it is due to side effects such as you can lose eternal life. Those who are identified as having a passive disapproval on the dependence, views the spirits as partially good and having the power to positively influence the lives of the human beings. Yet, they lack one thing, which is eternal life. Because they could lose this eternal life, they are obliged to restrain themselves from the spirits. It is not that they do not want to depend, but they are prohibited. Therefore, they are passively disapproving the reliance on the spirits.

7.1.2.2 Respondents with Moderate Dependence

Another stance concerning the dependence on the spirits was moderate. The respondents who had a moderate position seemed to be confused or ambivalent on how to comprehend Christians' reliance on the spirits. For the majority of Christians have as a common sense that a believer should not rely on the spirits, it would be a delicate matter for a respondent to claim personal dependence on the traditional spirits. Therefore, when analyzing this section, I have also taken into consideration participants' account on other believers.

Interviewee EC1_15, categorized as 'very low' on dependence, accounts how some people seems to be confused and ambivalent about the reliance on spirits. When asked on what the majority of churches say about the traditional spirits, she answered, "The majority of churches believe in the spirits. They mix because when I see certain assemblies, meaning other churches, the pastors do not truly teach on this matter. They leave the believers the freedom to seek for assistance to these spirits and some pastors even participates themselves." She is not stating her personal belief on the dependence. Nevertheless, through her account of other churches, we get to see in a roundabout way how there are some believers who are depending on these spirits because their ministers are not setting the boundaries on how to understand the spirits. They are not saying it is acceptable to depend on the spirits nor they are rebuking the dependence on the spirits. It is ambivalent. She claims not setting the frame of regulations by

the church leaders is bringing confusion to the church members and more confusion is caused due to some of the church leaders depending on the spirits themselves.

IC3_129, identified as 'very high' on dependence from the result of the quantitative, seems to be ambivalent on her dependence when analyzing the qualitative. Through the interview, the interviewee states how she understands the spirits. Here are couple of phrases on how she understands the spirits: "The spirits are our ancestors, our grandparents whom have already deceased," "there are two kinds of spirits, the evil and the goods. But when going to consult the spirits, we do not know which one is good and which one is evil," "These traditional spirits are not always dangerous." Through her statements, we get to observe how this participant has a neutral stance towards the spirits. As fore-mentioned on the qualitative analysis on the existence, this participant thinks that the spirits could be good or bad. This neutral attitude toward the spirits seems to have led the interviewee to be ambivalent on how to view the dependence on the spirits:

"The church is against these spirits. The church says it is not a good thing. It is like an idolatry and to quit this idolatry, we should not be in touch with the witchdoctors or any kind of people whom invokes these spirits. At church, they say the spirits exist, but we should not be in contact with the spirits."

The interviewee says, "We should not be in touch with the witchdoctors" and "we should not be in contact with the spirits." She knows depending on the spirits is something that should not be done. However, since this decision has not come from herself, for she has a tendency to be 'very high' on her dependence as noted on the quantitative result, the outcome turns out to have an ambivalent stance on the dependence.

The qualitative analysis on the dependence has led us to understand better on the respondents who have a neutral stance on the dependence. EC1_15 accounts on how some church leaders are ambivalent on this matter, thus they are not instructing the church members on how to understand the spirits. The unclear boundary that neither approves nor disapproves the dependence on the spirits are creating confusion amongst some church members. EC3_129 shows how her neutral attitude toward the spirits has also led to a moderate stance on the dependence. Although she thinks the spirits could be good, for the church prohibits, she seems to be a bit confused and ambivalent. Through this analysis, the lay believers illuminated a

portion of the veiled African Church members' minds, who have a moderate stance on the dependence of the spirits.

7.1.2.3 Respondents Approving Dependence

The last stance concerning the reliance are Christians who are approving the dependence on the spirits. Although there would not be many Christians who plainly claim to depend on the traditional spirits, for the disapproval seems to be the common sense throughout the semi-directed interview, the account of the participants on other believers portray that the approval on the dependence of the spirits is an actuality amongst some Cameroonian Christians. The quantitative results also back up these accounts for 4.3% of Evangelical Church 2 and 2.3% of Independent Church 3 have been classified as having an 'extremely high' perception on the dependence of the spirits, meaning they always rely on the traditional spirits. Although they are a minority, the dependence on the traditional spirits is an actual phenomenon amongst some Cameroonian Christians. Throughout this analysis, we would like to quest for the reasons on why some African believers might still want to depend on the traditional spirits.

Interviewee EC2_71, classified as having an 'extremely low' perception on dependence, accounts how some church members secretly depend on the traditional spirits:

"Generally, like in our church, those whom are attached to these spirits do not blurt out say that they admire the spirits. It is because they somewhat know what the stance of the church is. They come to church but they secretly go do their thing. Therefore, it is hard to know for they do not say it. They do not come to church to tell you, I am going after the traditions."

When asked about how she knows that there are church members who secretly practice the traditional spirit she replied:

"It is real because we distinguish them. Let us take as an example a funeral, since that is when many rituals related to the spirits are happening. There are people you know well they are at church, but during the funeral, they do ceremonies towards the dead. You will find him in his backyard doing his practice. However, when he is with you, he will not admit he has done it. There are clothes that people whom practice the traditional funeral wear. At church, you find some people who wear these clothes for maybe like a year. When they wear it, it just shows that some people have a foot inside and a foot outside because it is a visible sign."

The participant accounts how some fellow Christians do adhere to the spirits and that although they do it secretly, it is still recognizable through visible signs. The participant's account on her fellow church member is not a groundless charge, for the quantitative result from Evangelical Church 2 showed in cold figures that 4.3% of those surveyed answered they have an 'extremely high' dependence towards the traditional spirits.

Respondent EC1_36 also testifies how some Christians adhere the spirits, "Most of the people and even Christians have a foot inside and a foot outside, they worship the skulls of the ancestors." The respondent accounts how most people in the society and even some Christians worship the traditional spirits. These accounts from the interviewees strongly speculate us to believe that the reliance of the traditional spirits is a reality amongst some African Christians. Here, a curiosity emerges on why some believers still adhere and depend on the traditional spirits, although the common sense amongst the believers surveyed seemed to be neglecting the dependence on the spirits. Through an in-depth study of the semi-directed interview, the reasons African Christians have on-going dependences were unveiled. The reasons are the spirits being effective, them being part of the family, the influence from family, the pressure from family, the African cultural heritage, the lack of education, and the lack of faith.

7.1.2.3.1 The Spirits are Effective

The first reason why some African Christians are approving the dependence on the spirits is due to their effectiveness. When participant EC2_76 refers to the spirits, he mentions how there are plural types of spirits and they all have different functions such as some spirits are used for material prosperity, some are used for healings, etc... The spirits which will be used are chosen depending on their use. The point we need to remark here is that the dependence on the spirits does not focus on the being itself, but the practical function the spiritual beings can provide.

When IC3_97 is asked on the cause, why there is a phenomenon where some Christians are attached to the spirits and the Holy Spirit, an answer she gives is, "There are some people who call out on the double protection which is from God and from the traditional spirits." We get to perceive how the dependence of the African believers is not on the being itself, but on the

practical function they can provide. Since God and the traditional spirits can provide protections, some people like to have a definite protection that comes from both sides. Through this analysis, we get to realize how the spiritual reliance of some African believers is based upon its effectiveness. For these people, the church's stance on the spirits does not matter much, for they are willing to search after the spiritual beings that could be practical and effective. Such perception on the role of the spirits leads them also to rely on the traditional spirits whenever they could be of use.

Another interviewee, IC4_153 accounts of people who support such views. She says, "The problem with God is that he is not fast in action for there is a process he awaits to be filled for you to obtain something from him. They are impatient of waiting God's time and they want to find a fast solution to their problems." Through this statement, we can once again realize how the focus of some African believers is not on the belief of the Supreme Being, but on the effectiveness, the spiritual beings could bring to their lives. She mentions how God seems slow for some Christians and thus they find a fast way to solve their problems, which is the traditional spirits.

Respondent identified as IC4_155 gives her personal opinion on why she thinks there are Christians who are still attached to the spirits.

"It is because they are too attached to these spirits. They say they will contend with the spirits they have, and even if they will be in need of the Holy Spirit, the spirits of the family were already there from before and they protect. They do not feel the need of the Holy Spirit because the spirits of the family have already helped them a lot in their needs."

The answer given by the participant is that the traditional spirits are effective and the traditional spirits already meet the needs of the African Christians. Thus, they do not feel the necessity to rely on the Holy Spirit. We can once again observe how the spiritual reliance is focused on the need felt by the believers. Since the spirits are already effective, there is no need to depend on the Holy Spirit. Although some African Christians claim to believe in God, they seem not to really need the Holy Spirit for the traditional spirits functionally fills their expectations.

7.1.2.3.2 The Spirits are part of the Family

The second reason on why some African believers adhere to the spirits is due to them being a part of the family. The traditional spirits are considered as family amongst plural African

believers. Participant IC4_155 refers to these spirits with the term “the spirits of the family”. This term is repeatedly mentioned four times throughout his interview. By the use of this term, we get to realize how this respondent understands the traditional spirits as being part of the family. To the question on who the spirits are, EC2_71 answers, “The spirits are the spirits of our ancestors. They are spirits of our grand parents whom continue to watch over us even when they are dead. That is why people worship and do sacrifices to these spirits.” This interviewee also accounts how people understand the traditional spirits as being their family who have died but are still there to protect the family. IC3_131 answers to the previously mentioned question as following, “In my mother tongue, we call the traditional spirits ‘Mbamba’. This ‘Mbamba’ spirit is the spirit of a parent who was righteous in his life and has come to live with you and to guide you throughout your life.” The participant understands the spirit as a parent who come to guide his life. When the spirits are understood as a member of the family who have passed away and have come back into the family as a spirit, there is no reason for African believers to be hostile towards the spirits. They are family who are just in a different state of being than they are.

7.1.2.3.3 The Influence from Family

Third reason on the persistence of the spiritual reliance on the traditional spirits is due to the influence from family. African Christians have been influenced from their family since their youth to depend on the spirits in their times of needs. The spiritual reliance they have naturally acquired from their family has been rooted as a reflexive nerve in their spirituality. We can perceive how people who claim to have experienced the reliance on the spirits from the family have a tendency to depend more on the spirits.

Interviewee EC2_76 tells of the experience how the family dealt with the death of his younger brother.

“There was a time in my family when my younger brother died before I became a Christian. It created so much problem in the family that they decided to inquire the traditional spirits to identify whom had killed my younger brother. We made a track on the floor with things and family members had to pass one by one. When the bamboo stick fell and stopped the person who was passing on the track, it meant that person was the one whom had killed. Therefore, many people passed through it and when it was the turn of my eldest brother,

the bamboo stick fell. Due to this, the family was able to identify that my eldest brother was the one whom had caused the death of my younger brother.”

This participant has experienced how the family dealt in a situation they did not understand. His family was troubled with the unexpected death of the younger brother and a way they decided to settle the cause of this traumatic experience was to inquire the traditional spirits on the cause of this sudden death. This familial experience from youth had very probably influenced his understanding on the spiritual reliance for the participant’s quantitative result classified him to have an ‘extremely high’ dependence on the spirits.

Participant IC3_129 states, “Personally, I used to believe in these spirits because my mother used to bring me there. I used to see how things went there.” The interviewee says how her mother was the one who used to bring her to the traditional spirits. Due to her mother, she used to believe in them. Although she claims her reliance on the spirits were in the past, the quantitative analysis shows possibilities of the enduring reliance. Her quantitative result showed she had a ‘moderate’ dependence on the spirits. As fore mentioned, believers who are identified as moderate are people who are confused or ambivalent about the matter. This shows how although she is a Christian, she was not able to detach completely from the reliance of the spirits.

A similar case could be found with the interviewee EC1_21. He confesses how he used to rely on the traditional spirits before his conversion. When asked on the reasons of this fore existing reliance to the spirits, he answered, “When I used to be little, my parents used to bring me often to the witchdoctors. When I became older, I went to consult the witchdoctors myself since I was a trader. I wanted my business to do well. But in the end, it was not effective.” Although he accounts of an experience he used to have before conversion, we get to see how his reliance on the traditional spirits was learned from his parents. There are suspicions that this spiritual dependence is not over for the quantitative result shows he was classified as ‘moderate’ on the dependence of the spirits. He has a confused or an ambivalent stance regarding the dependence of the spirits.

If the influence of the spirit-attached family promotes the reliance on the traditional spirits, there should be evidence that proves the contrary. Respondent EC1_40 says he has never had any kinds of experience linked with the traditional spirits because he was born in a Christian family. His quantitative result shows his reliance on the traditional spirits is ‘extremely low’, meaning he has never had an experience of reliance towards the spirits. EC2_52 answers to the

question on whether he has ever consulted the traditional spirits before his conversion as, “No, because I am born in a Christian family. So our parents taught us to pray to God only.” Due to his familial background, he has never had any experience of reliance towards the spirits. The quantitative also classifies him as ‘extremely low’ on the dependence of the spirits. IC3_113 who also claims to be born in a Christian family is classified as ‘extremely low’ on the reliance of the spirits. Through this, we can realize how people who grew up in a Christian family are independent from the reliance of the spirits unlike those who grew up in a spirit-attached family. Interviewee EC1_40 also supports this view for he says, “In Africa, the majority believes in these spirits, in exception of those who had the grace to be influenced by Christianity in their young ages.” He states those who were influenced by Christianity from their young ages have the tendency to not believe in these spirits although the other majority believe. Thus, growing up in a spirit-attached family creates the possibility to be more dependent on the spirits.

7.1.2.3.4 The Pressure from Family

The fourth reason some African Christians have a persisting dependence on the traditional spirits is due to the pressure from family. This might seem similar to the previously mentioned cause, yet it is different. Whereas the influence from the family leads one to participate willingly in a traditional ritual, the pressure from family creates an atmosphere where a person is unwillingly forced to participate in certain traditional practices. IC3_97 accounts, “My family used to inquire the witchdoctors a lot; they always told us that we needed to purify ourselves. Every year we had to reunite all the family to purify ourselves.” We can perceive how the interviewee claims they had to reunite all the family every year for this ritual of purification. It is not a choice but something you had to, something that was mandatory in the family. This familial attachment towards the spirits created an atmosphere that a yearly participation in this ritual is necessary, thus, the family was pressuring its members in the participation.

A more explicit pressure is seen through the interview with EC2_68. The participant who claims to have grown up in a spirit-attached family says,

“In Africa, a family is not limited to parents, brothers, and sisters like in the occident. For us, the concept of family is really broadened. Sometimes an aunt can raise you up, you

depend totally on her. Here we live as a clan and if you dare disown the traditional practices, the family isolates you. You lose all the advantages you had from the familial solidarity. Although church is a family, many prefer the family they had from birth.”

The respondent perceives the reason of the continual dependence amongst some African Christians as the pressure from the family. He states, “It is true that there could be many other reasons, meanwhile I think the fact that you could be rejected by the family is the biggest reason why people prefer to remain in the tradition.” The explicit pressure of family that could result in rejection and isolation are causing some African Christians to continually be attached to the spirits and to participate in its rituals.

7.1.2.3.5 The Spirits are an African Cultural Heritage

The fifth reason that explains the attachment of some African Christians toward the spirits is due to them being considered as a cultural heritage left by the ancestors. EC1_36 accounts on how the majority of the Cameroonians consider the traditional spirits as a heritage left by the ancestors, which they should not abolish. However, they regard the churches as brought by the whites with the goal of destroying this given heritage. Through her account, we get to see how the traditional spirits are a cultural legacy left by the ancestors. IC4_145 also reports how the spirits are a cultural heritage passed down from the ancestors.

“There are some people in the church who says that the church is deceiving them regarding the spirits, because the church is something that evolved against the spirits. However, spirits were something that lasted long before the ancestors. Our parents, grandparents, and ancestors lived their life with these spirits, and they have benefited from these spirits.”

Both participants mention how the spirits are the way their ancestors, grandparents, and parents had been living with. The spirits are recognized among some African Christians as a cultural heritage that has been inherited from their forebears. For them, the church plays a role of destroying this cultural legacy that had been brought to them.

7.1.2.3.6 The Lack of Education

The sixth reason why some African Christians are bound to the traditional spirits are due to the lack of education. EC1_15 says, “Some churches mix the spirits and the Holy Spirit because when I observe certain assemblies, meaning other churches, the pastor does not truly educate on this matter, he leaves the believers the freedom to seek these spirits, some pastors even participate themselves.” The interviewee points out the reason why she thinks there are some Christians who adhere to the traditional spirits. It is due to the lack of education. She states that some pastors do not truly educate on the matter of the traditional spirits.

EC1_36 also supports this stance for when she was asked on why there are some Christians who have dual dependence, on the spirits and the Holy Spirits, she answered,

“I think such phenomena to exist because the awareness has not been done in depth. In example, when you go preach the Gospel to a person, the person just going to church is not enough, you need to have a follow up. You need to go in depth on the life of the person to know if the person reads the bible or if she prays, for the most of the people just open their Bible only during Sunday services. When this newly converted person is invited to family rituals, he is divided having a foot on the tradition and a foot at church. There is a necessity to follow up on the new converts to uproot the old customs and to show how God is real.”

The interviewee remarks how when there is a new convert, there is not a follow up on the life of the new believer. He is left being uneducated, so there are not any change in his way of life but just attends church service. Later on when the believer is summoned for a family ritual, he is unaware and participates in the traditional rituals. The lack of education causes African Christians to have dual dependences, a foot in church and a foot in the tradition.

7.1.2.3.7 The Lack of Faith

The seventh reason people account of the continual dependence on the spirits is due to the lack of faith. When the participant EC1_21 was asked on the reason why some Christians remain attached to the traditional spirits, he answered, “They still have doubts because they are in this world. They believe more in the things of this world and believe less of what God says.”

The interviewee is responding that people who rely on the spirits have more faith in them than they believe in what God is saying, meaning they lack of faith towards God.

Interviewee EC2_54 mentioned that the phenomenon of the dependence on the spirits is more common among the Catholics. When asked on the reason such situations are found, he responded,

“It is due to ignorance. Because they do not know the power of God. They do not know how great God is. They remain in the doubts. Can God really react in a given situation? Can Jesus really help me? There is a lack of faith. They do not firmly believe. They believe that it is by going to the witchdoctors that they could be satisfied.”

The reason why the participant think there is this continual reliance on the spirits amongst the Catholics is due to the lack of faith. For they do not have the assurance that Jesus can really help them, they turn back to the witchdoctors and the spirits for their satisfaction. EC2_84 also gives a similar answer on the reason why some Christians still go back to their old practice that is depending on the spirits. She responds, “Maybe it is because they are not truly convinced of the Holy Spirit.” The above-mentioned respondents are pointing their fingers towards the lack of faith as the reason causing the continual dependence on the spirits among some African Christians.

7.1.3 The Diversified view on the Influence of the Spirits

The diversified understanding of the spirits persisted even on its comprehension on the influence. The Cameroonian Christians’ who partially recognized the influence of the spirits were 65.4%, whereas the remaining 34.6% of the surveyed Cameroonian Christians responded the spirits had never influenced them. The majority of the respondents are accounting the influence traditional spirits have on their lives. Through this, we can note how although both stances have the common ground of being a Christian, there is a side that states that the traditional spirits are influencing them and another side that says traditional spirits are no influence to them. Although believers’ comprehension on the influence of the spirits varies regarding its influence on the Christians, they both agree that the spirits are influential among to non-believers. Therefore, we can visualize how the perception on the spirits’ influences are categorized that the spirits are influential to the non-believers, they are influential even to the

believers, and they are non-influential to the believers. Through this section of analysis, we would like to hear explanations from each diversified view on the spirits' influence.

7.1.3.1 Spirits Influence the Unbelievers

First, we would like to start from the common ground asserted by both stances that is the spirits are influential to non-Christians. EC1_21 categorized as having 'very low' perception on influence states, "For us Africans, when we speak of spirits, we generally refer to the evil spirits. I think they exist and that they influence the non-Christians." EC2_52 who has an 'extremely low' perception on influence says, "For the non-Christians, they influence because when we talk about diseases, they usually say it is caused by these spirits." IC3_116 classified as 'extremely high' on influence claims, "The spirits take actions in the lives of those who do not have Jesus... When one does not believe in God, he is visited by the worldly spirits." Through these different interviewees who range from never being influenced by the spirits (extremely low) to those who always experience the influence of the spirits (extremely high), we get to see how these people with different understandings on the spirits have a common ground that the spirits influence the lives of the non-believers. Now, we are to take a closer look on each side's perspective.

7.1.3.2 Spirits can not Influence Christians

Among the respondents, those claiming the spirits do not influence Christians constituted 34.6%. EC1_40, categorized as 'extremely low' on influence says, "I think the spirits exist but they do not have any influence on me because I am protected by the Spirit of God." IC3_116, classified as 'extremely high' on influence claims, "Since I have given my life to Jesus, I have never seen the spirits, but when I was a child, the spirits manifested in me in many different ways. But from the moment I have received our Lord, these spirits stopped manifesting in my life." EC2_72, having an 'extremely low' perception on influence, recounts of his personal experience that clearly showed him the traditional spirits could not have any influence in his life anymore.

“I have given my life to the Lord when I was still young; it was at Omnisport in 1997. Couple of months later, a nephew came to my house to tell me of a happening that occurred in our village. The chief of the village, wondering how couple of people were missing in the village for some days, asked where they have been. They replied they were in Yaoundé to kill you, uncle. The chief asked what offence you have made so that they were willing to kill you. They replied that they had nothing against you but just wanted to kill you. When the chief asked if they were successful in the journey, they replied, ‘No, we were not able to. When we arrived at his house, we found men who were as tall as the palm trees whom were almost 50 meters high and had wings on their backs. They also had long swords. When they moved their swords, fire came out of the sword. Frightened, we turned around and came back to the village but on our way back, we even had an accident.’ This is to say that I have experienced the Holy Spirit.”

Through this personal experience, the respondent now firmly believes the Spirit of God is protecting him and that the spirits cannot have any influence over his life anymore.

7.1.3.3 Spirits can Influence Christians

Larger number of Christians (65.4%) believe the spirits to have influence in their lives. IC3_107 grouped among those who are labeled ‘very low’ on influence says, "I used to believe in them but have left it aside once I believed in Jesus Christ. But, from time to time they still influence me irregularly." IC4_138 who has a ‘very low’ perception on influence also claims, “The spirits are real and it affects me. I had attacks from these spirits; I often have attacks from these spirits.” As seen above, some Cameroonian Christians insist that although you become a Christian, the influence of the traditional spirit is still persistent. Interviewee EC2_71, classified as ‘extremely low’ on influence, recounts of her personal experience in detail.

“The spirits do exist. It exists because even after having become a child of God, it still is not easy for me. When I am summoned for traditional rituals in the village, I refuse. When I refuse, I start having problems in my life. What kind of problems do I have? In example, when I sleep, I start seeing these spirits in my dreams. I see images of the spirits that comes to attack me and it wants to suffocate me. I see them regularly coming to attack me. It is a

constant and a permanent combat. This has diminished a lot, but still up to now, there are times I still see them in my dreams.”

Through these accounts, we get to realize how the spirits are influential in the lives of a significant number of Cameroonian Christians. These influences are not influences that were anticipated, for most of the respondent surveyed claim to not depend on these traditional spirits. The quantitative results have shown that 61.1% of the respondents surveyed answered they have never depended on the spirits, yet 65.4% of the respondents claim they have had experiences of being influenced by these spiritual beings. The unwanted influences of the spirits that is triggered from other factors than personal dependence are troubling the life of the African believers. Then what are the reasons why the Christians are experiencing the influence of the traditional spirits? Here are the answers given by the participants.

7.1.3.3.1 Personal Dependence

The first reason why some Cameroonian Christians are undergoing the influence of the traditional spirits is due to their personal dependence. As mentioned in section 6.1.2.3 on respondents who approve the dependence on the traditional spirits, there are plural reasons why some Cameroonian believers are continually reliant towards the traditional spirits. First is the practical function of the spirits. The spirits are effective and responsive to the needs of those who inquire. Second is the being of the spirits. The spirits are part of the enlarged African family. These spirits are considered as the spirits of their fathers, mothers, and elders whom had deceased. The spirits are families but just in another state of life. Third is the African cultural aspect. The African believers have grown to depend on the spirits due to the influence from their parents. Seeing and experiencing how their families relied on the traditional spirits had formed in them a reflexive nerve to rely on these spirits in their times of need. Sometimes the believers are not willing to rely on the spirits, for they have personally reasoned the practices to be vain, but family members' pressure threatening of being isolated from the family bond. Since the practice, on adhering the traditional spirits, had been performing from long ago, it is considered as a cultural heritage that had been passed on by the ancestors. Fourth is the ignorant spirituality of the believers. The lack of education regarding the abstinence of the traditional spirits has led

some believers' resolve that it is acceptable to depend on the traditional spirits. Some lack of faith on God and this makes them return to the dependence on the traditional spirits. The above-mentioned reasons are factors that strengthens the continual bridge of dependence between the African Christians and the traditional spirits. Since some believers are themselves depending on the spirits, these spirits are continually influencing the believers.

7.1.3.3.2 Weak Spirituality

The second reason explaining the influence of the spirits amongst African believers is their weak state of spirituality. Participant EC1_1 answers to the question on if the spirits could influence Christians, "They influence me when I do not pray. They always come to trouble my life when I do not pray." The respondent gives her personal thoughts on situations when the spirits are influencing her and it is when she is not praying.

Interviewee IC3_116 says the traditional spirits influencing the Christians are not common for he claims, "When you give your life to Christ, you have nothing to fear. You are protected by the power of God and these spirits do not have any power over you." However, he also mentions why the spirits affects some Christians. It is due to their lack of spiritual power. Not all believers are empowered by God. Thus, the reason participant IC3_116 testifies on the influence of the spirits is due to the weak spiritual power. Most Christians are empowered by God, but the spirits affect some believers who have not equipped themselves by the spiritual power given by God.

Respondent IC4_138 mentions what her church says about the spirits, "The church says we need to constantly pray. We must remain in prayer and we must separate from sin. The sin belongs to the spirits, so it is a way they could affect us more and more. So, we must remain in prayer and practice the Word of God." The interviewee accounts how a way traditional spirits influences people are through sins. When a Christian sins, it enables the influence of the spirits. Thus, a Christian should constantly pray and be spiritually awake. When a believer is spiritually strong, the spirits would be unable to affect. Nevertheless, when a believer is spiritually weak, that is the moment the spirits start affecting the Christians.

7.1.3.3.3 Lack of Education

The third reason that explains the continuous influence of the spirits in the lives of the Christians is due to the lack of education. We have already seen while analysing the dependence of the Cameroonian Christians on the spirits that the lack of education played an influential role. Some church ministers, who did not clearly instruct on how to understand the spirits and the probable restrictions on its reliance, have resulted the congregation to have the freedom to wander after their old practices. If the continual dependence of the African believers on the traditional spirits was because they were not explicitly educated to alienate from the traditional beliefs, this lack of education is also causing the ignorance of the African believers' that they now are empowered by the protection of Christ. Such ignorance leaves the respondents vulnerable before these spirits.

Interviewee EC2_71 was asked on whether her understanding of the spirits have changed before she believed in Christ and after her conversion. She answers,

“I think it is a process. When I became Christian, I saw spirits when I slept. Mostly I see them when I sleep. Some say they physically see them, but for me I see them when I sleep. When I used to see them, I was afraid. I woke up being frightened. However, with time, that is why I am talking about the process. When I was taught more, I understood that I did not need to be afraid, because Jesus who is within me is victory. Therefore, when I see them now, I am not afraid anymore. It is not the same anymore.”

The respondent tells us how she used to be afraid when she saw the spirits in her dreams. Yet, her being taught that Jesus was within her and that Jesus has overcome them has made her understand how she does not need to be afraid anymore. A reason of the constant fear and influence that persist among African Christians on the spirits is due to them not being not taught how they now have the power of Christ.

7.1.3.3.4 Attack from Others

The fourth reason, which explains the continual influence of the spirits on the Christians is due to the attack from others. Through the semi-directed interview, I heard voices that blamed other individuals' use of the traditional spirits. The surveyed believers were accounting that other people are using the traditional spirits to attack other individuals.

Respondent EC2_76 accounts of this outer factors that influence individuals regardless of their personal dependence on the spirits,

“We are here in Africa and there are lots of jealousy. Without reason, a person can use the spirits to others. Always someone would come maybe by envy and use a contrary force to eliminate you. Being in Africa, the problem in general is there are always uncertain people. That is why it is dangerous. Because there are forces that heals but you never know what could happen behind your back. That is the problem.”

The account given by the participant gives us an impression on how in the society there are suspicions of envy, fear, danger, and uncertainty. This unsettled atmosphere of the society seems to trouble the lives of the people and people are always nervous on the possibility of being attacked by someone without a fully convincing reason.

Another respondent also illustrates a similar ambience in the African family. When interviewee IC4_160 was asked on what they have heard on the spirits from the family, she states,

“It is often said that family members act badly towards their siblings. When they are jealous of the fact that their brothers are more elevated than they are, it bothers them. They usually go to the witchdoctors so that their siblings’ projects may fail.”

Through the depiction of the family’s atmosphere, we get to perceive of the jealousy and envy that exist among siblings. When a sibling starts having a better life, they say others go to the witchdoctors to inquire spirits to hinder their plans.

Through the accounts given by EC2_76 and IC4_160, we get to grasp the atmosphere of the Cameroonian society and family. They testify on the jealousy that stimulates individuals to inquire traditional spirits to attack others when they seem to get better off. Due to these attacks of the spirits that are caused by others, people are tensed and afraid of the constant probability of being attacked by others. These attacks from others are outer factors, which causes the Cameroonian Christians to be influenced by the spirits.

7.1.4 The Bipolarized view of the Church and the Society on the Spirits

The box plot quantification of the church and the society’s perception on the traditional spirits has shown how the church and the society were standing at each opposite end of the polarity. The quantitative study has illustrated their understandings of the spirits look so

discrepant. Throughout the quantitative analysis, two remarks that we need to investigate on our qualitative study were made. One was that although the church's perception was clearly distinguished from that of the society, the members of the church had a wide range of diversified views. Two was how although the respondents depicted the church was having a completely different understanding of the spirits than that of the society, 58.1% of the society were consisted of Christians.²⁶⁶ Therefore having these two remarks in mind, we would like to take a close look in this section on if the comprehension of the traditional spirits of the church and the society is truly that different. We will first analyse what the participants have accounted of the stance of the society and that of the church regarding this matter.

7.1.4.1 What does the Society say?

The focus of the semi-directed interview was to understand Christians' personal perception on their understanding of the spirits. However, throughout the interview, they have mentioned on how the society comprehended the spirits. Through these accounts on what the respondents have heard from the society, we would like to grasp the Cameroonian society's understanding of the traditional spirits. The following section will analyse the society's understanding of the spirits' existence, identity, and role.

7.1.4.1.1 Society's Understanding on the Existence of the Spirits

The society understands the existence of the spirits as a common sense. The analysis of the participants gives us an impression that the existence of the spirits is an obvious concept amongst the Cameroonians. Here are some interviewees' answers on what the majority of the people say about the spirits. EC1_1 says, "In my neighborhood, many people talk about the traditional spirits. Since I prepare food to go sell on the streets, many people like to talk about these spirits... The majority believes in them." EC1_18 states, "The majority of the people say that the spirits are here, present." When asked on some participants on what could be the

²⁶⁶ « The Association of Religion Data Archives | National Profiles ».

percentage of the Cameroonian people whom believes the spirits existence, EC2_52 accounts, “The majority accepts the spirits. They are around 70% and those whom do not accept are around 30%.” IC3_97 responds. “It is something obvious in Africa.” IC4_138 claims, “For those who did not yet receive Jesus as Savior, for those who do not truly have the Spirit of God in them, they think the spirits are real.” Through these multiple accounts, we get to grasp an image on how in the Cameroonian society, the existence of the spirits are considered as a common sense and something obvious. People frequently mention them and like to talk about them.

7.1.4.1.2 Society’s Understanding on the Identity of the Spirits

The society’s identifications of the traditional spirits are diversified from gods, good spirits, to bad spirits. The analysis on the spirits leads us to the curiosity on how the Cameroonians understands the identity of the spirits. The accounts of the interviewees depict how there are varied comprehensions on the identity of the spirits. Some view them as gods, others consider them as good spirits, and some others understand them as bad spirits. Following are the respondents’ testimony on how their neighborhood define the identity of the traditional spirits.

First is the society’s perception that understands the spirits’ identity as gods. EC1_18 states, “Those whom do not have Christ in their lives, they say that the spirits of the traditions are their gods.” EC1_40 answers to the question on what the majority of the people say about the spirits, “In Africa, the majority of the traditions believe in these spirits and only those who had the grace to be influenced by Christianity since their young ages are exceptions. In general, people believe in these spirits and make them their gods.” Through these reports, we get to realize how the traditional spirits are considered as gods in the Cameroonian society.

Some other people of the society comprehend the traditional spirits as good spirits. When asked what the majority of people say about these spirits, respondent IC4_155 replied, “They say that they are good, they protect us from evil spirits. These spirits give us a permanent protection so that we do not need to come too often to pray at church.” The interviewee tells us how the majority of the Cameroonians understand the traditional spirits as good. They are considered as good spirits among some Cameroonians.

Others in the society identify the spirits as bad spirits. Interviewee IC3_131 claims, “In Cameroon, the majority of people think that the spirits are not good.” Here, the spirits not being good implies that the spirits are bad. EC1_21 answers on what they refer when mentioning the spirits of the traditions, “For us Africans, when we talk of spirits, we generally make allusion to evil spirits.” The interviewee clearly states that when the term traditional spirits are mentioned, it generally gives allusions to the evil spirits for the Africans. Respondent EC2_52 also refers to the traditional spirits as evil spirits, while answering to the question on what people in the neighborhood talk about them. He says, “There are people who talk about the evil spirits, about witchcraft. They talk about cases of possessions by the evil spirits.” Through his account, we get to view how some Cameroonians understand the spirits to be evil, to be linked with witchcraft, and to be the spirits that possess people.

Although it had already been observed through the quantitative on how the spectrum of understanding the traditional spirits were widely varied, we can once again realise through the qualitative analysis on how the Cameroonian society itself has a different view on understanding the traditional spirits. Some comprehends them as gods, others as good spirits, and some others as bad spirits.

7.1.4.1.3 Society’s Understanding on the Role of the Spirits

In this section, we would like to analyse through the content of the semi-directed interviews, the role Cameroonian society is attributing to the traditional spirits. While having a closer look to the roles the society has assigned to the spirits, it was clearly recognisable that the roles they were undertaking were generally positive. Following are the roles claimed to be performed by the spirits.

Firstly, the traditional spirits are understood to protect the lives of people. EC2_71 testifies on how people believe the spirits to protect them and how some worship the spirits.

“There are people whom think that the traditional spirits protect their lives. Since they are convinced, they often go to the villages to worship, these worships are addressed to these spirits. However, there are those whom think that does not have any influence. Therefore, it depends on the people. The conceptions are not the same.”

For the participant has stated the conceptions to vary, I have asked on what the majority of the society think about these spirits. She replied, “They think that these spirits protect them everywhere, guides them everywhere, give them progress and success in their enterprises.” EC2_68 goes along with the concept the previous interviewee has stated. He says,

“According to what I have analyzed, many people think the spirits of the ancestors protects them. That is why from time to time, they bring gift and do rituals to thank them, to ask for help, or even to ask them to constantly stay with them. That is the conception of where I am from, the West of Cameroon.”

Participant IC4_155 also supports this idea that spirits protect people by mentioning, “People say that the traditional spirits protect them against the evil spirits. It is not good to stay without any protection. These spirits are a heritage of the family.” Through these accounts, we get to perceive how one of the role the traditional spirits are playing in the Cameroonian society is protecting the lives of the people.

Secondly, the spirits are considered as bringing success in life and to be the ones to solve the problems people face. EC1_15 accounts on what people say about the spirits,

“They often say that they believe in them and that it is due to them that they get to realize certain things in their lives. They cannot do anything without them, so they need to return to the village from time to time to make sacrifices on the skulls and sacred places so that they could have good health and prosper.”

The respondent mentions how people claim to be vulnerable without the spirits. They make it sound as if they absolutely need the spirits to realise things in their lives. The spirits are key to their good health and prosperity in their lives. Thus, the spirits are considered as the ones bringing success in their lives. EC2_72 votes on the same stance by stating, “The believing society claims the spirits to not exist, but the non believing society insists these spirits to exist and that they are protected by these spirits, they are the solutions to their problems.” We once again observe the account of the spirits being the ones to bring solutions of the problems Cameroonians are facing in their lives. IC4_145 also testifies,

“They seem to say that they are real. The spirits exist around us and these traditional spirits sometimes fly to their rescue in different needs. There are some who will consult the spirits in certain situations, for some questions of their very existence, and even questions regarding their daily lives so that they could have answers that will make them go a little forth in their everyday life.”

The multiple accounts lead us to visualize how the Cameroonian society regards them as having a role of bringing success and solving the problems people are facing in their daily lives.

Thirdly, people use the spirits to attack others' lives. Participant EC2_76 tells us of how his family has experienced the death of his younger brother. The first reaction the family has undertaken was to seek the traditional witchdoctors to find who has used the spirits to kill the younger brother. Such reaction to the death of a family member shows how the Cameroonian society perceives the spirits to be the powers used by others to attack the lives of others. Although the role of the spirits is mostly considered positive amongst the Cameroonian society, their role seem to be regarded negatively when others use the spirits.

Respondent IC3_129 accounts, "In a family like ours in Bafia, we give them the power to heal and others the power to harm people, others the power to prosper. So it depends, the grandfather can leave you the power either to heal, to prosper or to harm others." This implies the power left by the ancestors could be different. Some have the power to heal, some the power to harm, others the power to make people prosper. The traditional spirits play different roles on the lives of the Cameroonians according to the people that inquire them. People would most likely inquire for personal goods, but when their inquiry on the spirits will face toward others, it has a tendency to be malign. Thus, the role of the spirits regarded by the Cameroonian society is widely varied.

7.1.4.1.4 Society's Understanding of the Spirits

The analysis of the semi-directed interview enables us to have an understanding of how the Cameroonian society understands the traditional spirits. The accounts testify on how the majority of the Cameroonian society believe in the existence of the spirits. However, their perception on the identity of the spirits are varied for some view them as gods, others good spirits, and some others as bad spirits. The role they play in the lives of the Cameroonians also seem to vary, for some state them to be the ones to protect their lives, others the ones to give success and solutions to problems, and others the ones to attack. Such varied comprehension of the role could be understood upon the use of the spirits. Varying on who are inquiring the spirits, it could be used for the positive benefit or to harm others. This leads us to the conclusion that

there is a consensus on the existence of the traditional spirits. However, the society's view on their identity or their role seems to be widely varied.

One aspect we need to note here is the remark on the probable paradigm shift of the younger generation. EC2_84 says, "Since time changes, the behavior also changes and then people do not rely that much on the tradition... In my village, the younger generation are not much attached to the spirits." The interviewee claims that with the change of time, the younger generation's attitude toward the traditional spirits has changed. They do not rely on the traditional spirits as much nor are as much attached. The observation done by the interviewee on her village endorse and confirm the speculation made upon the quantitative analysis on the age variable being a possible factor to affect the understanding of the traditional spirits. The analysis remarked how the believers in their teens, meaning respondents from 18 years to 19 years old, had a notably disapproving stance towards the spirits. All of the respondents in their teens, who were eleven in total, had a disapproving stance towards the spirits. Such tendency was remarked and speculated as a possibility that younger generations in their teens could be less attached to the spirits. The interviewee whom had observed such actuality in her village is supporting and confirming this speculation to be an actual phenomenon. The importance of the traditional spirits is declining in the younger generations of the Cameroonian society.

7.1.4.2 What do churches say?

The previous section has revealed on how the Cameroonian society comprehends the spirits. This section will bring light on how the Cameroonian churches perceive the traditional spirits. It will cover from their understanding of the spirits' existence, identity, and role. Before the actual survey was proceeded on the lay Christians, I had a brief talk with each church leaders in order to have their consent for the survey. I asked the church leaders' stance on the spirits on how they comprehended their existence, identity, and role. Surprisingly, all four church leaders were having an identical understanding on these matters regardless of their denominational background. However, when we listen to the account of the lay Christians on what the churches' conception of the traditional spirits are, we get to realize that the congregation accounts differently than what the church leaders believed to have taught.

7.1.4.2.1 Churches' Understanding on the Existence of the Spirits

There are a varied understanding on the existence of the spirits among the Cameroonian churches. The interviewees account of different stances of churches regarding their existence. Some say they exist and others say they do not exist.

Some of the interviewees have accounted that churches claim the traditional spirits to exist. IC3_107 testifies, "The church acknowledge the existence of these spirits and prohibits us to have relations with these spirits." IC4_138 asserts, "Church says these spirits exist, since in the times of Jesus when he was on earth, he also had to deal with these spirits. Jesus casted these spirits away from people." These testimonies make us understand how the stance of the church these participants attend is the acknowledgement of the existence.

However, we also get to observe participants who support the inexistence of the traditional spirits. To the question on what the church says about the traditional spirits, participant IC3_102 answers, "For the church, these spirits do not exist." Interviewee IC3_113 supports a similar stance for she says, "The church says these spirits do not exist." It is surprising to see how the members of the Independent Church 3 state the traditional spirits to be inexistent for we have previously seen how interviewee IC3_107, from the same congregation, was testifying the church acknowledged the existence of the spirits. What the church members are accounting of the church's stance is in disaccord.

Then what would be the actual stance of the church? Surprisingly, a brief interview undergone with the church leaders beforehand, including the apostle of Independent Church 3, revealed that all four churches leaders were recognizing the existence of the spirits. Although all four church leaders believed the existence of the spirits and have taught its congregations, the way the church members understood regarding this matter were diverged. How are we to understand such phenomena? One, we could blame the church leaders for not clearly and explicitly conveying the church's official position regarding the matter of the traditional spirits. Two, we could blame the Cameroonian believers for being more embracive to what the society says on the traditional spirits than what the church is telling them. The fact that the same church members have a diversified understanding from the church's official stance implies that the society's comprehension of the traditional spirits have a stronger impact on their perception of

the spirits. In either way, there is a communicative problem within the church. The church leaders are not persuasively conveying the churches' stances or the congregations are not well embracing what the church is telling them concerning this specific matter. My personal perception inclines more to the latter cause.

7.1.4.2.2 Churches' Understanding on the Identity of the Spirits

Churches' understanding on their identity seemed to be comparably standardized. The traditional spirits are identified as not being from God, being evil spirits, and satanic. Churches draw a clear line identifying the traditional spirits as irrelevant with God.

Respondent EC1_36 mentions, "Church says that the spirits exist but they are not from God. These spirits have the power but all these do not come from God." We get to see how the Evangelical Church 1 draws a clear line that there is clear distinction between the traditional spirits and God. These spirits do not have any connections with God.

Interviewee EC2_71 says, "For our church these spirits are satanic. These spirits do not come from God. However, it depends on churches. For the Catholic Church it is not the same. People there still believe in the traditions and their spirits. That is why I have previously said it depends." The participant expresses how her church, Evangelical Church 2, considers the spirits as satanic and not coming from God.

Participant IC3_97 accounts, "Church tells us that these spirits are evil, they try to deter the children of God from the right way." The interviewee's church, Independent Church 3, comprehends the traditional spirits as evil spirits. The church's positioning on this matter is drawing a clear frontier between these traditional spirits and the Christian belief.

IC4_160 testifies of her church's stance that is similar to those of the previously mentioned churches, "The church sees these spirits as spirits from the enemies sent to act upon the lives of the children of God to destroy their lives." Independent Church 4 considers the traditional spirits as spirits sent from the enemies. These spirits are not spirits that can harmonize with the Christian belief but rather spirits that are in continual offenses.

Through the reports of the members from all four churches, we get to visualize how the churches that were surveyed understood the traditional spirits as being spirits distinct from Christianity. This is in accord with what was observed on the quantitative analysis. Through the

analysis of the general perception, it was concluded that the churches surveyed did not have a distinguishable understanding of the traditional spirits regardless of the denomination. The qualitative analysis of how the churches comprehend the identity of these spirits depicts us once again how the Cameroonian churches draw a clear line determining these spirits as distinct from God.

7.1.4.2.3 Churches' Understanding on the Role of the Spirits

The role of the spirits perceived by churches was in definite contrast to that the society comprehended. The society generally attributed the traditional spirits positive roles. However, roles attributed to the spirits by the churches are destroying, deterring, and bringing sufferings into the lives of people.

Interviewee EC2_68 accounts, "Church says that these spirits are simply diabolic, they come from the enemies, and they are here to destroy." The role attributed to the spirits by the church is destroying. Respondent IC4_160 testifies her church has a similar comprehension of the spirits, "The church sees these spirits as spirits from the enemies sent to act upon the lives of the children of God to destroy their lives." Her church views the spirits as having the role of destroying the lives of the children of God. Participant IC3_97 states, "Church tells us that these spirits are evil, they try to deter the children of God from the right way." Another way the church understands the role of these spirits are deterring people's lives from God. IC4_145 claims, "Church makes us realize that it is due to these spirits that the majority of people suffer." His church understands the spirits as the ones bringing suffering to the people's lives.

We here get to realize how there is a clear difference on the roles assigned to the spirits by the church and the society. Although it is varied, the society accredits the spirits mostly positive roles such as protecting lives, giving success, and bringing solutions to problems. However, the church attributes the spirits the roles of destroying, deterring, and bringing suffering.

7.1.4.2.4 Churches' Understanding of the Spirits

The analysis of the semi-directed interview brought us into a closer understanding of how the Cameroonian churches view the spirits. Through this analysis, we get to realize that the perception on the existence of the spirits is varied, whereas the identities and the roles attributed to the spirits had consensus. This is in contrast to the society's perception for the society has a consensus on the existence but has varied views on the spirits' identities and roles. Due to these detailed differences, we get to see how the accounts of the semi-directed interviews and the illustrations of the quantitative study draw the church and the society's comprehension of the spirits in bipolarity. Yet, here we get to question once again. Are the society and the church really at each end of the polarity as the cold figures and the interviews account? The surveyed lay African believers provide two possible answers for this question. One is "yes" and the other is "no".

Some surveyed lay African believers say that the church and the Cameroonian society really are at each end of the polarity. Throughout the interview, I was able to observe the respondents' emphasis on the distinctive trait of their churches. EC1_1 talks about how her brother is an elder at a church in Douala but he is attached to the spirits. However, when talking about her church, she says, "The majority of people in our church do not believe in the spirits, they believe in Jesus." There is an impression that she is emphasizing that our church is different. Respondent EC2_71 says that the way churches understand the spirits are diversified and especially Catholic churches have more tendencies to be linked with the traditions. Nevertheless, when talking about her church, she says, "For our church, the spirits of the traditions are satanic spirits. This is clear. They are satanic spirits. They are not spirits coming from God, nor from Jesus." Once again, there is an impression that the church member is drawing a line between other churches and the church she is attending. As the respondents are emphasizing, it could really be that the churches have different stances from other churches.

Another answer implicitly given by some other surveyed believers are that the church and the Cameroonian society might not really be that different in their understanding of the traditional spirits in the end. While analyzing the qualitative interview, I realized how some respondents had contradictory answers on their perception of the traditional spirits. Interviewee IC3_116 was classified as 'extremely high' on his perception of influence on the traditional spirits in the quantitative survey. This means that the traditional spirits are influencing him all

the time. However, during his interview, he affirmed that the spirits were not able to influence Christians for they are empowered by God. This brings him in self-contradiction for in the quantitative survey he confesses the traditional spirits always influences him, but in the qualitative survey, he is claiming the opposite. Another participant EC2_71 is identified 'extremely low' on the quantitative survey on the influence of the traditional spirits. This means that the traditional spirits had never influenced her. Yet, on her interview, she supports the opposite stance saying that Christians are still influenced by the spirits.

What do these self-contradictory answers imply? Regardless of the quantitative or the qualitative, there are Christians whom have given answers that would fit the norm of the church. Interviewee EC2_71 supports this stance, for she claims,

“Generally, those that are attached to the spirits do not say it out loud. It is because they somehow know that it is not the stance of the church. They come to church but go secretly to the witchdoctors. That is why it is difficult to know since they do not say it. They do not come to church to tell you that I am attached to the tradition.”

The participant herself has turned out to answer why she had self-contradictory answers. As she states, people whom are in the church and influenced by the spirits do not express their stance aloud, but practice it in secret for they know such practice is out of the norm of the church. The observation that some of the participants had self-contradictory answers brings up possibilities that the churches' stance on the traditional spirits might not be as discrepant as depicted in the quantitative study on section 6.1.5. Churches may officially state their distanced view to that of the society. Nevertheless, some church members would still have a closer perception to that of the society on their comprehension of the spirits.

7.1.5 Conclusion on the Qualitative Analysis on the Spirits

The African Christians' comprehension of the spirits could be concluded by this one word, which is diversity. This diversity does not mean the diversity between the churches surveyed, but the diversity among the believers of the same church. Although the same church leader had nourished the believers in the same congregation, the way its members perceived the existence, the dependence, and the influence of the traditional spirits varied. This varied view covered from a Christian's comprehension of the existence, dependence, and influence of the

traditional spirits. Through the qualitative study, I have inputted efforts to unveil the Cameroonian believers' varied comprehension on the traditional spirits.

The existence of the traditional spirits was mostly approved, ambivalent by others, and a portion disapproved the existence. Amongst the Christians who approved the existence of the traditional spirits, their stances on this existential being differed from being hostile, neutral, and favorable. Regarding the dependence on the traditional spirits, the majority claimed that it was not acceptable to depend on the spirits. Yet, a significant number of them seemed to be confused and ambivalent on how to approach. Some even testified how there were Christians whom actually depended on the spirits. The reason why some Christians depended on the traditional spirits were due to the spirits being effective, the spirits being considered as part of the family, due to familial influence and pressure, the lack of education from church, and the lack of faith toward the Holy Spirit. The perception on the influence of the traditional spirits also differed for some claimed the spirits influenced Christians and others stated the spirits could not influence the believers. The respondents explained the reasons why the traditional spirits could be influential even amongst the believers. The reason was due to personal dependence, weak state of faith, lack of education, and due to attacks from others.

Then how are we to understand these varied views on the understanding of the traditional spirits observed among the Christians in Cameroon? The church leaders, regardless of their denominations, perceived similarly and taught identically to their congregations regarding this specific matter. It could be that their teachings on the traditional spirits were not fully persuasive to the point of convincing the congregation. Alternatively, it could be that not all congregation members agreed to what the church leaders taught. They demonstrated a varied understanding that very likely derived from the influence of the society.

7.2 Qualitative Analysis on the Holy Spirit

This section of the study will focus its attention in further enlightening the curiosity that was raised on the quantitative analysis of the Holy Spirit. Interesting remarks that were made throughout the quantitative analysis was how the surveyed lay African believers had a high approval on the existence of the Holy Spirit, how they had a higher dependence that exceeded

their acknowledgment of existence, and how this high dependence of the believers were not met with the actual influence from the Holy Spirit. The qualitative analysis will further give explanations regarding these interesting footnotes. In addition, the qualitative analysis will also bring light on where the Cameroonian believers draw the line between the Holy Spirit and the spirits of their traditions. Do the surveyed African believers really make a distinction between the two spiritual beings or are they considering them as spiritual beings that are interrelated? The lay believers' process of theologizing these two spiritual worlds will be grasped with close attention.

7.2.1 High Approval of the Existence

The absolute majority of the Cameroonian Christians approved 'extremely highly' the existence of the Holy Spirit. The cold figures from the quantitative analysis depicted that 99.45% of the respondents surveyed approved of the existence, 0.55% were ambivalent, and there were none disapproving its existence. When having a closer look, 73.25% of participant had an extremely high perception on the existence of the Holy Spirit, meaning they always understood the Holy Spirit to be existent. 19.38% of Cameroonian Christians surveyed claimed they very frequently acknowledged the existence of the Holy Spirit, and another 6.82% confessed they frequently admitted its existence. Although the majority of the Cameroonian Christians surveyed also approved the existence of the traditional spirits with the average of 62.5%, we observe a large gap and a clear distinction with 99.45% of believers whom acknowledge the existence of the Holy Spirit. The observation that believers approve 'extremely highly' the existence of the Holy Spirit leads us to be curious on the reasons why they came to acknowledge of its existence. The analysis of the semi-directed interview hints us that the personal experiences believers had with the Holy Spirit have lead them to their recognition of the Holy Spirit. The respondents' personal experiences vary from feeling, hearing, seeing, speaking in tongues, and other particular experiences of the Holy Spirit.

7.2.1.1 Feeling the Holy Spirit

The first reason Cameroonian Christians firmly believe the existence of the Holy Spirit is due to their experience of having felt the presence of the Holy Spirit. Participant EC1_1 says, “I know the Holy Spirit is real because when I concentrate during service at church, the Word of God penetrates in me, and I feel how I am trembling. I feel the Holy Spirit whom is descending and penetrating me.” The interviewee states how she is feeling the penetration of the Holy Spirit and one of its physical reaction is the body trembling. Interviewee IC3_97 states,

“I have personally experienced the Holy Spirit during a service at church on a Sunday. During the time of prayer, I felt something that visited me spiritually. I felt something happened in me, which I cannot explain. I began to pray, to move, to panic and after I suddenly felt soothing, light, and different. It is difficult to explain, however just after that experience, I felt different, and everything had become so clear.”

The respondent accounts of the spiritual visit she had felt. Although it is hard for her to explain, she sensed something happened in her and felt different after the experience. She links this spiritual experience to the visit of the Holy Spirit. Respondent IC3_107 accounts, “At times when I worship, I feel the presence of God. In addition, sometimes it happens that I really want to worship. I feel that the presence of God is in me. I recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit by the manifestations, by the agitations, and also by this supernatural presence that one feels in oneself.” The interviewee tells us the way she recognizes the presence of the Holy Spirit is by sensing its presence. The presence is sometimes revealed through physical agitations.

7.2.1.2 Hearing the Holy Spirit

Secondly, another experience of the Holy Spirit that has led the Cameroonian Christians to acknowledge the existence of the Holy Spirit is hearing its voice. Interviewee EC1_15 says, “When I think of the Holy Spirit, the first image that comes to my mind is the small voice within that often talks to me to bring me back to the right way, which is in accordance with the Word.” She tells of her personal experience on how she had met a man whom wanted to marry her. Since he lived in Yaoundé and she stayed in the West region of Cameroon, he invited her over to Yaoundé. She prayed God to talk to her if he is the right person. That night, she had a dream, in which she saw the man who continued to covet other women around her. She thought the

dream was not enough and she decided to go to Yaoundé herself, to verify if the dream she had could really be true. Upon her arrival, the man whom she was supposed to meet did not show up, so she went to her cousin's house. At night, around 11pm, the man called saying he was sorry he missed the call and wanted to come pick her up. Since it was late, she refused and they decided to meet the next day. The next day, he called saying he is sorry that he had to travel and that he is in another city. When a bit later she called back the number, she realized it was the number of a telephone booth located in the same city, Yaoundé. The interviewee then had realized how this man was not serious and was a liar. She thanked God for having talked to her in advance through the dream about who this person truly is. Through this experience, the respondent truly realized how the Holy Spirit was a voice within that guides her path.

Respondent EC1_36 also claims that the Holy Spirit talks to her in dreams or inner voices. She says,

“Often when I am close to the Lord, the Lord will begin to reveal things to me clearly. Even the interview you are doing to me, when I am intimate with God, he could tell me well in advance that you are going to interview me. Sometimes, he speaks to me through dreams, sometimes by inner convictions, and when I do not obey that, I stumble afterwards. If the conviction asks me to go to the left and I go to the right, I will find obstacles in front.”

Another way Cameroonian Christians perceive the existence of the Holy Spirit is through the voice they hear from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit talks to the believers through the inner voice of the heart, sometimes by dreams, in order to guide their path and alert of things to come.

7.2.1.3 Seeing the Holy Spirit

Thirdly, some Cameroonian Christians approve the existence of the Holy Spirit due to their personal experience of seeing the Holy Spirit. Participant EC2_71 accounts,

“I had personal experience of the Holy Spirit while I was sleeping. While I was sleeping, I had a vision. I saw how a spirit similar to the form of angels came down. I was in a situation where the evil spirits threatened me. I see it coming down, coming down slowly. When it slowly comes down, I raise my hand to touch it. I want to touch it but I cannot touch, for it flees. Suddenly, I feel how a peace invades me. It is his glorious presence.”

The interviewee had seen in a dream, the Holy Spirit descending in a form similar to the angels, the moment he was threatened by the evil spirits. Although he was not able to grasp the Holy

Spirit, the Spirit had left him with an inner peace. This experience of seeing the Holy Spirit in her dream remained as one of her personal experience she had come to acknowledge the existence of the Holy Spirit.

Interviewee IC4_145 also states of his experience of having seen the Holy Spirit. He narrates,

“I gave my life to Christ around 2009. When I started to walk with the Lord, I had a vision and since then I started to think about whom the Holy Spirit is. What was the vision about? It was a person with great resplendent light who was in front of me with whom I walked for evangelization. We went to evangelize somewhere, and at the end of the evangelization, he gave me a scroll after which he disappeared. When I came back to my mind, I asked myself questions on what this could mean. The more I questioned myself; I got to realize it was the presence of God’s Spirit. Since then, when I am in an uncomfortable situation, I give a simple prayer and I have the expected result. It gives me the conviction once again that the Holy Spirit is real and that he can help in various ways on various fields.”

The respondent thinks the person with the resplendent light he has seen in the vision is the Holy Spirit. As he started his journey of faith, he had seen this vision, and it came to make him believe that the Holy Spirit is real. The existence of the Holy Spirit is approved by some Christians due to their experience of seeing the Holy Spirit through dreams or visions.

7.2.1.4 Speaking through the Holy Spirit

The fourth personal experience believers in Cameroon came to acknowledge the existence of the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues. Christians testify that through this experience, they have come to recognize the Holy Spirit was actually working in their lives. The following interviewees were asked on when they have come to truly realize that the Holy Spirit was working in their lives.

Participant EC1_40 replies,

“It is said that when you receive Christ and become rooted in the Word, you grow because the new birth is like a newborn who must grow up and become an adult. At first, I was young in the Word and sometime later, I received gifts such as the gift of vision, speaking in tongue, and deliverance.”

The different spiritual gifts he had received had lead him to realize the Holy Spirit was present in his life. One of these spiritual gifts he mentions is speaking in tongues.

Interviewee IC4_138 answers to this same question as following.

“So this one day I am really into worship and I start dancing. I suddenly find myself in a trance. I find myself talking in tongue. I myself started so ... being like that, I started to experiment, and I did not know... It was later that I knew it was the Holy Spirit. However, on the spot there I did not know. I was drunk and drowned. That is what happened to me. It was later on that I realized the Lord had visited me.”

The respondent had this spiritual encounter with the Holy Spirit. During the worship, she fell into trance, started dancing, and started speaking in tongue. It was later on, when she came back to her mind that she realized it was the visit from the Holy Spirit. Due to these spiritual experiences, including her speaking in tongue, she realized the Holy Spirit visited her personally.

EC2_52 testifies that he experienced the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in his life when he started speaking in tongue. He says, “Yes, many times during prayers. I can be interceding for a case and suddenly I feel the Spirit invades me. I even begin to speak in tongue. I pray in a language I do not know and I feel the Spirit of God act within me.” The respondent senses the Spirit of God act within him and one of the way he senses this presence is through the phenomenon of him praying in tongue.

7.2.1.5 Other Particular Experiences of the Holy Spirit

Lastly, African Christians come to acknowledge the existence of the Holy Spirit due to their particular experiences they had of the Holy Spirit. Participant EC1_21 details he had come to experience the Holy Spirit while he was preparing for his marriage.

“I had experienced the Holy Spirit in my life when I was about to get married. I did not have anything and my family had not given me anything. But the Holy Spirit acted and I got married. I had a small meal but many people ate and I think it was a miracle. Few people had contributed to help me for in our tribe, the Betis, there is jealousy and this prevents people from helping you. So, you first have to have your own money before expecting anything from anyone.”

He accounts how he was financially broke to prepare his marriage. Yet, with the little he had, he was able to prepare a satisfactory wedding feast and this particular experience had made him believe it was the work of the Holy Spirit.

Respondent IC4_153 links her experience of the deliverance to that of the Holy Spirit. She says, “I have a personal experience with the Holy Spirit; I did not know when the Holy Spirit began to act in my life. I tell to myself that it is probably when my deliverance began.” For her, the Holy Spirit started acting in her life from the moment of deliverance.

Interviewee IC4_155 mentions her experience of healing.

“I was seriously ill to the point of death. If I did not come to church, I will not be doing this interview. I was not able to get up; I was almost in a coma. My mother took me to church and I had my consolation and my recovery. The Holy Spirit really exists through feelings and by manifestations. You yourself see how someone who is bewitched is delivered and a good Spirit enters into you, you feel the capacity of the power of God.”

Although she was close to the point of death and being almost in a state of coma, she recovered upon her arrival to church. Now, she strongly believes the Holy Spirit really exists and perceives its existence by seeing people being recovered from the evil spirits. The particular experience she had has led her to conclude the existence of the Holy Spirit.

7.2.2 Dependence that is higher than the Existence

A fascinating observation done through the quantitative analysis of the Holy Spirit was the Cameroonian Christians’ tendency to have a higher dependence than its existence. This means the congregation members whom stated always to depend on the Holy Spirits were greater than those whom claimed they always recognized the existence of the Holy Spirit. With the exception of Evangelical Church 1, the cold figures of the remaining three churches similarly had this propensity. Evangelical Church 2 had 2.1% higher, Independent Church 3 had 11.6% higher, and Independent Church 4 had 15.1% higher dependence than the recognition of its existence. The perception of existence and dependence here is based upon those classified ‘extremely high’ meaning all the time. How could believers depend more on a spiritual being than they acknowledge its existence? Having someone rely on a being that he has not yet admitted to exist would be a rare phenomenon. It would be very odd for someone to depend on a being they think is inexistent. My personal interpretation to this question is traced to the fore-existing reliance on the traditional spiritual beings. Before the introduction of Christianity, the Cameroonians already had a spiritual dependence formed by the spiritual worldview inherited

by the African traditions. This pre-acquired dependence on the spirits remained on the mind of the African believers. Moreover, this reliance is transfused to the newly introduced spiritual being, the Holy Spirit. Although some have not come to admit thoroughly its existence, the fore-existing spiritual reliance created an atmosphere of trust toward this spiritual being. Thus, this transfused dependence from the traditional worldview influenced Cameroonian believers to expect and to attribute similar roles to the Holy Spirit.

7.2.2.1 Similar Roles Attributed to the Holy Spirit

A characteristic of the Cameroonian believers' surveyed is their tendency to have a notably high dependence. The dependence on the Holy Spirit is higher than their recognition of its existence. Such phenomenon is assumed to derive from the African spiritual worldview. An evidence that supports this assumption is the roles Cameroonian Christians are attributing to the Holy Spirit. The attributed roles are considerably similar to the expectations the Cameroonian society had toward the traditional spirits. They expect to receive prosperity and good life, healing, guidance, power, and be able to communicate with God through the spiritual beings. The spiritual dependence that had been embedded within the Cameroonians are being transferred into the Holy Spirit as they start attending churches. This explains why the Cameroonian believers have a tendency to depend more than they actually acknowledge the existence. Some have not yet personally experienced the Holy Spirit. Meanwhile they are hoping that this spiritual being could come to their help.

7.2.2.1.1 The Giver of Prosperity and Good Life

The first role African Christians have attributed to the Holy Spirit is prosperity and good life. EC1_26 states, "The Holy Spirit always realizes good things in our lives." EC1_40 claims, "In Galatians 5, the Bible tells us what the Holy Spirit brings into the life of God's child. He brings humility, love, peace, and joy. The Holy Spirit brings only things that is positive." IC4_155 says, "The Holy Spirit brought me many blessings in my life. I had my child, I am with my parents, and I come to church as many times as I want. Even when I do not come to church,

I pray at home. I know that my Holy Spirit listens to me and protects me.” Through the contents of the interviews, we get to grasp how one of the role African believers attribute to the Holy Spirit is realizing good things in our lives, bringing things that are positive, and bringing many blessing in one’s life.

Throughout the analysis on the traditional spirits, we have come to encounter how one of the main interest African people had when they relied and revered the spirits were because they wanted to prosper and gain goods in their lives. EC1_15 mentioned, “People believe the spirits and say it is due to them that they get to achieve certain things. They cannot do anything without these spirits and that is why they go often to their villages to offer sacrifices to the skull and the holy places to have good health and to prosper.” This expectation to prosper from the dependence of the spirits seems to have been transfused to the Holy Spirit.

7.2.2.1.2 The Healer

The second role assigned to the Holy Spirit by the African believers is healing. EC1_21 expresses, “Holy Spirit is a Spirit of God that is sent to chase away evil spirits. He heals and remains among the Christians.” We get to observe how the speaker gives the role of delivering and healing to the Holy Spirit. IC4_145 says, “The Holy Spirit is he who came after Jesus Christ. As Christ was the comforter, he was good to people, he healed those who were sick, he brought solutions to people who had problems, it is the same. The Holy Spirit came to accomplish exactly the same thing and maybe even more.” We here see how the role the interviewee attributes to the Holy Spirit is healing people from the sick and bringing solutions to problems people have in life.

This role of healer attributed to the Holy Spirit seems to be not too distant from the hope the Africans had while relying on the traditional spirits. IC3_129 refers to the role the spirits have as, “The Spirits are our grandparents whom are already deceased. These spirits transmits medicaments to heal people.” Another major role African society had assigned to the traditional spirits were that of healer and this role seems to be bridged to the newly introduced spiritual being, the Holy Spirit.

7.2.2.1.3 The Guide

The third role entrusted to the Holy Spirit by the Cameroonian Christians is that of a guide. EC2_76 comments,

“There are many times I got to realize the Holy Spirit was present in my life. On my way going to work, I see a scene that shows me how the boss will stress me. During the day at work, when it actually happens, I stay calm in front of the situation because the Holy Spirit had already warned me. I see scenes appear sometimes right in front of my eyes, sometimes through audible sounds, and sometimes through dreams.”

The interviewee testifies how he is alerted in advance of things to come by the Holy Spirit. When such things actually happen, for he has been noticed in advance, he calmly responds to the given situation. IC3_113 states about the Holy Spirit as, “The Holy Spirit is the inheritance left by Jesus when he left the earth. He is there to guide us, to help us and to keep us away from evil.” The participant understand the role of the Holy Spirit as being there to guide and to help from evil.

We once again get to perceive how the role that had been assigned to the Holy Spirit by the Cameroonian believers is not that distant to that they anticipated from the traditional spirits. EC2_71 accounts of the traditional spirits as, “These spirits are thought to be spirits that protect, guides them everywhere, and gives them success in their lives.” The entrusted role is protecting, guiding, and giving success in one’s life. We here see how the role of a guide was also one of the task the traditional spirits had to carry through.

7.2.2.1.4 The Provider of Strength

The fourth role the Holy Spirit has received from the Cameroonian congregation is power. Holy Spirit is understood as a source of power. EC2_71 comments, “The Holy Spirit is the strength that Jesus has left us when he left, and it is this strength that accompanies a Christian in his daily life, in his struggles, in his victories, and it is this strength that instructs me.” The interviewee refers multiple times to the Holy Spirit with the term strength. EC2_76 also takes a similar stance and mentions about the Holy Spirit as following.

“Jesus told us if he did not go away, we will not have the strength, the Holy Spirit. When he does go away, then he will send the Comforter to strengthen those whom are going to pray... As a born again Christian, I have the strength that enables me to understand clearly the Holy Spirit. It is my all. It needs to be in perpetual movement because if it stops, then

I am dead. Then, I will not have the strength as Jesus said, "If you remain in me and if I live in you ..." I understand the Holy Spirit as the fuel that enables us to circulate. It needs to be there in order for us to exist. That is how I understand the Holy Spirit."

The contents of the interview depicts how one of the role attributed to the Holy Spirit is the provider of strength. Cameroonian believers comprehends the Holy Spirit as the source of strength given by Jesus to the believers.

It is familiar for the Cameroonian society to entrust spiritual beings to be the source of power. The multiple interviewees that described how Cameroonians rely on the spirits in order to protect themselves from the probable attacks by others depict how the traditional spirits are understood as a form of power to protect. EC2_68 testifies, "To the Africans, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit who keeps you and it is the Spirit superior to all other spirits, he is above all spirits, he has more power, he is good, and he cares about the man." The statement of the interviewee implies how the traditional spirits have power. However, the Holy Spirit is understood as a spiritual being that has more power than the traditional spirits. This role of being the source of power, which is familiar to the traditional belief have been transmitted to the Holy Spirit.

7.2.2.1.5 The Mean of Communication with God

The fifth role attributed to the Holy Spirit by the Christians in Cameroon is the mean of communication with God. Through the Holy Spirit, God communicates with believers and believers are able to communicate to God through the Holy Spirit. IC3_97 accounts, "The Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is a way God uses to communicate with us for the Holy Spirit lives in us." The interviewee comprehends the Holy Spirit to be the mean God uses to communicate with the believers. EC2_76 also mentions similarly about the Holy Spirit,

"We understand that we have the Holy Spirit whom communicates permanently between Jesus Christ and us. He sends us the message and everything... I believe that the Holy Spirit is our admirable counselor, it is he who shows us the way"

The role assigned to the Holy Spirit is being the one whom enables the communication between Jesus and the believers. Through him, the message from God is sent to us.

Understanding the Holy Spirit as a mean of communication with God is a concept that is also familiar among the traditional worldview. Interviewee IC3_102 says, "God passes

through these spirits to pass on a message. God takes the form of a person whom you love a lot to talk to you.” One of the roles was attributed to the traditional spirits was to be messengers whom revealed about God’s intentions. The Cameroonian believers have also entrusted this identical role to the Holy Spirit.

7.2.2.2 Different Roles Attributed to the Holy Spirit

Although the Holy Spirit seems to have overtaken a significant amount of role that is similar to what the traditional spirits used to undertake, most Cameroonian Christians also recognize the difference between the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. In addition to the previously mentioned roles, following are roles Cameroonian Christians believe are distinctive to that of the traditional spirits. The roles that are uniquely undertaken by the Holy Spirit is he being the one to transform people’s lives, liberating, giving peace, and speaking truth.

7.2.2.2.1 The Transformer

One of the role African believers think the Holy Spirit acts differently to that of their traditional spirit is transforming the lives of people. IC3_102 states,

“When you dream of your mother at night, it does not bring you a change in your way of living, while comparing to your old life. However, the Holy Spirit is something you acquire. It seems like someone has implanted something in you that pushes you to change. Not by your own strength but by the Holy Spirit.”

The interviewee is stating that although the spirits cannot change the way of your life, the Holy Spirit pushes people to change and to be transformed no matter what their personal will is. IC3_116 also supports this stance for he accounts,

“As soon as you have the Holy Spirit, you will see the change yourself. The way you are going to speak, the way you act in the society and talk with your worldly friends will not be the same. When you have received Jesus, your life changes because you receive the Holy Spirit who will now manifest in you.”

The respondent accounts that as soon as you receive the Holy Spirit, the life of a believer changes. The way they talk and act changes. They become someone different than whom they formerly were.

7.2.2.2.2 The Liberator

Another role that is comprehended to be more particular to the Holy Spirit is the role of liberating. Interviewee EC2_76 claims,

“There is no resemblance between the Holy Spirit and the spirits, because with the spirits, you are captive of something. Whereas here, you live with the freedom and you have like the impression that it works without asking anything in return. The only one condition is to walk according to the Word. That is, to walk in righteousness. Therefore, it is two different things. They are not the same.”

The respondent accounts that the Holy Spirit and the spirits have no resemblance. The Holy Spirit gives you freedom, liberty, and it does not ask you anything in return. The only condition is to walk according to the Word of God. However, the spirits captivate you in/ return of the assistance, and they ask for recompenses. The Holy Spirit liberates, whereas the spirits captivate you.

Some readers might be surprised with the statement of the interviewee whom claims the spirits to captivate. For the society understands the traditional spirits to liberate people from other spirits and from difficult situations. Nevertheless, the participant surveyed understands these acts of liberation as a mean the spirits use in order to make someone rely on them. Yet, in the end, the goal of the traditional spirits will be to captivate and to manipulate the person. Another interviewee, EC2_71 says, “I say no to these spirits because they attract you. Once you put your faith on them, once you base your life on them, then it will be the moment that the spirits will start manipulating you.”

7.2.2.2.3 The Peace Giver

One of the traits that draws a distinctive difference from the spirits is the manner in which it approaches people. EC2_71 details of the way the spirits approaches people.

“The evil spirits, the spirits of tradition, they come with... I do not know how I am going to explain that. They come with fear, they come with the taboos, and they are frightening... The Holy Spirit is not like that, for me the Holy Spirit is very different. The Holy Spirit comes with peace and forgiveness. The Holy Spirit comes with gentleness. The Holy Spirit comes with the light, it lights you. There is no similarity between the Holy Spirit and the spirits for me, there is no similarity.”

The evil spirits approach people with fear and while frightening. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit comes with peace, forgiveness, and gentleness. The interviewee draws a clear distinction on the impression these two spiritual beings come across. The Holy Spirit brings peace. Although there were multiple accounts that the spirits bring solutions to problems and bring goods in life, it had never been mentioned that the spirits give peace. EC2_54 states, “The family spirit is the spirit of the ancestors who sometimes disturb, but the Spirit of God is the Spirit of peace, love, and progress.” A role uniquely undertaken by the Holy Spirit among the believers in Cameroon is giving peace.

7.2.2.2.4 The Truth Speaker

Another distinctive role practiced by the Holy Spirit is speaking the truth. The Cameroonian Christians believe the Holy Spirit to speak the truth, but the spirits are considered as liars. EC1_15 says, “The Holy Spirit is stronger and the spirits of tradition are simply liars.” The interviewee compares while mentioning the Holy Spirit to be stronger and the traditional spirit to be liars. The two criteria the respondent have given do not seem to be similar criteria that could be compared along. Nevertheless, she decides to compare strength and lying. What could this mean? This comparison could be understood when we take attention to the following statement. IC4_145 states,

“The only difference there is could be grasped on what people say about them. People say that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. It means that if he suggests something to you, it will certainly happen. When it comes to the traditional spirits, they can tell you things, but they do not have the power and the ability to do these things. That is why we classify them in the category of liars. They lie to you and they say things that can not be achieved, but the Holy Spirit can tell you something and it will certainly happen.”

The reason the traditional spirits are considered as liars are due to them not being able to realise things they are saying. This is the probable reason why the previous interviewee has compared strength and lying, the Holy Spirit has strength to realize the spoken word but the traditional spirits are not able to realize things they have said. They both make promises but one does not have the power to realize things that were said, thus becoming a liar. However, when the Holy Spirit makes promises, all these promises comes true. The Cameroonian Christians surveyed consider the Holy Spirit to be the Spirit that talks the truth.

7.2.3 Dependence that is higher than the Influence

Another interesting factor noticed through the quantitative analysis on the Holy Spirit is the fact that the actual influence the believers experienced was lower than the dependence. In exception of Evangelical Church 1, the remaining churches had shown this identical tendency. Congregation members of Evangelical Church 2 whom confessed they always depended on the Holy Spirit were 83.0%, whereas those recognizing the Holy Spirit always had influenced their lives were 76.6%. Independent Church 3 members claimed 83.7% of them always depended on the Holy Spirit, yet 72.1% acknowledged the consistent influence. Independent Church 4 showed 81.8% of its believers always depended on the Holy Spirit, but only 66.7% of them admitted they continuously experienced the influence of the Holy Spirit. The African Christians are claiming they always depend on the Holy Spirit, but due to the actual influence they experienced from the Holy Spirit not meeting up their expectations, their spiritual dependence are unmet. Then what could this phenomenon of having an unmet dependence result in? The semi-directed interviews revealed how some Cameroonian Christians felt doubts towards God and others continuously stayed attached to the traditional spirits.

7.2.3.1 Continuous Doubts

One of the reactions African believers have, due to this unmet dependence, are doubts. They doubt if God is there and if God is powerful. EC1_15 mentions, “There are still some who still doubt and mix the two. They say that ancestors have room in their lives, because they believe that it is the ancestors who act and who come in spirit.” The interviewee accounts how there are still some people who doubt. This implies the doubt did not stop but is an ongoing process although they now had become churchgoers. The expectations they had towards the Holy Spirit were not met and due to this, the doubt about God is not resolved but at an ongoing phase. EC1_21 states, “They still have doubts because when they are still in the world, they believe more in the things the world says and they believe less in what God says.” The interviewee testifies how they are still doubting Christians and this doubts make them believe more in what the world says than what God says.

A phenomenon that appears, when the African believers' reliance toward the Holy Spirit is not met, is that their doubts toward God is unresolved. However, when they experience the influence of the Holy Spirit to the point of their expectations, then the doubts they had becomes dissolved. EC2_71 comments, "Then, I was convinced that the Holy Spirit has taught me. These are personal experiences, a bit difficult to explain but that is it. There is a strong conviction when the Holy Spirit is there, you are convinced, you do not doubt, you do not grope, you do not hesitate." The respondent testifies how her personal experience of the Holy Spirit's presence had made her be convinced and not doubt God.

7.2.3.2 Attachment to the Traditional Spirits

Another reaction triggered by the unmet dependence is attachment to the traditional spirits. When the African Christians do not have their expectations met by God, they return to their familiar spiritual practice as a mean to fulfill their needs. IC4_153 says,

"The problem is that with God it is not fast because there is a process... When you arrive in church, you only want to receive the prayer from the pastor and then you want to leave. They are those whom are impatient to wait for God's timing. That is why they have desires to find quickly a solution to their problems, which means they do not understand how God works."

The respondent testifies how when the need of the Cameroonian believers are not met, some of them are impatient and want to quickly find solutions to their problems. One of the most familiar way Africans find ways to their problems are returning to the familiar traditional spirit for solutions. The unmet dependence of the Holy Spirit results in a recovered attachment to the traditional spirits.

Another participant, IC4_155, also gives a similar account about the matter. She says, "They no longer need the Holy Spirit because family spirits are already helping them in many of their activities." The statement of the participant brings up two factors we need to consider. One is the acknowledgement of the traditional spirits' effectiveness among some Cameroonian Christians. When the Holy Spirit is not considered as God himself but as another spirit that helps, they do not feel the need of the Holy Spirit because the family spirits are already helping them. A way the Holy Spirit could be revered in this situation is to demonstrate a higher effectiveness

so that the churchgoers whom are already satisfied with the traditional spirits realize the superiority of the Holy Spirit. Second is the returning reliance to the traditional spirits. The interviewee states that the Christians no longer need the Holy Spirit. They once used to need the Holy Spirit, but the unmet dependence has made them return to the traditional spirits and the assistance of the Holy Spirit is no longer needed. This implies that the believers whom had already experienced the influence of the traditional spirits, once they realize how their dependence on the Holy Spirit are not met, they have a high probability to return to the fore-experienced traditional spirits whom are considered effective.

7.2.4 Where do the Cameroonian Christians draw the Line?

The qualitative analysis of the Holy Spirit has brought light to the hidden traces of the traditional spirits on the understanding of the Pneumatology. While analyzing the African Christians' dependence on the Holy Spirit that is higher than the existence, we have got to speculate this dependence found amongst the Cameroonian believers were pre-acquired from the traditional spiritual worldview. A proof of this speculation was found by the roles attributed to the Holy Spirit, which is very similar to that the Cameroonian society had entrusted to the traditional spirits. Another vestige of the traditional spirit could be found among the Cameroonian Christians while analyzing how their dependence on the Holy Spirit was actually higher than the influence they actually experienced. The unmet spiritual reliance and expectations are continuously raising doubts among believers and making some to return to the traditional spirits.

This makes it appear as if the lay believers' theologizing process of the two spiritual world, one of the African tradition and of the Christianity, have come to an interrelationship. Although this analysis is acknowledging that there are some traces of significant influence from the traditional spirits on the participants' comprehension of the Holy Spirit, it is not generalizing that the African Christians' understanding of the Holy Spirit has been transfused from the traditional spirits. The majority of the church members from the Evangelical and the Independent churches are drawing a clear line between their understanding of the traditional spirits and their comprehension of the Holy Spirit. The distinction the lay Christians surveyed

make between the traditional spirits could be observed throughout their personal account of their turning point, their understanding on the identity and the attributes of the Holy Spirit.

7.2.4.1 The Turning Point

The first factor that leads us to understand how the majority of the Cameroonian Christians surveyed draw a clear line between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit is their personal account of the turning point from the traditional spirits. A specific occasion in their spiritual journey had made them to conclude and deter from the reverence of the traditional spirits. For some, it was their realization on how the spirits were ineffective, others their conversion, and others, it was their personal experience of the Holy Spirit.

7.2.4.1.1 Realization of the Spirits' Ineffectiveness

The turning point of interviewee EC1_1, from the traditional spirits, was her realization that the spirits were useless. She states,

“I decided to cut the relationship with the traditional spirits because there is no use that you go to the witchdoctors. God has created the person you go to consult. I decided to cut off with the practice to the skulls because skulls do not speak, they do not walk, and they do not see. I told to myself that it is useless. I must follow God. He alone protects me. It is only he who provides for my needs.”

The respondent realized the skulls were not able to speak, nor walk, nor see. Then, she had realized that it was useless to go before the skulls and the witchdoctors to rely on the traditional spirits. This realization had made her turn more toward God. EC1_15 also states how she had realized the spirits did not work, through her mother's experience, and it made her turn away from the spirits,

“My mother had relationships with the spirits of tradition. She had two experiences that showed her that the spirits of the ancestors did not work. She first lost her mother, then she lost her little brother in short intervals. She took us all to a witchdoctor whom sacrificed us. Then she realized that everything went wrong. Everything went in contrary to what these people had promised her. In the end, she stopped everything. So, as we grew up, we clearly knew that we should not rely on the witchdoctors nor visit the skulls.”

The interviewee had an indirect experience of the spirits through her mother whom had to undergo two personal experiences to realize the spirits of the ancestors do not really work. Seeing how her mother was deceived, this had made the participant turn away from the traditional spirits from her youth.

7.2.4.1.2 The Conversion

Another turning point, for the lay Christians surveyed, from the traditional spirits is the believers' conversion. The respondents testify their moments of conversion came to be their turning point from the dependence of the African spiritual world. When asked what had made the interviewee to turn away from the traditional spirits, EC1_18 replies, "It is because I accepted Christ in my life. While accepting Christ in my life, I gave up everything. With Christ there is the truth and he is my Creator." EC2_68 responds to the same question as following.

"When I was 17 years old, my mother brought us to church and that is what caused the rupture with these spirits. In the beginning, I just went to follow my mother. 2 years later, I truly accepted Jesus as my Savior. And since then, I totally cut off any attachments with these spirits without anyone forcing me to do so."

He accounts on how he accepted Jesus as his Savior and since then, he had totally cut off any attachments with the traditional spirits and traditions. The conversion had become a moment of turning point for him. Participant IC3_116 tells, "Since I gave my life to Christ, I never went to meet these spirits. When I was a kid, these spirits manifested in me in different ways, but from the moment I have received Christ, these spirits stopped manifesting in my life." The Interviewee had renounced his reliance toward the traditional spirits from the moment he had received Christ. In addition to that, he realized the spirits were not able to influence his life anymore. He continues, "After my conversion, my life was completely transformed. I did not see spirits any more but I rather saw visions. God showed me in advance things that were to happen. Even though I did not take it too seriously sometimes, things that God had shown me always happened." These numerous accounts of conversion, enlighten us to perceive how for a significant number of Cameroonian Christians surveyed, the moment of conversion was their turning point of cutting the bridge from the familiar African spiritual world.

7.2.4.1.3 The Experience of the Holy Spirit

The personal experience of the Holy Spirit is a factor mentioned by some African Christians as their turning point from the traditional spirits. Interviewee EC1_21 states,

“Before, I did things like a mad man. I looked very sad. When someone spoke to me, I insulted him. I also liked to flirt with young girls. However, when I experienced the glory of God, I realized how I have wasted my time doing things that is not right. I have experienced the Holy Spirit and these things do not mean anything to me anymore.”

By the term “these things,” the respondent englobes the traditional spirits. He accounts how before, he used to think of the traditional spirits and the witchdoctors as gods. He then used to live his life like a mad man, but his experience of the Holy Spirit had changed him. Participant IC3_131 adds another particular experience of the Holy Spirit, which had made him cut his relationship with the traditional spirits.

“I was sick for several years. I was brought everywhere, to the witchdoctors and to the exorcist priests. However, nothing got better, so I was brought to church. The pastor welcomed me, gave Bible verses, and asked me to concentrate on prayers. I started to pray and meditate on the Word of the Lord, and that is when I received my deliverance. Since then, the Lord has started talking to me; the Holy Spirit started using me. After that, I compared with what that woman was doing, I realized it was not a good spirit that she was using.”

Interviewee accounts how he came to be totally delivered from sickness. Since that deliverance he had experienced, he realized how the Holy Spirit was working in him. In addition, he realized how the traditional spirits the woman used were not good spirits. Through his experience of the Holy Spirit, the respondent now has a different perception of the traditional spirits. He used to consider the traditional spirits used by his neighbor to be good spirits, but after his experience of the Holy Spirit, he realized that the spirits used by his neighbor were not spirits that could be considered good. The personal experience of the Holy Spirit had changed his perception on the traditional spirits.

7.2.4.2 *The Identity of the Holy Spirit*

The second factor that clearly illustrates the distinction between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit is the African Christians’ understanding on the identity of the Holy Spirit. The Cameroonian believers comprehended the Holy Spirit as God and the Spirit of God. When

comparing to the lay African Christians' comprehension on the traditional spirits, they do not attribute this divine nature to the traditional spirits. Although the image accredited as good spirits by some surveyed Cameroonian believers seemed to give an overlapping impression between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit, this resemblance ended when the topic of their identity emerged during the interview. Another additional identity surveyed African believers entrusted to the Holy Spirit is the power given by Jesus. Whereas the traditional spirits are considered power temporarily borrowed, the Holy Spirit is conceived as the power that had been handed over to the believers by Jesus.

7.2.4.2.1 God

The Cameroonian believers identified the Holy Spirit as God. EC2_54 says, "I do not find any similarity between the Holy Spirit and the family spirit. The family spirit is the spirit of the ancestors, the customs, and the witchdoctors. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit, it is God himself in person." We get to see how the interviewee draws a clear line when mentioning the identity of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God but the traditional spirits are not considered as God, although they might be the sympathized familial spirit.

Interviewee IC3_107 was asked on how she would explain the Holy Spirit to someone whom did not know of the Holy Spirit at all. She replies, "I will tell him that the Holy Spirit is God, it is the presence of God in himself." The first thing the respondent mentions of the Holy Spirit is the identity. The Holy Spirit is God and the presence of God in us for the believers.

Participant EC2_52 brings us an interesting approach on the identity of the African spiritual world and that of Christianity. He talks about the Bassa tribe's spiritual world, since that is where he is from. He explains that in the Bassa tribe there is a concept of God whom is called "Job," meaning the sun. According to the interviewee, the Bassa knew the existence of the Supreme Being, but since they did not know how to name their god, they named him sun. The other traditional spirits found in the Bassa tribe are spirits that work under Job. The respondent links this Job with the God of Christianity by saying, "I believe that this Job is related to the God of the Bible, because already the term that the Bassa used to qualify the God of the Bible is always Job." The interviewee naturally made a connection between the Supreme Being of the African tradition and the God of Christianity. I then became curious if the respondents

would next bridge the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, when it came to comparing the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit, he reacted in a different way. He claims, “There is no relationship between the Holy Spirit and these spirits. The Christians believe in the Holy Spirit but the non-Christians the spirits.” The interviewee draws a clear line between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit, although he leaves room for the Supreme Being and God to be joined. What is the key for these distinctions made by the interviewee? It is his perception on their identity. He bridges Job and God together for their identity are both God. However, he does not recognize the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit together. He latter mentions, “God is apart, these spirits are also apart.”

Although the society may consider the traditional spirits as gods, the analysis of the qualitative has not revealed any Cameroonian Christians whom think the traditional spirits to be God. The minority of the lay Cameroonian Christians, whom consider the role of the traditional spirits to be good, gives an impression that their understanding of the Holy Spirit could partially embrace the traditional spirits. Yet, when the topic on the identity of these spiritual beings arises, the fog that seemed to englobe the two spiritual beings together are suddenly vanished. And we get to find how they draw a clear distinction on the substance of these two entities.

7.2.4.2.2 The Spirit of God

Another identification of the Holy Spirit by the Cameroonian Christians is the Holy Spirit being the Spirit of God. Throughout the semi-directed interview, the majority of the respondents referred the traditional spirits in relation to the ancestors and family. They were spirits sent by the dead ancestors to give messages or spirits sent by a mother to guide. However, the Holy Spirit is different. He is the Spirit sent by God.

Respondent IC3_116 comments, “The Holy Spirit is the Spirit that comes from God. When you believe in the Lord, you receive the Spirit. The disciples of the Lord have believed in him and God has given them the Spirit, he is there to nourish the children of God spiritually.” The interviewee clearly states from whom the Holy Spirit comes from. It is the Spirit coming from God. IC4_153 states, “The Holy Spirit is the third personality of God. Therefore, it is a spirit of God who is holy. He cannot live where there is sin. It is when you confess Christ that he takes position in your life. But, if one continues to behave as before, it ends up leaving.” The

interviewee identifies the Holy Spirit to be the Spirit of God. Participant EC1_21 also gives a similar account, “It is God who sends the Holy Spirit. He sends the Spirit of God to hunt evil spirits. The Holy Spirit heals and remains within the Christians.” We here get to perceive once again, how the Holy Spirit is understood as the Spirit of God among the Cameroonian believers surveyed. This intimate relationship between the Holy Spirit and God, and the fact that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God himself, brings a definite contrast with the traditional spirits.

7.2.4.2.3 The Power given by Jesus

The Holy Spirit is identified among the Cameroonian believers, as the power given to the believers. Although some also understand the traditional spirits as the source of strength, there is a qualitative difference between the power derived from the traditional spirits and that of the Holy Spirit. The accounts on the traditional spirits give us the impression that the traditional spirits hold this power and they intervene in a given situation with their strength. However, the power of the Holy Spirit is considered as a power that is handed over to the Christians.

Interviewee EC2_71 tells of how she will explain the Holy Spirit to someone who does not know about the Holy Spirit.

“I will first explain to him that he is the third person of the Trinity. As there is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In addition, it is the power that Jesus left us when he left. This strength accompanies the Christians in their daily life, in struggles, and in victories. This power instructs me. When I say that he instructs me, it is because I have already noticed. When I take the Word of God for example, when I vaguely read like that, I do not feel a particular effect. Nevertheless, when I take moments to pray saying, “Lord reveal me when I am going to read Your Word, the same word that I have read, it feels as if my eyes were open. I come out from this Word with something special. Here, I am convinced that the Holy Spirit taught me. These are personal experiences, a bit difficult to explain but that is it.”

The interviewee states how she understands the Holy Spirit as the Power that Jesus had left to the Christians. This power remains within the believers influencing and guiding in their daily lives. She gives an example of how sometimes she does not understand anything while reading a passage of the Bible. However, when she prays and starts reading again, she starts being

revealed with special messages. The Holy Spirit is the power given to her, to guide her in her daily life and spiritual life.

Respondent EC2_76 also has a similar stance and identifies the Holy Spirit as power given to the Christians.

“Jesus told us, “If I do not go away, you will not have the power, the Holy Spirit. But, I am leaving.” Moreover, he sent the Comforter to strengthen those who were going to pray... As a born again Christian today, I have this strength to understand that the Holy Spirit is everything to me. It must be in perpetual motion because if it is not moving, then I am dead. I could certainly go into a state of shock. I will not have the strength as he said, "If you remain in me and I live in you..." That is a little... it is a little revelation. I understand that the Holy Spirit is the fuel to circulate, it is the life to exist, and that is how I understand the Holy Spirit.”

We get to perceive how the interviewee understands the Holy Spirit as the power given by Jesus. The Spirit that is active in the life of the believer is like a fuel, which enables the Christians to forego their spiritual life.

This understanding of the Holy Spirit draws a clear boundary between the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. The traditional spirits are inquired in times of troubles for they are considered as a temporarily borrowed powerful being. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit is understood as the power given to the Christians by Jesus in order for them to have strength to overcome their daily life and be victorious in their spiritual journey. Traditional spirits are outer forces that are temporarily inquired but the Holy Spirit is the power that remains within the believers.

7.2.4.3 The Attributes of the Holy Spirit

The third factor that African believers distinguish between the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits are their attributes. No matter how influential and effective the traditional spirits could be, the majority of the Cameroonian Christians whom I have surveyed comprehended the traditional spirits as evil spirits, whereas the Holy Spirit was understood as the good spirit. The attribute of good versus evil is a clear distinction most believers distinguished. However, there are some, although they are a small minority, whom acknowledged the existence of good spirits in the traditional spirits. Nevertheless, even they

make distinctions regarding the attributes of the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits mentioning the Spirit of God to be eternal and to give salvation.

7.2.4.3.1 Goodness

The majority of Christians in Cameroon contrast the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits due to their attributes of good and evil. The Holy Spirit is perceived as the good spirit, whereas the traditional spirit is comprehended as the evil spirit. Interviewee EC2_52 was asked if there are similarities or differences between the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. He answers,

“The other spirits are wicked and evil. They act in the darkness to harm, while the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God who is there to enlighten us. It is He who intercedes for us beside the Father.”

Respondent IC3_97 responds to the same question as,

“As similarity, on both sides, they are spirits we can not see them. We cannot explain these things. When talking about the difference, there are big differences. The spirits are there to bewitch, to hurt, and to destroy. When a spirit is in you, it makes your life incomprehensible, it conditions your life, you are unable to make your own decisions, it makes your life miserable and to get rid of it, it is the loss of finances. On the contrary, the good Holy Spirit makes you lighter, it puts you in symbiosis with the Lord, and it is as God speaks directly to you. Even when you want to drift away, there is always this force or an intuition that calls you back.”

For her, although they have a little similarity that they are spiritual being and cannot be seen, the big difference they have is that the traditional spirits are evil and that the Holy Spirit is good. She says the traditional spirits bewitch, hurt, destroy, and make miserable. Whereas the Holy Spirit is perceived as good, brings closer to God, makes one speak to God, and calls back when a person drifts away from God.

Interviewee EC2_72 was asked on what he thinks of the good spirits in the traditions.

“I do not know. I never thought about this. It is my first time to hear that there are good spirits in the traditions. People who say that there are good spirits in traditions, on what do they base their statements? I understand that the Spirit of God is good. The spirit that is not the spirit of God that is whether called good spirit or bad, it is called good spirit the day that the spirit attracts you. The spirit attracts you with a bait... I say no because these spirits seduce you. Once that you will put your faith on them, you will entrust your life on them, it is at this moment that the spirits will start manipulating you.”

The respondent was first surprised to know that there were spirits referred as good in the traditions. He interpreted these spirits called as good to be temporarily in favor of people until the moment people will start entrusting themselves. Then, they were to reveal their evil nature and start manipulating people's lives. Through these accounts, we get to perceive how a large majority of the Cameroonian Christians comprehend the attribute of the traditional spirits as evil and the Holy Spirit as good. Although the traditional spirits could play the role of the good spirits, it is understood as a way to seduce people until they reveal their true nature.

7.2.4.3.2 Eternal

One of the attributes African believers perceive of the Holy Spirit is its goodness. This attribute of goodness is a distinctive feature that separates the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits to the majority of the believers. Nevertheless, although it is a small minority, some lay Cameroonian Christians also understand the traditional spirits as being good. Such understanding of the traditional spirits makes it look as if the distinction of these two spiritual beings is inexistent amongst the Christians whom believe the traditional spirits to be good. However, even to the believers whom comprehend the traditional spirits to be good, they still differentiate the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits with the attribute of eternity. The Holy Spirit is eternal and the traditional spirits are finite.

Interviewee EC2_84 perceives the traditional spirits to be also good, but he still draws a line between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit.

“Yes, the Holy Spirit is also good. However, it does not have a connection. Why? Because everything that is done here is not eternal. Nothing that is from this world is eternal. None that is done by men, by men whom are not Christians, does not last for long. Nonetheless, when the Holy Spirit touches you, it lasts forever. Yes, that is the difference.”

Her statement “the Holy Spirit is also good” implies that the respondent considers the traditional spirits to be good. Although both spiritual beings are considered good, she claims they do not have connections. The traditional spirits' effect does not last for long, whereas the Holy Spirit's touch is eternal.

7.2.4.3.3 Gives Salvation

Another attribute Cameroonians believe, whom comprehend the traditional spirits to be good, entrust the Holy Spirit is salvation. They comprehend that worldly goods and solutions of problems could both come from the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. Nonetheless, only the Holy Spirit is able to give eternal life.

When the interviewee IC4_138 was asked if there are good spirits in the traditions, she claimed that there exist good spirits in the African tradition whom can heal and help.

“There are, there are good spirits in the traditions, but it can make you lose eternal life. Yes, they can give you healing and help you. But because the Lord Jesus says he is the way, the truth, and the life. Moreover, he says that no one will be saved except through him. He is the only one who has shed his blood on the cross for humanity. These spirits have not shed their blood to save humanity.”

Although the respondent comprehends the traditional spirits as being good, the distinction she makes is that the spirits cannot give you eternal life. Only Jesus is the one whom had shed his blood on the cross for humanity and only the Spirit he has sent is able to bring salvation to the people. The participant mentions that relying on the traditional spirits can make one lose eternal life. Despite the fact that the two spiritual beings are considered as good amongst some Cameroonians Christians, the believers draw a clear line saying only the Holy Spirit could bring salvation.

7.2.5 Conclusion on the Qualitative Analysis of the Holy Spirit

7.2.5.1 Summary on the Qualitative Analysis of the Holy Spirit

The understanding of the Holy Spirit, by the believers surveyed in Cameroon, portrayed by the quantitative study had led to the emergence of multiple curiosities. The Christians in Cameroon demonstrated a high approval on the existence of the Holy Spirit, showed a higher recognition of dependence than its existence, and exhibited a higher acknowledgement of dependence than its influence. The multiple pieces of unmatched puzzles were investigated closely throughout the qualitative analysis and had led us to a closer understanding of how the Christians in Cameroon understood the Holy Spirit.

The believers showed an extremely high approval on the existence of the Holy Spirit. 99.45% of the Christians in Cameroon approved the existence of the Holy Spirit, 0.55% were ambivalent on its existence, and there were no Christians whom disapproved of its existence. When taking a closer look on these groups of Christians whom approved the existence, 73.25% claimed they always recognized the existence of the Holy Spirit. These cold figures drawn by the quantitative study had led us to question on what were the cause of this high approval on the existence of the Holy Spirit, for this numbers demonstrated a high contrast to the 62.5% of the Cameroonian believers whom acknowledged the existence of the traditional spirits. The analysis of the semi-directed interview relieved this curiosity. The reason of this high approval of existence was based on their personal experiences of the Holy Spirit. The believers in Cameroon testified their personal experiences of feeling the Holy Spirit, hearing its voice, seeing him, speaking in tongues, and multiple other particular experiences on the Spirit of God has led them to concede to its existence. I was astonished to hear the dynamic and vivid experiences the respondents shared. When compared to the lay believers I have met throughout my church ministries, three years in Seoul and four years in Montreal, the experiences shared by the surveyed African believers were so compelling. They were experiences that were uncommon among other believers. However, we did not have occasions to hear this dynamic illustrations of the Holy Spirit by contemporary lay African Christians due to the African theologians whom monopolized opportunities to raise voices. This research had passed on the microphone to the lay African Christians to speak up on what they understand of the Holy Spirit and it has revealed of the vivid accounts of the Spirit of God that had led them to highly acknowledge of its existence.

Another curiosity raised through the pieces of puzzle thrown by the quantitative study was that the dependence of the Christians was higher than their acknowledgement of its existence. Although the acknowledgement of the existence was objectively high, the dependence the African Christians had was even higher. This strange phenomenon was observed in three churches surveyed, which was Evangelical Church 2, Independent Church 3, and Independent Church 4. It was very odd to find African believers relying to something they did not acknowledge to exist. The answer to this emerging curiosity was found on the Christians' account on the roles they attributed to the Holy Spirit. We are to note the roles attributed to the

Holy Spirit, such as giving prosperity and good life, healing, guiding, providing strength, means of communications, were significantly similar to the roles they formerly used to expect from the traditional spirits. The expectations they used to have toward the traditional spirits have been transfused to the Holy Spirit. The strange phenomenon of the dependence being higher than the recognition of its existence was residues of the spiritual reliance from the African tradition that has remained among African believers. This spiritual reliance deriving from the traditional worldview could be considered as an advantage to the African believers, for this reliance is triggering the African believers' expectations to encounter the Holy Spirit.

The last curiosity that emerged through the quantitative study is the dependence on the Holy Spirit that was higher than the actual influence. Such phenomenon was observed in three churches that were similar to those mentioned above. Having a higher dependence than the actual influence implies that believers in Cameroon are experiencing unmet expectations. Their spiritual reliance is not being filled. Such phenomenon resulted in some Christians having doubts toward God and in some to be attached to the traditional spirits. We here get to remark how the religiosity found among some of the African Christians surveyed had a tendency to focus its attention on the effectiveness. When a spiritual being was effective to meet their expectations, they had a tendency to depend. However, when the spiritual being was found to be ineffective in the given situation, their dependence had a tendency to shift to other spiritual beings.

The analysis on the dependence that is greater than the existence and the influence had led us to trace a continual influence of the traditional spirits amongst some Cameroonian Christians. This remaining residue of the traditional spirits on the comprehension of the Holy Spirit gives an impression of a melded understanding of the two spiritual beings from different backgrounds. However, the analysis of the interviews made us realize how the lay Christians were themselves drawing a clear distinction between the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. Their confession of the turning point from the reliance of the traditional spirits, their exhibition on the diagnosed identity of the Holy Spirit, and the illustration on the attributes of the Spirit of God clearly portrayed how the lay Cameroonian Christians perceived the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits as completely distinctive spiritual beings. The lay believers account how they severed their reliance to the traditional spirits due to the ineffectiveness of the spirits, their

conversion to Christianity, and their experience of the Holy Spirit. Other believers state how the identity of the Holy Spirit is a distinctive factor to the traditional spirits. Holy Spirit is God, the Spirit of God, and the power given by Jesus. In contrast to these identifications, the Cameroonian Christians are not attributing divine identity to the traditional spirits. Another factor that differentiates the Holy Spirit is its nature. Most believers understand the Holy Spirit as being good, whereas the traditional spirits are evil. Although there are some minority of lay Christians whom take a different stance and discern the ancestral spirits to be good, they still draw a clear line between the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits, asserting the Spirit of God is eternal and gives salvation.

7.2.5.2 How do the Lay African Christians Theologize?

This thesis started in order to search on the actual contemporary comprehension of the Holy Spirit found amongst the lay African Christians. The African understanding of the Holy Spirit introduced by the theologians was polarized and contradictory. They looked at the same phenomenon but drew completely discrepant analysis. While the polarized voices were in constant argument, I was astonished to find out that there was not much attention paid to the ground. How the lay African Christians understood the Holy Spirit was unheard. That is why I have decided to bring the spotlight to the terrain in order to unveil what is the actuality of the phenomenon through the quantitative study and to find its meaning through the qualitative study. Having come to the end of the qualitative analysis that had provided abundant enlightenments on the African Christians' understanding of the two spiritual worlds, we would like to synthesize how the lay African Christians did theologize the collision of the two spiritual worlds.

7.2.5.2.1 Transferring the Dependence

Firstly, the lay African Christians surveyed have theologized to transfuse their dependence of the traditional spirits to the Holy Spirit. There are couple of evidences that the reliance on the traditional spirits had been transferred to the Holy Spirit. One is that there are significant similarities on the roles they attribute to the Holy Spirit. The believers surveyed

expected the Holy Spirit to give prosperity, heal, guide, provide strength, and considered as a mean of communication with God. However, these roles were remarked as roles the Cameroonians society awaited from the traditional spirits. The same expectations they used to have on the traditional spirits are now passed on to the newly introduced spiritual being by Christianity. Another evidence that the high dependence of the African believers owes to the African tradition is the reliance on the Holy Spirit that is higher than the acknowledgement of its existence. How can respondents depend more on the Holy Spirit than they approve of its existence? It would be very odd to rely on something that does not exist. Such particular phenomenon is due to the fore-existing spiritual dependence African believers used to have to the spiritual beings of the African tradition. Thus, we get to realize how the lay African Christians whom had to undergo the collision of the two spiritual worlds, the African tradition and Christianity, decided to transfer their reliance from the traditional spirits to the Holy Spirit. They have theologized that attributing the roles they used to expect from the traditional spirits to the Holy Spirit is acceptable. The fore-existing spiritual reliance had played a favorable role on familiarizing the Holy Spirit to the African Christians.

7.2.5.2.2 Drawing the Boundary

Secondly, the lay Cameroonian Christians surveyed had theologized to draw a clear boundary between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. The boundary between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit at times did not seem clear when observing the practice of the African believers. There were accounts on how some believers returned to the traditional spirits when their spiritual needs were not met with the Holy Spirit. I was even able to observe a believer whom considered the Holy Spirit to be just another good spirit. Interviewee IC3_131 states, “The Holy Spirit is not God, it is a spirit that protects us, that uses us.” Such statements of devaluing the divinity of the Holy Spirit leads us to speculate that there might be not many differences with the traditional spirits among some African believers. However, this is the opinion of the very few African believers for there were only one respondent whom considered the Holy Spirit to be just a spirit.

Nevertheless, the majority of the lay Cameroonian Christians surveyed have personally theologized to draw a clear boundary between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. Although the anticipated roles may seem similar, a clear distinction is made when perceiving their identity and attributes. The respondents firmly state the identity of the Holy Spirit to be God and the Spirit of God. The participants strongly affirm the nature of the Holy Spirit to be eternal and giving salvation. Whereas none of the lay Cameroonian Christians surveyed have attributed such identity and nature to the traditional spirits. The collision of the two spiritual worlds that appeared to be foggy in practice was concretely distinguished by revealing the lay African Christians' process of theologization on the two spiritual worlds. The roles could be partially similar, but the identity and the nature is definitely different.

7.2.5.3 Forwarded Questions

This chapter has synthesized the analysis from the qualitative survey in order to formulate how the lay Cameroonian Christians surveyed, whom were undergoing the phase of transition from the traditional spiritual world to the Christian spiritual world, have theologized the collision of these two spiritual worlds. They have approved to transfer their spiritual reliance from the spirits to the Holy Spirit while attributing the similar roles, yet have drawn a clear distinction when dealing with its identity and nature. I would further like to excavate from the voices the lay Cameroonian Christians have raised. Therefore, in the next chapter, the voices from the terrain would forego a conversation with the voices from the academic field.

Where would the voices of the lay African believers be located on the bipolarized spectrum of the ongoing debate on the academic field? Would the voices raised from the terrain dilute and reconcile the bipolarized understanding of the Holy Spirit persisting on the academic field or would it further stimulate the debate? The following chapter, chapter 8, will enhance an atmosphere of dialogue between the voices of the terrain and those of the theologians in the academic field and then it will try to locate where the voices of the surveyed African believers stand. After having situated the voices of the terrain, a system of categorizing the comprehension of the Holy Spirit will be introduced on chapter 9. Then on chapter 10, I will propose a popular Africanized Pneumatology in an urban context.

PART IV. Expounding a Popular African Pneumatology

Chapter 8: Locating the Lay African Christians' Understanding of the Holy Spirit

The African believers are going through a phase of transition from the African traditional comprehension of the spiritual world to a Christian one. This phase of transformation is the key element that is triggering a unique but also a controversial phenomenon among the African Christians. At the core center of this key element stands the Holy Spirit. It was mentioned in chapter 2 that comprehensions of the Holy Spirit in Africa introduced by the theologians were standing at each end of the polarity. For the past half century, they were not able to reconcile, but just firmly stood at each end of the polarity asserting their stances. At one end of the spectrum, theologians such as Allan Anderson and Elochukwu Uzukwu opened up the doors to be favorable to the continuity of the traditional spirits with the Holy Spirit. At the other end, theologians as Gerhardus Oosthuizen and Matthew Michael stated the discontinuity of the traditional spirits with the Holy Spirit. Thus, surprisingly these theologians were looking at the same phenomenon but having different interpretations. In this section, I would like to bring up the voices of the surveyed lay African Christians, so that they could participate in the controversial debate on the African understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Allan Anderson (1991) and Gerhardus Oosthuizen (1992) were observing the African Independent Churches in South Africa, but they had different conclusions. Seeing the movements of the African Independent Churches Oosthuizen states, “the functions of the ancestor spirits have been transferred to the Holy Spirit, or simply ‘the Spirit’, so that in the independent post-Christian movements, their ‘holy spirit’ is no longer the Holy Spirit of whom we learn in the Scripture.”²⁶⁷ Anderson interprets it differently for he claims, “Africans expect God to be closely involved in their daily lives and act upon their lives. However, the way

²⁶⁷ Oosthuizen, *Post-Christianity in Africa: A Theological and Anthropological Study*, 68.

missionaries have introduced Holy Spirit is not in such form but in a distant matter. This is where the spirit-type church has introduced a Pneumatology where Spirit is involved in their daily lives.”²⁶⁸

Elochukwu Uzukwu (2012) and Matthew Michael (2013) identically studied Independent Churches in Nigeria but they also resolved to have different interpretations. Uzukwu claims, “A Generalized Holy Spirit who bestows all gifts of healing and divining becomes a creative Pneumatological contribution from West African Christianity to the great Christian tradition. The leading contribution of African Independent Churches in this creative Pneumatology should be recognized.”²⁶⁹ He praises the Independent Churches to have been creative and insists their contribution to be recognized. However, Michael thinks differently, “The traditional concept of the good spirit can be readily associated with the Christian Holy Spirit who is also thought to give gifts, spiritual power, and blessings. Most of the African Independent Church often have a problematic concept of Pneumatology because of this common association.”²⁷⁰ He claims most of the African Independent Churches to have a problematic comprehension of the Holy Spirit because they associate the traditional concept of the good spirits to the Holy Spirit.

The theologians are inspecting the same regions, the South African Independent Churches and the Nigerian Independent Churches, at the similar period of time, the 1990s and the 2010s, but they are having completely different interpretations. Then how are we to perceive the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit? Is it really in controversy as the theologians claim from their end of the polarity having no intention to step a foot closer? The measure we have resolved in chapter 2 was to raise the voices from the ground, to let the voices of lay African Christians join the debate solely monopolized by the theologians. Since we have thoroughly analyzed in the previous chapters on how the surveyed lay African Christians understood the Holy Spirit, we would like to bring up their voices to the academic field and promote a dialogue with the previously referred theologians. Then we will proceed to locate

²⁶⁸ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 9.

²⁶⁹ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 179.

²⁷⁰ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

where the lay African Christians stand on the spectrum of bipolarity preformed by the theologians.

8.1 The Dialogue with the Theologians Stating the Continuity

The surveyed lay African Christians' voices will be brought up to have its interaction with the theologians whom are stating the continuity of the traditional spirits with the Holy Spirit. This section will mainly focus on two theologians that were introduced on chapter 2, Allan Anderson and Elochukwu Uzukwu, whom are supporting explicitly or indirectly the continuity between the two spiritual beings. The dialogue will enable us to comprehend more on what the surveyed lay African Christians have to say on the opinions formulated by these theologians.

8.1.1 There is no Real Conflict between the Two Spiritual Worlds

One of the main claims made by the theologians stating the continuity is that there is no real conflict between the two spiritual worlds. Anderson believes the Western missionaries had misunderstood and suppressed the African churches to have their own way of understanding and practicing the Holy Spirit. He insists that the liberty should be given to the African Churches so that the Holy Spirit could work in a particularly African way. He states,

“It is a fact, however, that a fear of the excesses that often accompanied the receiving of the Spirit in African churches caused many Western Pentecostal missionaries to suppress this central tenet of their faith in teaching and practice. It is necessary for the Holy Spirit to be allowed to work in a particular African way.”²⁷¹

After having observed how the ancestor cult is common amongst the mission churches and the independent churches, he concludes that there is no real conflict between the ancestral cult and the Christian belief. He claims, “The ancestor rituals are an exclusively African and personal affair, which can legitimately exist side by side with Christianity. They belong to two different worlds; and yet they can also be reconciled.”²⁷² Uzukwu supports the view that the two spiritual

²⁷¹ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 46.

²⁷² Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 124.

worlds could go hand in hand by giving the examples of the African Independent Churches whom have combined the two worlds and have converted the African spiritual world into the domain of the Holy Spirit. He claims such understandings to be creative and flexible. “African Independent Churches combine the biblical and ancestral cosmologies. They boldly and radically convert the ancestral world of Vodhun into the domain of the Holy Spirit who is active amongst them in the prophetic ministry of visionaries.”²⁷³ Mulago also supports such view saying, “Veneration to the ancestors are in goal to bring honor to God, do not see reasons why this should not be done.”²⁷⁴ The theologians whom support the continuity of the spirits to the Holy Spirit presuppose the two spiritual worlds, the African tradition and Christianity, to not be in real conflict.

However, the lay African Christians whom were surveyed do not fully approve of such stance. They partially approve that the God of Christianity and the Supreme Being revealed in the traditional belief could be the same God, whereas when it comes to the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit, they do not accept its continuity. A lay African believer who represents such comprehension is interviewee EC2_52 whom states,

“I think that the Supreme Being ‘Job’ is related to the God of the Bible... I do not think that there are any relationship between the Holy Spirit and the spirits. The Christians believe in the Holy Spirit but the non-Christians believe in spirits. The spirits are dangerous, bad, and they take actions in the dark to harm people. But, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God that is there to illuminate our ways. He intercedes for us beside the Father.”

The conception that the traditional spirits are in discontinuity with the Holy Spirit is the common sense among the lay African believers whom were surveyed. Although, 62.5% of the people surveyed approved the existence of the traditional spirits, not all whom acknowledged the existence had a similar stance toward the spirits. The qualitative analysis revealed that some were hostile, some indifferent, and some were favorable toward the spirits. The majority of those whom approved the existence of the spirits had a hostile stance towards them but only a very few minority had favorable stance toward the spirits considering them to be good spirits. For

²⁷³ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 172.

²⁷⁴ Cikala Musharhamina Mulago, *La religion traditionnelle des Bantu et leur vision du monde* (Kinshasa: Faculté de Théologie Catholique, 1980), 173.

the largest majority comprehended the spirits to be evil and not coming from God, the lay African believers had theologized to conclude the discontinuity between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. Although they acknowledge the presence of some Christians practicing the dual fidelity, to the spirits and the Holy Spirit, it is considered as something out of the norm that should not be done.

8.1.2 The Acknowledgement of the Traditional Spirits will fill the Spiritual Vacuum

Another assertion made by the theologians supporting the continuity is that the acknowledgement of the traditional spirits by the independent churches had filled the spiritual vacuum felt by the African Christians. Oosthuizen accounts the spiritual vacuum felt among African Christians were due to the mission churches' ignorance of the African spiritual world. The mission churches have treated the traditional spirits as superstitions. He states,

“The function of the African Independent Church prophet is to help people in their need by solving conflicts, taking personal interest in the sick, especially those who have problems with illnesses related to the African cosmology like sorcery and witchcraft – diseases which are associated with the activities of evil spirits... The vacuum Africans felt in the mission churches, where the specific African diseases had been merely ascribed to superstition and ignored, or those who believed in them were censured. With the African Independent Church, prophet healing is thus not merely a physical issue, but is also closely related to the human being's psychical existence.”²⁷⁵

Anderson claims that this spiritual vacuum had been filled by the independent churches whom have involved the traditional spirits in the daily lives of the Christians.²⁷⁶ He states,

“When Christian transformation takes place in the spirit-type churches, it often meets the need of African people far more substantially than does its traditional counterpart or the Pneumatology imported to Africa in Western philosophy.”²⁷⁷

Then what do the lay believers from the African Independent Churches account on this spiritual vacuum and hunger that were speculated to exist due to the ignorance and rejection of the African traditional spiritual world? The quantitative study done on church members from

²⁷⁵ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 19.

²⁷⁶ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 9.

²⁷⁷ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 97.

the Independent Church 3 and Independent Church 4 illustrated that the lay African believers still felt spiritual needs and hunger. When comparing the congregation members whom accounted always to depend on the Holy Spirit and their recognition of the actual influence from the Holy Spirit, it was observed that the actual influence of the Holy Spirit was not meeting their expectations. Independent Church 3 had 11.6% less influence and Independent Church 4 had 15.1% less influence than they have anticipated through their dependence. The phenomenon of the spiritual vacuum felt by the African Christians has not been fully resolved by the churches endorsing the existence of the traditional spirits. Thus grounding on these results, we get to realize that the spiritual vacuum accounted by Anderson is a reality among the African believers. However, the assumption that it was caused due to the ignorance and rejection of the African spiritual world by the Westernized churches are incorrect, for the African Independent Churches that were surveyed, were churches established by African leaders and have not ignored the existence of the African spiritual beings, yet they still account of this spiritual hunger.

8.1.3 African Understanding of the Holy Spirit needs to include the Traditional Spirits

The theologians stating the continuity of the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit emphasize that it is crucial for the African Pneumatology to encompass the traditional spirits in order to be relevant to the Africans. Anderson notes, “Pneumatology in Africa that does not seriously consider the objective reality of ancestors, and which fails to provide an answer to the problems inherent in that reality will be an irrelevant pneumatology.”²⁷⁸ He adds another account from an African theologian saying, “In actual practice this is ambivalent and it is very difficult for anyone to disentangle oneself from social practices connected with ancestor cult.”²⁷⁹ Uzukwu acclaims the African Independent Churches for its efforts to integrate the traditional spirits on pneumatology,

“The matter is viewed with greater reserve, suspicion and antagonism when one comes to consider the deities. They were generally demonized by missionary Christianity, and this procedure is more or less followed by their successors. Missionary Catholicism had the

²⁷⁸ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 79.

²⁷⁹ Anderson, *Moya: the Holy Spirit in an African Context*, 177.

advantage of being ritualistic, bringing it closer to West African ritual attitude. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the new African Pentecostalism is intolerant of anything related to ancestral culture. They denounce any “covenanting with ancestral spirits” radically opposed to “covenanting with Christ,” this covers whatever has anything to do with extended family structures, ancestors and deities. Charismatic movements that recognize the ministry of gifted members of the Christian community – revealed especially through speaking in tongues and other charisms that show the power of the Holy Spirit for the common good – reject the deities, but they use rituals. The African Independent Churches are closest to the ground in assimilating but transforming the ministries that are connected with the deities. They reinterpret the services rendered by the elect of the deities as the sphere or economy of the Holy Spirit. Consciously or unconsciously they clothe the Holy Spirit with the qualities of the deities.”²⁸⁰

He adds, “Developing God-talk in West African Christian style implies that one must creatively respond to the multiplicity of spirits and deities.”²⁸¹ The assertions given by the theologians give impressions that including the traditional spirits on an African understanding of the Holy Spirit seems inevitable.

However, the surveyed lay African believers have a different point of view. Although they accept the significant influence African understanding of the spiritual world had played on their faith, they do not approve of the fact that the traditional spirits are critical essence on the African Pneumatology. A proof of this is that there were no respondents, from the Evangelical Churches nor the Independent Churches, whom acknowledged the traditional spirits to be in continuity with God or the Holy Spirit. Most surveyed believers had a negative perception and were hostile to the traditional spirits. The very small minority, who sympathized the spirits to be good, drew a clear boundary between the traditional spirits and the Christian God. Interviewee IC4_138 says, “There are good spirits too, who can even help you out and give you healing, but it will cost you eternal life.” Although some understands the traditional spirits to be good, they think that it will cost eternal life, meaning it does not have any relationship with God. Thus, it is not a spirit from God. Therefore, the lay African Christians surveyed do not believe including the traditional spirits in an African Pneumatology to be crucial. Here, we get surprised on the fact that although on the academic field, it seemed as if subsuming the traditional spirits on the Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit was widely spread among the Independent

²⁸⁰ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 168.

²⁸¹ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 48.

Churches, it is not the case for the Cameroonian Evangelical and Independent Churches surveyed. The church leaders were surprised to hear the existence of such theological conception of the Generalized Holy Spirit. In addition, no lay Christians expounded of such comprehension of the Holy Spirit.

Then, how could we understand this phenomenon of discrepancy between the academic field and the terrain on the comprehension of the Holy Spirit? First, there is a possibility that the theologians had observed the phenomenon that is similar to what I have observed among the Cameroonian Christians. Then, by being inspired of the idea from the very minority, whom understand the ancestral spirits to be good spirits, have created a pneumatology that is exotic to draw the attention of the Western theologians. Paul Makhubu, an African Independent Church leader, claims the African Independent Churches who mix Christian religion with ancestor worship to be a very small minority.²⁸² It is probable that the theologians whom wrote about the continuity of the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit have generalized their observations from the very minority as if it was the popular Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit. Second, there could be a possibility that although in South Africa and in Nigeria, the Independent Churches have taken steps forward to Africanize their understanding of the Holy Spirit, the social environment in Cameroon did not promote such liberty. Uzukwu adds to the speculation that the social environment in Cameroon could have deprived the liberty of the believers to incorporate freely traditional aspects into their understanding of Africanized Christianity. He mentions in his book that Ivory Coast and Cameroon list witchcraft on the table of their criminal code.²⁸³ The social ambiance of the law restricting to perform witchcraft, which is indelibly associated with the traditional spirits, could have considerably restrained the Cameroonian churches from fully developing a theology that incorporates more form the cultural aspects such as the traditional spirits, which is closely linked with witchcraft. Such social ambiance of the Cameroonian government restricting witchcraft could be influences of secularization.

²⁸² Paul Makhubu, *Who are the Independent Churches?* (Johannesburgh: Skotaville Publishers, 1988), 60.

²⁸³ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 197.

8.2 The Dialogue with the Theologians Stating the Discontinuity

The dialogue of the surveyed lay African Christians will proceed next to the conversation with the theologians whom are stating the discontinuity between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. The voices raised will mainly have its interaction with two representatives referred on chapter 2, Gerhardus Oosthuizen and Matthew Michael, whom are firmly affirming the discontinuity with the traditional spirits. The conversation of the lay believers with the theologians will enable us to grasp more on how the lay African believers have implicitly theologized their understanding of the Holy Spirit.

8.2.1 The Traditional Spirits are in Discontinuity with the Holy Spirit

Michael firmly states the discontinuity of the traditional spirits with the Holy Spirit. He claims, “the Holy Spirit is a member of the Godhead that is the Holy Spirit is God, while these good spirits are merely lower spirits and created beings, thus the Holy Spirit is totally different from the African beliefs of the ‘good spirits’.”²⁸⁴ Michael observes a clear distinction between the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. He further goes to affirm, “Holy Spirit is not another spirit of the African spiritual cosmology but God himself.”²⁸⁵

The majority of the lay African believers whom were surveyed agree with this stance that the traditional spirits are in discontinuity with the Holy Spirit. Out of the respondents surveyed, 62.5% of the African believers approved the existence of the traditional spirits. However, the attitude the believers had toward the traditional spirits were hostile. Following are the expressions participants have used regarding the traditional spirits: satanic, Satan, sons of Satan, bad, evil, liars, destroy people, harm people, attack people, bring sufferings, bring curse, manifest negatively in people’s lives, and make people sick. Considering the largest majority of the 62.5% whom acknowledge the existence of the spirits have a hostile view toward the spirits and that another 18.3% totally neglect the existence of the spirits itself, we soon get to realize that subsuming the traditional spirits into the Generalized Holy Spirit would not be a popular

²⁸⁴ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 192.

²⁸⁵ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

way lay African Christians will comprehend Pneumatology. It could be fresh and unique but not how the Africans truly understand it. This is what the surveyed believers have responded about the similarity of the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. Interviewee EC1_18 states, “They have nothing in common. The difference is that the Holy Spirit is God and the spirits of the tradition is Satan.” Participant IC3_102 accounts, “They are the contrary.” Respondent IC3_107 testifies, “They rather have differences. The Holy Spirit and the spirits do not resemble. The spirits come to threaten yet the Holy Spirit comes to console.”

8.2.2 The Holy Spirit is No Longer the Holy Spirit from the Bible

The theologians supporting the discontinuity criticize the African understanding of the Holy Spirit and especially the African Independent Churches' comprehension of Pneumatology to be unbiblical. Uzukwu accounts of such criticism, “The African Independent Churches’ responses are so close to ancestral cosmology that they arouse suspicion of mainline churches and lead to outright condemnation as paganism and superstition.”²⁸⁶ Oosthuizen himself claims, “The functions of the ancestor spirits have been transferred to the Holy Spirit, or simply ‘the Spirit’, so that in the independent post-Christian movements, their ‘Holy Spirit’ is no longer the Holy Spirit of whom we learn in the Scripture.”²⁸⁷ Michael joins this opinion by supporting,

“The traditional concept of the good spirit can be readily associated with the Christian Holy Spirit who is also thought to give gifts, spiritual power and blessings. Most of the African Independent Church often

8.2.3 African Christians should overcome the Double Fidelity

André Yves Samekomba mentions of the double fidelity found in Cameroon, “They are divided between, on one hand, a strong and sincere commitment to Catholic Church with its principles, and on the other hand, an appeal to traditional African cultures and ritual practices

²⁸⁶ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 170.

²⁸⁷ Oosthuizen, *Post-Christianity in Africa: A Theological and Anthropological Study*, 86.

to solve their daily life problems.”²⁸⁸ Uzukwu also accounts of such phenomenon found among the believers, “In times of need, Christians do not ask the theological question about the identity of the health-generating spirit. They address themselves to healers who operate in the name of Agwu, Vodhun or Orisa as well as those who act in the name of the Holy Spirit of Christ.”²⁸⁹ Oosthuizen also joins on testifying the ambiguous practices found among the African Christians, “Sorcery, witchcraft and spirit possession are realities for many Christians in the established churches and the African Independent Church.”²⁹⁰ Michael steps a foot forward and proposes a way to deal with this phenomenon,

“The African Christian church should seek ways to help church members to overcome the temptation of associating or classifying the Holy Spirit with the many good spirits of the African spiritual world. There is need to emphasize the person of the Holy Spirit in contrast to the impersonal forms of these ‘good spirits’. Significantly, the church should also seek to underscore the Godhood of the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Trinity.”²⁹¹

Michael calls the African church to stand up and execute its role to help the believers to deviate from associating the traditionally good spirits in link with the Holy Spirit. Reinforcing the status of the Holy Spirit being God and the third person of the Trinity is anticipated.

The surveyed lay African Christians agree with the stance that the church has a role to carry out in this stage of transformation from the tradition, but are not faithfully accomplishing the given tasks. Respondent EC1_15 testifies, “Some churches mix the spirits and the Holy Spirit because when I observe certain assemblies, meaning other churches, the pastor does not truly educate on this matter, he leaves the believers the freedom to seek these spirits, some pastors even participate themselves.” He points out that the reason some Christians seek and depend on the spirits are due to the church leader not truly educating about the traditional spirits. Participant EC2_71 accounts,

“I think it is a process. When I became Christian, I saw spirits when I slept. Mostly I see them when I sleep. Some say they physically see them, but for me I see them when I sleep.

²⁸⁸ Samekomba, « Le laïc Camerounais face à une “double fidélité” . Analyse du problème de « dichotomie » dans la vie du laïc d’aujourd’hui, à la lumière de l’histoire du laïc Camerounais ».

²⁸⁹ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 177.

²⁹⁰ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 17.

²⁹¹ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

When I used to see them, I was afraid. I woke up being frightened. However, with time, that is why I am talking about the process. When I was taught more, I understood that I did not need to be afraid, because Jesus who is within me is victory. Therefore, when I see them now, I am not afraid anymore. It is not the same anymore.”

The participant mentions how being educated more had led her to the understanding that there were no need to be afraid of the traditional spirits. The churches duties to educate the believers are both emphasized by theologians stating the discontinuity and the surveyed lay African believers on how the African Christians could overcome the dual fidelity. African Christianity should overcome the dual fidelity persisting on some Christians. This can be done when churches stand up to execute its role of educating who the Holy Spirit truly is.

8.3 Where do the Surveyed Lay African Christians Locate?

8.3.1 Recapitulating the Dialogue

The conversation of the lay African Christians with the theologians have led us to have a clearer picture of where they stand. They did not agree at all with the theologians whom supported the continuity between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. The theologians on the academic field claimed as if the Generalized Holy Spirit, which subsumes the traditional spirits, were the popular understanding of the Holy Spirit among the African Independent Churches. However, I discovered that believers in Independent Churches in Cameroon whom were nurtured by African church leaders did not empathize with such understanding of the Generalized Holy Spirit. The surveyed believers also did not agree to the theologians’ stance that acknowledging the traditional spirits would fill the spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers. It had been observed that the spiritual need was still persistent among the believers whom attend churches that recognized the existence of the traditional spirits. The voices from the ground also denied the theologians’ opinion that including the traditional spirits would be crucial for the African Pneumatology.

Whereas the surveyed lay African Christians’ attitude was mostly uncooperative with the theologians stating the continuity, their conversation with the theologians stating the discontinuity were more favorable. They agreed on the fact that the traditional spirits were in

discontinuity with the Holy Spirit. In addition, they supported the opinion of the theologians that the churches had to input further efforts in order to help the African Christians troubled with double fidelity. However, the African believers received an impression that the theologians were too critical when analyzing the African Pneumatology. Theologians stating discontinuity criticized most of the African Independent Churches and even African Christianity to have a problematic understanding of the Holy Spirit.²⁹² Theologians presumed the Independent Churches and the African Christianity to have an unbiblical comprehension of the Holy Spirit that transferred the nature of the traditional spirits into Pneumatology. Nevertheless, the surveyed Christians disagreed with such criticism. They perceived the African Christianity to be partially influenced by the traditional spirits on comprehending the functional aspect of the Holy Spirit as mentioned in section 7.2.2.1. By functional aspect, it means that the roles they anticipated from the Holy Spirit was similar to what they awaited from the traditional spirits, which is giving prosperity, healing, guiding, providing strength, and a mean of communication with God. However, they drew a clear distinction when understanding the substance of the Holy Spirit. There were no account of theological bridging between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit, when understanding the identity and the attribute of the Holy Spirit.

8.3.2 The Original Contributions the Lay African Christians have brought into the Field

The conversation the surveyed lay African Christians had with the theologians, whom supported the continuity and the discontinuity of the traditional spirits with the Holy Spirit, have led us to clear out the fog that hindered an adequate assessment of the African comprehension of the Holy Spirit. We are to applaud the theologians' pioneering work of researching and discovering particularity found among the African Christianity. However, we also have to evaluate from an objective point of view, aspects the theologians have not seen throughout their studies on the African understanding of the Holy Spirit. This section of the thesis will contrast peculiarity theologians have seen on analyzing the African Pneumatology and sides that were unseen by the theologians but were clarified by the surveyed lay African Christians. This process

²⁹² Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 191-198.

of contrast with the theologians will further reveal the original contributions the voices of the lay African believers are bringing into the academic field.

8.3.2.1 Revealing the Misrepresentation of the African Independent Churches' Pneumatology

The first noticeable original contribution by the lay African Christians surveyed is that they have revealed the misrepresentation of the African Independent Churches' Pneumatology that was persisting on the academic field, due to the theologians whom monopolized the field to raise their own personal interpretations. The most attention drawing particularity of the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit, found by the theologians, was the embracement of the traditional spirits under the Generalized Holy Spirit, which was especially observed among the African Independent Churches. Such comprehension of the Holy Spirit was witnessed by theologians standing on both end of the bipolar spectrum, those supporting and those disapproving of such understanding. Uzukwu supporting this perception accounts, "The Celestial Church of Christ subject African Traditional Religion's spirits to "higher order integration in a Generalized Holy Spirit." The characteristics of the West African deities are subsumed under the one Holy Spirit."²⁹³ He further adds, "A Generalized Holy Spirit who bestows all gifts of healing and divining becomes a creative Pneumatological contribution from West African Christianity to the great Christian tradition. The leading contribution of African Independent Churches in this creative Pneumatology should be recognized."²⁹⁴ Michael, whom disapprove of embracing the traditional spirits under the Generalized Holy Spirit, also mentions of such peculiarity,

"The recognition of the activities of these "good spirits" often influences the understanding of the Holy Spirit in the minds of many Africans. While the traditional recognition of the works of these "good spirits" provides a common ground in discussing the person and activities of the Holy Spirit among African Christians, often the understanding of the impersonal nature of these "good spirits" is transferred to the Holy Spirit, thus distorting the biblical understanding of the Holy Spirit."²⁹⁵

²⁹³ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 176.

²⁹⁴ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 179.

²⁹⁵ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 191.

He further blames the African Independent Churches to have an unbiblical understanding of the Holy Spirit saying,

“The traditional concept of the good spirit can be readily associated with the Christian Holy Spirit who is also thought to give gifts, spiritual powers, and blessings. Most of the African Independent Churches often have a problematic concept of Pneumatology because of this common association.”²⁹⁶

Through the accounts of the theologians, we get to encounter this exotic African understanding of the Holy Spirit and it gives an impression to be the popular comprehension of Pneumatology among the African Independent Churches. The academic field leaves traces of dissonance between the churches in Africa caused by this unique perception, “The African Independent Churches' responses are so close to ancestral cosmology that they arouse suspicion of mainline churches and lead to outright condemnation as paganism and superstition by neo-Pentecostalism.”²⁹⁷ It is illustrated as if the African Independent Churches are insisting on this comprehension and the mainline churches are confronting such understanding.

However, the surveyed lay African believers have raised their voices to clear out the exaggerated packaging of the African Pneumatology done by the theologians on the academic field. Throughout the semi-directed interview, the lay Christians from the Independent Church 3 and Independent Church 4 have revealed of their personal stance and the churches' stance on the traditional spirits. Interviewee IC3_116 says, “These Spirits are the spirits of the ancestors. When a person dies today, he leaves his spirits to the children, and the children when dying leaves their spirits to their children and it keeps going on. These spirits of the world are there just to destroy.” Another respondent, IC3_131, from the same church adds, “I have resolved that the spirits are not good Spirits, for when you are with the Lord, it is only the Holy Spirit that needs to live in you and use you as his tool not another spirits.” A lay believer from Independent Church 4, identified as IC4_160, also comments of his perception on the traditional spirits, “I do not think there are good spirits apart from the Spirit of God.” The content of the interview with the church members from the Independent Churches in Cameroon shows whatsoever no traces of bridging on the substance between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit.

²⁹⁶ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

²⁹⁷ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 170.

The rupture of the link between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit is also observed on their account of the churches stance. Interviewee IC3_129 testifies, “The church is against these spirits. The church says these spirits are not good and they are like idolatry. To get rid of these idols, we should no longer be in contact with witchdoctors, all kinds of people who uses these spirits.” Another respondent IC4_153 comments, “The Church is present to cast away these spirits, to free the lives of the Christians from these evil influences because the church is the hospital of the Christians.” Once again, the peculiarity of the Africanized Pneumatology that was illustrated as being popular among the African Independent Churches cannot be traced from the accounts of the interviewees.

There were some church members from the Independent Churches surveyed, who partially approved of understanding the traditional spirits as being good, yet they also drew a clear line with the Holy Spirit. Participant IC4_138 states, “There are good spirits too, who can even help you out and give you healing, but it will cost you eternal life.” Respondent IC4_145, whom also approves the traditional spirits to be good accounts, “I realize that these spirits can help us out just for our goods and for our life in this world, but concerning our life beyond this world, they are incapable of whatsoever.” These church members from the African Independent Church 4, approves of considering the traditional spirits to be good, yet when they mention of the traditional spirits, they bound their influence to this world and at the same time hints it has no role to play on life beyond this world. They partially approve the similarity on its function, but also sees the limit the traditional spirits have.

Through the voices raised by the lay African believers from the African Independent Churches in Cameroon, we can clearly perceive how the majority comprehends the traditional spirits with the negative connotations. Even the few who approves the traditional spirits to be good and helpful in this world, they draw a clear line between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit by mentioning they have no power on life beyond this world and that it could cost eternal life. As mentioned on section 7.2.2.1, which notes on the similar roles attributed to the Holy Spirit by lay African believers, there is a partial acknowledgement of rapport with the traditional spirits on its functional aspect. Nevertheless, even the minority of respondents whom consider the traditional spirits to be good draw a clear line of distinction when referring about their

substance. Their functions could be partially similar but the traditional spirits could not have the identity and the attribute of the Holy Spirit.

The interview that led us to hear the voices of the ground enhanced us to realize how the theologians and their works on the academic field were misrepresenting the Pneumatology of the African Independent Churches. Both theologians from the bipolar ends illustrated as if it was a common sense among the African Independent Churches to subsume the traditional spirits on their theology of the Holy Spirit. However, the voices from the ground revealed it was not the case in Cameroon. There might be a speculation that the African Independent Churches in Cameroon are an exception. Nevertheless, Paul Makhubu, a leader from the South African Independent Church, seems to support the voices of the lay African believers in Cameroon for he states that even among the Independent Churches in South Africa, those whom actually mix the ancestral worship with Christianity is a very small minority.²⁹⁸ The originality of the voices raised from the ground is that it helped clear out the fog created by the theologians that misrepresented the African Independent Churches' understanding of the Holy Spirit. Through this statement, the lay African believers surveyed are not refuting the essence of the pioneering works done by the theologians, for there could actually be a possibility of such comprehension on the Holy Spirit, as also mentioned by Paul Makhubu. Yet, they are repudiating the exaggerated embellishment of such findings to be the popular Africanized Pneumatology among the African Christians, particularly the African Independent Churches.

8.3.2.2 Revealing the Misunderstanding of the Spiritual Vacuum felt by the African Believers

The second contribution the surveyed lay African believers have brought into the academic field by raising their voices is that the theologians have misunderstood the essence of the spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers. Theologians have commonly observed a phenomenon of an unfilled spiritual need among the African Christians and have diagnosed its cause to be the eradication of the African spiritual worldview by the Westernized Churches. On the other hand, they have praised the African Independent Churches for their efforts to fill this

²⁹⁸ Makhubu, *Who are the Independent Churches?*, 60.

spiritual vacuum by incorporating the African spiritual worldview into their comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Michael mentions about such phenomenon as following,

“African Independent Churches are seeking to fill a cultural, religious, spiritual and psychological void in the psyche of the African people particularly as defined within these culturally accepted backgrounds. In this way, the African Independent Churches are a quest to meet the obvious needs of the African people in providing answers, guidance and blessing of the spiritual world, which is culturally believed to have a dominant influence on events in daily life. Unfortunately, such prophetic institutions are lacking within the walls of the missionary founded denominations, which solely rely on the Bible for guidance during the critical moments in the life of the African people. Such allegiance of the Bible is often shaken at the moment of crisis and most often African Christians frequent these traditional places of guidance when they are greatly pressed by issues of daily existence.”²⁹⁹

Michael notes the efforts inputted by the African Independent Churches to fill this spiritual void and refers to the denominations founded by missionaries to lack of such efforts to fill the emptiness felt by the African believers. Oosthuizen, having a similar perspective, adds,

“The vacuum Africans felt in the mission churches, where the specific African diseases had been merely ascribed to superstition and ignored, or those who believed in them were censured. With the African Independent Church, prophet healing is thus not merely a physical issue, but is also closely related to the human being’s psychical existence.”³⁰⁰

Oosthuizen also perceives of this spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers and notes how the African Independent Churches have inputted efforts to deal with this void felt in the mission churches.

Theologians have commonly sensed a phenomenon of spiritual void among the African believers and have mostly diagnosed it to be caused by the ignorance of the African spiritual world. However, the voices raised from the ground have revealed the spiritual vacuum to still persist among the believers in African Independent Churches in Cameroon. Instead, they have even showed a tendency to feel a higher spiritual need than their counterparts the Evangelical Christians have. The spiritual void was observed through the quantitative analysis, which illustrated that the surveyed lay African believers had higher dependence on the Holy Spirit than they actually experienced the influence of the Holy Spirit. In exception of the Evangelical

²⁹⁹ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 196.

³⁰⁰ Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, 19.

Church 1, the remaining three churches all showed a similar propensity of experiencing less influence of the Holy Spirit than they have anticipated. Evangelical Church 2 had 6.4% less, Independent Church 3 had 11.6% less, and Independent Church 4 had 15.1% less influence than they have speculated. The results from the ground clearly disprove the diagnose theologians have made on the spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers, for such void is still persistent among believers from the surveyed African Independent Churches whom approve the existence of the African traditional spiritual world. The lay African believers are consenting on the existence of the spiritual hunger, which had been already observed by the theologians, but are giving a different diagnoses on its cause for accepting the existence of the African spiritual world had not solved the spiritual void.

The reason why the theologians had misinterpreted the cause of the spiritual vacuum is due to the literal interpretation of the phenomenon. Theologians observed the phenomenon of African believers running back to the traditional spirits when their spiritual need was not met. Moreover, they ostensibly interpreted that such phenomenon was caused because believers spiritually hungered for the traditional spirits. To explain the theologians' literal interpretation, I would like to give a short example of a hungry man. There was a hungry African man whom was eating his mango. Then a man passing by gave him an apple to try. Since he was hungry and it looked good, he accepted the apple and put his mango back in the refrigerator. However, after he ate the apple, his hunger was not filled, so he went back to his refrigerator to eat the rest of the mango he used to eat. Observing this hungry man and interpreting that this man's hunger could only be filled by eating mango would be a superficial interpretation. For if this hungry man had a chance to eat another apple, he would have surely wanted to eat an apple too. The theologians have similarly observed hungry African believers, and they interpreted that this spiritual hunger would only be filled when the traditional spirits would be incorporated into their sphere of faith. However, the surveyed contemporary lay African believers, whom unlike the olden missionary founded churches acknowledged the presence of the traditional spirits, still demonstrated a phenomenon of spiritual hunger. Such voices of the terrain whom account the persisting spiritual void, lead us to conclude that accepting the African spiritual world in the African believers' faith was not enough to satisfy the African believers' spiritual vacuum and thus the theologians misinterpreted the cause of the spiritual need felt by the African believers.

The voices raised from the ground brought back the spotlight on the question, which once seemed to be answered by the theologians, on what is the cause of this spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers? Drawing out a probable answer to this question from our survey could lead us to have a deepened insight on the African religiosity and would enable us to formulate a popular Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit that meets their spiritual need. For the moment, we would like to conclude that the surveyed lay African believers have contributed by revealing the misunderstanding of the spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers. We will step forth to chapter 9 of this thesis, which will be dedicated to answer the question that touches the core essence of the African religiosity. Why do the African believers still feel a spiritual vacuum?

8.3.2.3 Revealing the Outmoded Paradigm of the Africanized Pneumatology

The third contribution done by the lay African Christians is revealing the outmoded paradigm in which the theologians have developed their Africanized Pneumatology. The pioneering works done by the theologians on the African understanding of the Holy Spirit was mostly done on a dichotomized scale of the African tradition versus the Westernized Christian tradition. Uzukwu mentions in one of his work, “Thus the first task facing the African theologian is the intimate and critical study of his cultural tradition and the received West Christian tradition. His use of critical tools indicates to him how the one is adapting to the other and the unanswered questions raised by the one for the other.”³⁰¹ His statement depicts the ground in which he is doing his theology and the ground in which he believes other theologians should do theology. He believes theology should be done on the bipolar paradigm of the African cultural tradition versus the West Christian tradition. Uzukwu and many other theologians whom studied on the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit mostly considered their theology on this bipolarized paradigm that lead to a debate of continuity or discontinuity between the traditional

³⁰¹ E. Ikenga-Metuh, ed, *African Inculturation Theology: Africanizing Christianity* (Nigeria: Imico Books, 1996), 33.

spirits and the Holy Spirit. That is why for the last half a century, the attention on the Africanized Pneumatology was mostly focused on this irreconcilable debate.

The theologians whom mostly formulated their theology on this bipolarized paradigm, once seemed to represent the African believers' perception, but they have made a crucial error of only considering the interaction of the traditional culture versus the Westernized Christian faith. Metogo criticizes the bipolarized paradigm of doing theology, claiming it makes Africanized theology insignificant and inefficient.

“We are more and more convinced that unless we choose to be insignificant and inefficient, the Christian thought and practice of Africa must stop to consider African culture and Christianity as timeless and immutable realities in order to restore them to the reality, the living history. However, African theologians continue to elude the debate on African philosophy, the anthropological and philosophical debate on what the African culture means, its identity and tradition, and to deal with problems of the past, in simply repeating that there is a definite African philosophy.”³⁰²

The process of transformation that contemporary Africans are undergoing from the tradition is not only grounded on these dichotomized factors but on multiple other factors in which secularization is among its representative. Samekomba joins on the criticism of doing theology on the bipolarized factors by mentioning,

“This reading leads us inevitably to hermeneutical shifts in assessing the reasons of the malaise whom the African layman is confronted in his Christian practice. As a matter fact, our discovery is that the challenges of a modern and even post-modern society are not only conflicts between traditions and Western Christian culture. There are results of a more fundamental crisis: the crisis of secular world.”³⁰³

He claims the adaptation of faith in modern society is not only about the tradition and about the Westernized Christian culture, but there is a serious need to consider secularization into mind as an influential factor. Takyi also approves that secularization is playing a considerable impact on contemporary sub-Saharan African society, “Many African countries, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa, are thrust into this ongoing debate concerning the secularization of

³⁰² Eloi Messi Metogo, *Dieu peut-il mourir en Afrique? Essai sur l'indifférence religieuse et l'incroyance en Afrique noire* (Paris ; Yaoundé: Karthala ; Presses de l'UCAC, 1997), 175.

³⁰³ Samekomba, « Le laïc Camerounais face à une “double fidélité” . Analyse du problème de « dichotomie » dans la vie du laïc d'aujourd'hui, à la lumière de l'histoire du laïcât Camerounais ».

contemporary societies or societies in transition as is happening in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa.³⁰⁴

Surprisingly, the voices from the ground joined the criticism, and they depicted a paradigm shift that connoted the influence of secularization. Interviewee EC2_84 says, “Since time changes, the behavior also changes and then people do not rely that much on the tradition... In my village, the younger generation are not much attached to the spirits.” The respondent accounts how the attitude of the younger generation toward the traditional spirits has changed. The stage of transformation mentioned by the respondent is not about the bipolarized interaction between the African tradition and the Christian faith, but another factor that is secularization. This paradigm shift of the younger generations that include secularization as another pole needs to be taken into account when considering the contemporary Africanized Pneumatology.

The quantitative study on section 6.1.6 backs the participant EC2_84’s statement on the younger generation’s tendency to be less attached to the African traditional spiritual world. The quantitative study had analyzed on the probable factors that could influence African believers’ perception of the traditional spirits and surprisingly it was observed that Christians of the younger generations, implying the teens from 18 years to 19 years old, all had a disapproving stance towards the traditional spirits. In addition, it was observed that years lived in urbanity to be another component that influence peoples’ attachments towards the traditional spirits. The survey depicted that people whom had lived in urbanity for over 20 years in urbanity were less affined to the traditional spirits.

The results from the qualitative analysis and the quantitative analysis are supporting that the importance of the traditional spirits are being diminished significantly in the younger generations of the Cameroonian society. The years lived in urbanity is also affecting one’s attachment to the traditional spirits. Thus, ignoring these influential factors from the contemporary society and foregoing the studies on the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit solely basing on the bipolarized factors of the African tradition and the Westernized Christianity would be irrelevant to the present-day African believers. The contemporary lay

³⁰⁴ Zuckerman et Shook, *The Oxford Handbook of Secularism*, 204.

African believers have taken steps forth from the bilateral paradigm and perceive matters from a trilateral perspective that is the African tradition, Christianity, and secularization.

Let us return to the question that started the section 8.3 on where the surveyed lay African Christians stand on the debate of continuity and discontinuity that was formed by the theologians before the voices from the ground was raised. Although the former sections on the dialogue with the theologians have shown their temporary stance was closer to discontinuity, their final answer is none. Such debate that is formulated by the bipolarized paradigm of doing theology is outmoded and too limited to represent the worldview in which contemporary African believers understand the Holy Spirit. The efforts to locate the surveyed Evangelical Churches and Independent Churches on the bipolarized paradigm of Africanized Pneumatology made the survey indifferent while analyzing the four churches from two different denominations. The surveyed lay African believers have revealed the outmoded bipolarized stage that had been the field of debate for the theologians and have dismantled the stage that did not thoroughly convey the contemporary African spiritual worldview. Although such approach will not be a proper way to reconcile the ongoing disharmony that had been resounding among the theologians, at least there will be no more disputes added to this stage by the succeeding theologians. For the voices raised from the ground cannot be located on this outmoded paradigm and since analyzing the results from the ground with this paradigm gives an indifferent result for all four churches, there is a need to reconstruct a system in which the contemporary voices raised from the ground could be identified and classified. Therefore, this thesis will step a foot forward to the next chapter with the goal to propose a reconstructed paradigm that will be able to embrace and contrast the diverse voices expounded by the contemporary lay African believers. The newly reconstructed pneumatological stage of conversation will try to surmount the limits the previous bipolarized stage had.

Chapter 9: Systemizing the Lay African Christians'

Understanding of the Holy Spirit

It was formerly mentioned how the pioneering works of the theologians on the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit was based on a dichotomized scale, and thus the surveyed lay African Christians have refuted such comprehension to be outmoded. The transforming contemporary African society and its religiosity can no longer be perceived by the bipolarized paradigm of the African tradition and the Westernized Christian faith. The contemporary African society has embraced additional influential components such as secularization. The lay African Christians have concluded that the dichotomized academic stage, which had been the spotlight of ongoing debates for the past half century, was too limited and old fashioned to connote the voices from different contemporary African grounds. Therefore, this section of the thesis will develop and reconstruct a novel ground of paradigm that could systemize the succeeding varied voices on the understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Then how could we build another paradigm of understanding the African religiosity that is still relevant to the contemporary African believers whom are undergoing a dramatic transfiguration? The theologians' answer to have a relevant Africanized theology was to look at the dichotomized context, the African tradition that is the ground and the Westernized Christian faith that was newly introduced. However, such approach became irrelevant when the context started undergoing a dramatic transformation. Therefore, I would like to provide a distinctive paradigm that is more relevant on comprehending the contemporary African religiosity. We should no longer focus solely on the context itself as the former pioneers have done, but rather approach from an empirical aspect on how the African believers perceive the context in transition. The newly built paradigm to understand the contemporary African religiosity would bring its attention to the African believers' empirical perception.

I would like to build a paradigm that considers the senses of the human being in order to systemize a person's empirical perception of the Holy Spirit. Data given from a person's thoughts, emotions, and experiences influence on how a person understands a given matter. It is in this approach I have tried to approach the surveyed lay African believers. The believers' thoughts on the existence, the believers' emotions on their dependence, and the believers'

experiences of the influence. It is in this way that my quantitative survey had approached a person's perception of existence, dependence, and influence of the Holy Spirit to understand the African believers' comprehension of the Holy Spirit. These trilateral elements of existence, dependence, and influence will be the founding ground on the newly reconstructed systematization on understanding the Holy Spirit. It will be named as the Existence-Dependence-Influence based Systematization, abbreviated as EDI, on comprehending the Holy Spirit.

Then how would we construct a system that categorizes and contrasts the different understandings of the Holy Spirit based on one's perception on the existence, dependence, and influence of the Holy Spirit? It will take these three component factors and evaluate them relatively within one's own perception as high and low. In example, a believer whom highly approves the existence acknowledges in his mind that the Holy Spirit exists, but he could have no personal experience of the Holy Spirit, which will make him be identified as low in influence. There will be particular traits that a believer whom has a high perception on existence but low perception on the influence demonstrates. Another Christian could have a low perception in existence, meaning he is not fully convinced on the actual existence of the Holy Spirit, but could have highly experienced the Holy Spirit. Such person will exhibit another distinctive characteristic compared to the former believer. We here want to stress an emphasis that the evaluation of one's perception as being high and low cannot be absolutized. Therefore, the evaluation of whether one has a high or low perception on the existence, dependence, and influence will be assessed relatively by the comparison to other two composing elements of comprehension. This section of the thesis will first introduce the different categorization on comprehending the Holy Spirit with biblical examples of people or community that demonstrated similar understanding. Then, it will proceed on classifying the four surveyed communities, Evangelical Church 1, Evangelical Church 2, Independent Church 3, and Independent Church 4, that will be representing the raised lay African believers' voices from the ground in the EDI based systematization. Finally, it will ponder on the contribution the newly introduced EDI based systematization is bringing to the academic field.

9.1 The Different Categorizations of the Existence-Dependence-Influence based Systematization

This section of the thesis will introduce the different categorizations of the Existence-Dependence-Influence based Systematization on understanding the Holy Spirit accompanied with the biblical examples of believers and communities whom share a similar stance on their understanding of the Holy Spirit. The depiction of different perception on the Holy Spirit from the Bible will enable the readers to have a clearer understanding as to how to evaluate the three composing elements of a person's perception of the Holy Spirit as high and low. This part of the thesis will abbreviate words that will be repeatedly used which are 'high' to 'H' and 'low' to 'L'. It will also refer to a person or a community's perception of the Holy Spirit as 'HHH', 'HLH', or 'LLH'. As aforementioned, the 'H' and the 'L' will be standing for high and low. The three abbreviations that stands in a row will represent the perception of the sequential order from existence, dependence, to influence. Therefore, a person whom has a 'HHH' perception of the Holy Spirit will have a 'high' perception on existence, 'high' perception on dependence, and 'high' perception on influence. A believer whom has a 'HLH' perception of the Holy Spirit will have a 'high' perception on existence, 'low' perception on dependence, and 'high' perception on influence. The different categories of the EDI based systematization would be eight in total. Its classifications on the perception of the Holy Spirit are as following: 'HHH', 'HHL', 'HLL', 'HLH', 'LHH', 'LHL', 'LLH', and 'LLL'.

9.1.1 'HHH' Perception: Existence (High), Dependence (High), Influence (High)

The first category of the EDI based systematization is the 'HHH' perception of the Holy Spirit. Such believer will have a high perception on existence, high perception on dependence, and a high perception on influence. A Christian with a 'HHH' perception will assert the existence of the Holy Spirit, fully depend on the Holy Spirit, and will experience great influences from the Holy Spirit. Biblical personages whom had such perception of the Holy Spirit are John the Baptist and Stephen.

John the Baptist could be seen as a person whom had a 'HHH' perception on the Holy Spirit. An angel announces to his father Zachariah that his wife whom had been barren will bear a son. The angel leaves him with this message about his son John, "He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth" (Lk 1:15 NIV). Such prophecy becomes real for his mother Elizabeth. In her sixth month of being pregnant, she encounters Mary and has a unique experience. While having John the Baptist in her womb, she is filled by the Holy Spirit. "When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit" (Lk 1:41). Even before birth, John the Baptist was a person filled with the Holy Spirit. He surely had a high perception on the existence of the Holy Spirit for as he grew older and was preaching to the crowd, he clearly demonstrates of his knowledge on the existence of the Holy Spirit, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Lk 3:16). Not only had he firmly approved the existence of the Holy Spirit, but also he lived a life fully dependent of the Holy Spirit. His unique lifestyle, that was clearly distinguished from others of his time, depicts how he truly depended on the Holy Spirit. "And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the desert until he appeared publicly to Israel" (Lk 1:80). "John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan" (Mt 3:4-5). He was a man who had his own family, his father and his mother, but he lived in the desert eating locusts and wild honey. The distinctive lifestyle he had chosen to live is a clear illustration of how he was fully dependent on the Holy Spirit. John not only had a high perception on the existence and dependence of the Holy Spirit but he personally experienced the influence of the Holy Spirit. As mentioned above, John was filled by the Holy Spirit even before his birth. John whom had grown was preaching in the desert and was baptizing people whom were repenting to live a life devoted to God. One day, Jesus comes forth to him to be baptised and John claiming this Jesus to be the Lamb of God adds, "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him" (Jn 1:32). John, whom was able to see the spiritual activity of the Holy Spirit, clearly illustrates of the high influence he is experiencing from the Holy Spirit. Thus, John the Baptist is a biblical figure whom has a 'HHH' perception of the Holy Spirit.

Another biblical personage whom had a ‘HHH’ perception of the Holy Spirit is Stephen found in the book of Acts. As the apostles were not able to fully devote themselves on the daily distribution of foods, they decide to select men whom would be able to take over this responsibility, so that the apostles could solely focus on praying and preaching. Stephen is chosen for this duty and the Bible describes about him as, “They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 6:5). The fact that other believers acknowledged Stephen as a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit illustrates how he had lived a life dependent on the Holy Spirit. It will be difficult for others to realize a person to be filled with the Holy Spirit if he did not live a Spirit dependent life. Further, Acts testifies how he “did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people” (Acts 6:8). Stephen was also a man whom greatly experienced influences of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 7, we see how Stephen stands in front of the Sanhedrin and the high priest. There he preaches, “You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!” (Acts 7:51). Through his sermon that refers to the Holy Spirit, we get to perceive how he had a high perception on the existence of the Holy Spirit. Thus, Stephen could also be seen as a personage in the Bible whom had a high perception on the existence, dependence, and influence of the Holy Spirit.

9.1.2 ‘HHL’ Perception: Existence (High), Dependence (High), Influence (Low)

The second group of the EDI based systematization is the ‘HHL’ perception of the Holy Spirit. The believers with these perceptions highly approve the existence of the Holy Spirit and extremely depend on it. However, it will not be experiencing much influence from the Holy Spirit. The Bible depicts Simon from Samaria as a person whom had ‘HHL’ perception of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8 accounts of Simon, the sorcerer, who lived in Samaria. For he had been amazing them with sorcery for a long time, people followed him and considered him as the man whom received great power from God. However, Simon gets to believe in Jesus through Philip and starts following him. “Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw” (Acts 8:13). As the Gospel was spreading throughout Samaria, due to Philip and other disciples who were scattered because of

the persecution in the Church in Jerusalem, the apostles in Jerusalem sent Peter and John to this region. Peter and John whom realized how the Samaritans have accepted Jesus but still had not received the Holy Spirit prays for them. “When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:15-17). Simon, seeing this phenomenon of people receiving the Holy Spirit through prayer and laying of the hands, was amazed. He knew of the existence of the Holy Spirit for he had heard how Peter and John was preaching and praying for believers to receive the Holy Spirit. For he had been following Philip everywhere seeing the great signs and miracles performed, he had really been wanting these great wonders to happen to him. Therefore, he says, “Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:19). It is not clear whether Simon already did receive the Holy Spirit on verse 18 when Peter and John prayed for the believers of Samaria to receive the Holy Spirit. Maybe he could have been left out on this experience of the Holy Spirit the believers in Samaria had or he could also have received the Holy Spirit, being among one of the believers in Samaria. Yet, one clear aspect is that whether he experienced the Holy Spirit or not, he was not fully satisfied with the influence of the Holy Spirit he was currently experiencing. His high knowledge of existence and high dependence made him to expect more influence from the Holy Spirit. The spiritual dissatisfaction Simon was experiencing leads us to evaluate his perception on influence as ‘low’. Therefore, Simon from Samaria would be categorized as ‘HLL’ on his perception on the Holy Spirit.

9.1.3 ‘HLL’ Perception: Existence (High), Dependence (Low), Influence (Low)

The third section of the EDI based systematization is the ‘HLL’ perception of the Holy Spirit. Believers with such understanding of the Holy Spirit highly recognize its existence, but they do not fully depend nor personally perceive the influence of the Holy Spirit. The believers from the Bible whom are depicted to have such perception of the Holy Spirit is Ananias and Sapphira mentioned in Acts 5.

In the early church, believers whom experienced being filled with the Holy Spirit became one in their hearts and started sharing their possessions. From time to time, people who owned houses and lands sold them and brought the money to the apostles so that it could be distributed to anyone in need. Among those whom sold their goods and brought their money was a Levite from Cyprus named Joseph. Ananias and Sapphira also sell a piece of their property and brings it to the apostles. However, unlike what they have claimed before the apostles, they have kept part of the money for themselves and have brought the remaining as if it were the sum of the revenue. Peter responds to Ananias' behavior as, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?" (Acts 5:2). Ananias, as a member of the early church community, surely highly acknowledged the existence of the Holy Spirit. Peter speaks to him of the Holy Spirit as a being they share the common sense on its existence. However, he carries out an action that is described from the perspective of other believers whom approves the existence of the Holy Spirit as lying to him. Peter seeing Ananias claims Satan has filled his heart. The action of Ananias was considered as unacceptable to God that God decided to have him dead. Ananias nor depended on the Holy Spirit nor fully experienced the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we could evaluate that Ananias had a 'low' perception on the dependence and the influence of the Holy Spirit. About three hours later, Ananias' wife enters the scene and identically states about the sum of the properties they have sold. Peter replies, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also" (Acts 5:9). Peter describes Sapphira and Anania's attitude toward the Holy Spirit as testing. A person will not test a being whom they highly depend on. Thus, Ananias and Sapphira could be evaluated as having a 'HLL' perception on the Holy Spirit.

9.1.4 'HLH' Perception: Existence (High), Dependence (Low), Influence (High)

The fourth classification of the EDI based systematization is the 'HLH' perception of the Holy Spirit. A person whom has an 'HLH' perception will highly approve the existence of the Spirit, experience the active influence of the Holy Spirit, but will not fully devote himself to

the Spirit. A biblical illustration of a community with such perception of the Holy Spirit is the Church of Galatia.

In the Epistles to the Galatians written by Apostle Paul, we can see Paul reproaching the believers. He writes, “I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?” (Gal 3:2). The impression Paul gives while mentioning the reception of the Holy Spirit is that its existence seems to be an agreed consensus among the church members in Galatia. The Galatian Church has a high perception on the existence of the Holy Spirit. Paul then adds, “Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?” (Gal 3:3). He criticizes how the believers are trying to attain their goals by their own human efforts, thus not relying on the Holy Spirit. Paul’s reference on the Galatian Church beginning with the Spirit but are now trying to attain their goal by human efforts imply how the Church in Galatia had experienced the influence of the Holy Spirit as a community. However, the way they currently live their faith did not follow the experience they formerly had but they now tried to live according to their own human efforts. They acknowledged the existence of the Holy Spirit and they experienced the influence of the Holy Spirit, but this experience did not extend to the dependence. They comparatively had a low dependence on the Holy Spirit. That is why Paul is comparing their beginning experience of the Holy Spirit and their current way of living their faith. Their low dependence could also be noticed in the following passage, “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ” (Gal 1:6). Paul’s opinion of the Galatian community is that they are deserting, meaning fleeing away from Christ. The Church in Galatia surely had the experience of the Holy Spirit that led them to admit of its existence. However, this spiritual experience did not extend to the continuous dependent life towards Christ and Paul in the first chapter of the Epistle reproaches this aspect. The Galatians efforts to attain their goal of life with their human efforts and them deterring from Christ lead us to evaluate their dependence on the Holy Spirit as being low. However, they are experiencing an active influence of the Holy Spirit in their lives, for Paul mentions, “Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?” (Gal 3:5). The Galatian community had received the Holy Spirit and were experiencing the great miracles performed by the Holy Spirit. Paul was clearly seeing how the

Holy Spirit was actively influencing their community. Therefore, the Galatian Church will be evaluated as having a “HLH” perception of the Holy Spirit.

9.1.5 ‘LHH’ Perception: Existence (Low), Dependence (High), Influence (High)

The fifth categorization of the EDI based systematization is the ‘LHH’ perception of the Holy Spirit. Such person will not approve of the Holy Spirit but will be depending on it and experiencing the active influence of the Holy Spirit. However, such perception seems to be theological and abstract for it will be irrational for a person whom is experiencing the vivid influence of the Holy Spirit and relying on it not to approve of its existence. I was not able to find examples from the Bible whom demonstrated a ‘LHH’ perception of the Holy Spirit.

9.1.6 ‘LHL’ Perception: Existence (Low), Dependence (High), Influence (Low)

The sixth section of the EDI based systematization is the ‘LHL’ perception of the Holy Spirit. A person whom has an ‘LHL’ perception will not fully approve of the Holy Spirit, nor experience the influence from the Holy Spirit, yet he will be depending and expecting from the Holy Spirit. An example of people with identical perception in the Bible is the seven sons of Sceva.

The seven sons of Sceva are illustrated in chapter 19 of Acts, as having a ‘LHL’ perception on the Holy Spirit. Paul arrives in Ephesus and finds believers whom did not even know about the Holy Spirit. Through the laying of Paul’s hand, the believers in Ephesus receives the Holy Spirit. Paul stays for two more years preaching in this region. God performs extraordinary miracles through Paul and people in this region gets amazed. Some Jews, whom were exorcists, saw the miracles Paul performed through the Holy Spirit and started imitating him. These Jews are not identified in the Bible as believers. They are not fully convinced of the existence of the Holy Spirit nor have personal experience the Holy Spirit. However, through the indirect experience of the Holy Spirit they have, by observing Paul, they put their dependence on this spiritual being. They go to people whom are demon-possessed and proclaim, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out" (Acts 19:13). The seven sons

of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, also imitate Paul. However, the evil spirit rebukes them saying, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" (Acts 19:15). The man with the evil spirit jumps on them and beats them. Such illustration of the seven sons of Sceva shows how although they did not fully recognize the existence of the Holy Spirit nor had personal experience of the Holy Spirit, they have put their reliance on the Holy Spirit. Thus, they could be evaluated as having a 'LHL' perception on the Holy Spirit.

9.1.7 'LLH' Perception: Existence (Low), Dependence (Low), Influence (High)

The seventh group of the EDI based systematization is the 'LLH' perception of the Holy Spirit. A believer with an 'LLH' perception will not fully approve of the Holy Spirit, nor rely on this spiritual being, but will vividly experience the influence of the Holy Spirit. Examples of believers with a similar perception of the Holy Spirit are Cornelius, a centurion from Caesarea, and Saul.

Cornelius a God-fearing man sees an angel whom tells him to look for Simon Peter and hear what he has to preach. Cornelius sends his servants and a soldier to bring Peter back. Peter, also having seen the vision from God to not despise the Gentiles, comes to Cornelius' house and starts preaching the good news about Jesus Christ. However, as Peter was preaching about Jesus, suddenly the Holy Spirit descends upon Cornelius and those gathered with him. "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message" (Acts 10:44). Cornelius did not yet know who the Holy Spirit was, nor did he depend on the Holy Spirit, but suddenly the Holy Spirit was poured unto him. He had experienced the influence of the Holy Spirit before he could even approve of its existence and rely on him. Such perception of Cornelius would be marked as 'LLH'.

Saul, enraged of the Christians whom were spreading the news about Jesus, headed to Damascus with the approval of the high priest in order to imprison the Christians. On his way, he suddenly hears the voice of Jesus asking him on the reason of his persecution and instructs him to wait in the city until he will be told what to do. Amazed at this unbelievable encounter of Jesus, whom he thought to be a blasphemer, he goes into the city of Damascus blinded by the sudden light that appeared from heaven. Saul while waiting for what to do stays fasting and

praying. On the third day, a disciple of Jesus, named Ananias, is sent to Saul. He places his hand on Saul and prays, “Brother Saul, the Lord--Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here--has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 9:17). Immediately, scales fall from Saul’s eyes and he is filled with the Holy Spirit. Saul did not firmly approve the existence of the Holy Spirit, nor did he depend on it, but through the prayer of Ananias, he experiences the miraculous influence from the Holy Spirit. Paul’s perception of the Holy Spirit in his early stage of conversion could be identified as ‘LLH’.

9.1.8 ‘LLL’ Perception: Existence (Low), Dependence (Low), Influence (Low)

The last category of the EDI based systematization is the ‘LLL’ perception of the Holy Spirit. A person with ‘LLL’ perception of the Holy Spirit would not know of its existence, nor depend on it, and would have not experienced the influence of the Holy Spirit. The believers in Ephesus illustrated in Acts 19 could be evaluated as having an ‘LLL’ perception of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesus was a region ministered by Apollos whom preached through the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah. Nevertheless, Apollos only knew the baptism of John and did not know about the Holy Spirit baptism. That is why when Paul visits Ephesus, while Apollos went to visit Corinth; he realizes the believers in Ephesus did not even know the existence of the Holy Spirit. To the question asked by Paul on whether they have received the Holy Spirit upon their conversion, they answer, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit” (Acts 19:2). Paul realizing on how the believers he has met in Ephesus did not know about the Holy Spirit nor received, “Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied” (Acts 19:6). We can observe how the believers in Ephesus, before their encounter with Paul, had a ‘LLL’ perception on the Holy Spirit for they did not know its existence, nor depended on it, and did not experience the influence of the Holy Spirit.

9.2 Classifying the Lay African Christian's Understanding of the Holy Spirit

This thesis had focused its attention on the voices of the terrain, in order to verify the reality of the ongoing debate persisting on the academic field of Pneumatology. It was speculated that the voices of the terrain could raise the hand of one of the bipolar end, the hand of the theologians whom state the continuity or the hand of the theologians whom state the discontinuity. After investigating the survey on the lay African believers, I realized how the contemporary voices of the terrain were not able to be located in this bipolarized paradigm, which has one end of the polarity as the African tradition and the other end as the Westernized Christianity. The voices of the terrain raised the issue that the context of faith in which they lived is not only about the African tradition and about the Westernized Christianity, but there were other emerging factors to take into account such as secularization. Because the formerly constructed paradigm of understanding the Africanized Pneumatology was no longer able to embody the comprehension of the contemporary Africans, I have reconstructed a model that could embrace the present lay voices from different African grounds. This section of the thesis will try to classify the surveyed lay African Christians' voices on this newly constructed EDI based systematization. While the results from the ground did not illustrate any distinction on how they comprehended the Holy Spirit on the former bipolarized paradigm because all four churches were clearly stating the discontinuity to the traditional spirits, the newly reconstructed model enabled the lay voices to be more visibly distinguished from one another.

Although the surveyed lay African believers' voices will be referred to as Evangelical Church 1 (EC1), Evangelical Church 2 (EC2), Independent Church 3 (IC3), and Independent Church 4 (IC4), we need to take into consideration that its classifications are not based on the churches leaders' stances nor on the churches official stances. The name of the churches will be identification to indicate the gathering of the lay African believers' voices raised from that given community. Therefore, although they will be named as EC1, EC2, IC3, and IC4, it will represent the lay voices from each given ground.

In order to classify the surveyed churches' comprehension of the Holy Spirit on whether they have a high or a low perception on each three composing elements, I have taken into

consideration the results from quantitative analysis of the Holy Spirit. The quantitative survey on the Holy Spirit already had analyzed each church's perception of the Holy Spirit based on the existence, dependence, and influence. Though I will be basing my evaluation on each church's perception on the cold figures acquired from the quantitative study, there will be no absolute quantified cold figure that will classify one's perception as high or low. As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, each perception will be relatively contrasted with the remaining others. So, although the cold figures of a component seems high, when it has a gap larger than 7%, it will be considered distinctive and be assessed as 'low' from the preceding perception. Cold figures of perception that remains within the boundary of 7% will be considered as similar so they would both be evaluated as 'low' or 'high'. In example, if IC3 had 72.1% of its community whom very highly perceived the existence of the Holy Spirit and had 83.7% of the church members whom very highly perceived the dependence, although the perception on existence 72.1% is significantly high, it is not this absolute value that will be assessed but its relation to the community's dependence. Since the gap between the two perceptions is more than 7%, this community's perception on the existence will be identified as 'low'. The reason why 7% was chosen as the standard number that draws the boundary between perceptions is that it represented 10% of the congregation's majority perception. The quantitative analysis depicted that the largest majority of the surveyed believers' extremely highly approved the existence of the Holy Spirit with 73.3% for EC1, 80.9% for EC2, 72.1% for IC3, and 66.7% for IC4. The majority perception of the churches understanding of the dependence and the influence all range from mid 60% to mid 80%. Therefore, since we are dealing with each church's majority stance that represents around 70% of its congregation, the standard number 7% would mean approximately 10% of the majority perception. For the number 7% will be representing 10% of the church members' majority perception whom we are going to deal in this section of the thesis, it will be the relative figure that differentiate perceptions as 'high' or 'low'. 10% of church members whom understand differently on existence, dependence, or influence would be significant enough to be considered as distinctive.

9.2.1 Evangelical Church 1 Classification: ‘HLH’ Perception

The Evangelical Church 1 had 73.3% of its members whom perceived extremely highly of its existence, 66.7% of its believers whom perceived extremely highly on its dependence, and 75.6% of Christians whom perceived extremely highly on its influence. Considering this numbers and relatively evaluating them, we could identify that the highest perception here is the influence with 75.6%. Therefore, the perception on influence will be evaluated as ‘high’. The following next high perception of this community is the existence with 73.3% and it ranges within the 7% boundary, thus the perception on existence will be understood as equal to the perception on influence and be assessed as ‘high’. However, we realize that EC1’s perception on the dependence is 66.7% that is beyond the boundary of 7% with the perception on influence that is the highest out of them all, so it will be labeled as ‘low’. When classifying Evangelical Church 1 in the EDI based systematization, it will be categorized as ‘HLH’ perception. EC1 has a high perception on existence, low perception on dependence, and high perception on influence.

As previously mentioned in section 9.1, a biblical illustration of the community with similar a perception is the Church in Galatia. The church strongly affirmed of the existence of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit was actively influencing their communities. The phrase written by Paul depicts of the work God was doing in their church, “Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?” (Gal 3:3). Paul is reproaching the Church of Galatia, for having begun by the Holy Spirit but now they are trying to attain their goal by humanly efforts, thus not fully relying on the Holy Spirit. Paul’s phrase that states they had started with the Holy Spirit implies how this community had experienced the work of the Holy Spirit and have acknowledged of its existence, but now instead of the full dependence on the Spirit, they are depending on their own human efforts. The experience they had of the Holy Spirit have not been extended to the strong dependence of the Spirit, but they have turned towards their humanly efforts in order to attain their goal. They have a high perception on existence and influence of the Holy Spirit, but they comparatively have a low dependence on the Spirit for they are being reproached on this aspect.

EC1 shows similar tendencies to the Church of Galatia. The qualitative interview depicts how the congregation is strongly experiencing the work of God. To the question on whether they had observed the Holy Spirit working in the church, interviewee EC1_1 responds, “Yes,

often at prayer nights, I see people falling. They even fall by my side when I am praying. The Lord is acting in the church.” When I have asked on why people fall during prayer, she answers, “I do not know, I tell myself that the Holy Spirit is chasing evil spirits in them.” Another respondent, EC1_15, answers to the same question on when they had realized the Holy Spirit was present in the church,

“Last Saturday, I saw the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. In other churches when there are such events, the pastor takes the situation by praying for the person who manifests to say that it is he who is powerful. Here, the pastor does not even bother. He lets the Holy Spirit act. There is a woman, who runs around the congregation every time, but no one disturbs, no one moves, the pastor stays quiet and the Holy Spirit acts. Before I wondered why we do not stop it because it could be incantations. Yet, I realized that we do not have to be agitated in the presence of the Lord because the Holy Spirit who is in us is stronger than the others.”

Participant EC1_26 adds to what happened on last Saturday that was mentioned by the previous interviewee, “Last Saturday, the pastor was praying for a family and a woman fell and began trembling. Some times after, the pastor prayed for her and she got back up. By this phenomenon, I affirmed that the Holy Spirit was present in the church.” When asked what the Holy Spirit was doing on that woman, the interviewee answered, “The Holy Spirit was delivering her from the evil spirits.” Through these accounts, we get to realize how the church members highly affirm the existence and the influence of the Holy Spirit.

However, the qualitative interview gave us traces that some believers were not fully depending on the Holy Spirit. To the question on what do the friends at church say about the traditional spirits, EC1_15 answers, “They do not believe it. But there are still some who still doubt and mix the two.” The respondent states that the majority do not believe in the traditional spirits but there are still some who doubt the Holy Spirit. Respondent EC1_21 gives a random guess of how many percentages of African Christians she presumes to confess they believe in Jesus but are still depending on the traditional spirits. “About 30% to 40% of people are still attached to the spirits of tradition.” Taking into mind that 66.7% of this church’s members have claimed they always depend on the Holy Spirit, the remaining 30% could be as the interviewee have stated, Christians whom have the possibility to have a lesser dependence on the Holy Spirit and they could have a tendency to partially rely on the traditional spirits. These testimonies to some measure depict of EC1’s perception of dependence that is assessed as ‘low’. As the Church

of Galatia, their dependence is not fully relying on the Holy Spirit or has partially turned away from the Holy Spirit for they think there could be other things that could be more reliable.

9.2.2 Evangelical Church 2 Classification: ‘HHH’ Perception

The Evangelical Church 2 had 80.9% church members whom extremely highly understood the existence of the Holy Spirit, 83.0% whom comprehended extremely highly their dependence, and 76.6% of believers whom perceived extremely highly its influence. Applying the standard number of 7% for their relative comparison, we get to realize that the highest perception is the dependence and that the remaining two other components remain within the 7% boundary. Therefore, the three component factors of perception would all be evaluated as ‘high’. EC2 could be identified as having a ‘HHH’ perception.

Biblical example with a ‘HHH’ perception was John the Baptist and Stephen. The distinguished lifestyle that John the Baptist adhered depicts us on how he was devoted to the Holy Spirit. “John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan” (Mt 3:4-5). He lived in the desert wearing clothing from camel’s hair, leather belt, ate food from locusts and wild honey. He did not try to live in a man made lifestyle, the way he lived cutting off from all interest of the world, shows his full dependence on the Holy Spirit. Through John’s account of Jesus in the Gospel of John, we can also see how he actively perceived the influence of the Holy Spirit in his life. “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him” (Jn 1:32). John the Baptist was able to catch sight of the Holy Spirit’s vivid operation. He saw the heaven opening and the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus. Stephen was also a biblical personage that is considered to have a ‘HHH’ perception of the Holy Spirit. He sternly proclaims to the Jewish religious leaders, “You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!” (Acts 7:51). Stephen’s statement of people always resisting the Holy Spirit implies how he himself lives a life that is always recognizing the presence of the Holy Spirit. Through the illustrations given by John the Baptist and Stephen, we could see how those whom understand

the Holy Spirit with a 'HHH' perception has a high understanding of its presence, dependence, and influence.

The congregation of the EC2 also has an identical comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Respondent EC2_68 responds to the question on his personal experience of the Holy Spirit as,

“On several occasions I felt the presence of the Holy Spirit. While praising at church, at home when offering morning prayers, I often feel strong vibrations that seems to me supernatural. It feels a bit like an electrical current is passing through me. Often when I am going through difficult times, I hear an inner voice that tells me to be courageous and that everything will be better. I think that inner voice is the Holy Spirit.”

The explanation of the interviewee's experience of the Holy Spirit lead us to monitor how he always perceives its presence in his life. He acknowledges its presence at church, at home, and when going through difficult times. The church members of EC2 have a high perception on the existence of the Holy Spirit.

The congregation not only has a high perception on the existence but also on its dependence. Interviewee EC2_54 gives the following accounts on the Holy Spirit,

“At this moment, I felt the Holy Spirit in me. I took authority and I began to pray. I spoke to the spirits that are in him and they answered me. Those spirits within him pronounced my name. They called me by my name [...], which is only used at home. “[...] leave us alone!” I said, “I do not know you. Leave this child. He already had confessed Jesus.”

The testimony given by the respondent explains of how he was at church in the prayer meeting and suddenly realized that evil spirits were possessing a boy who was praying with them. Feeling how the Holy Spirit was present within him, he takes authority relying on the Spirit and shouts to leave the child. Participant EC2_72 tells of his experience,

“I teach in an Arab school that means a Muslim school where children fall very often in a trance state. One day, I come back from class and around 30 minutes after, students come calling for me. “She fell!” “Why did she fall?” They reply that it was after sports class and I say it is not after the sport because I found that this girl had rigid fingers, it was strengthened, and jaws were well locked and hairs erected. I looked at this child right away and the Holy Spirit acted because I did not look with physical eyes but with spiritual eyes. I told them, “No, this child is possessed.” I raised a prayer instantly. The spirit presented itself, “It's me Idiriss.” That was a man's name whereas she was a girl. “What are you doing in her?” I asked. “It's my friend.” “How your friend?” As I do not like chatting with spirits, I ordered this spirit out. And thank God I had the secretary whom also was a Christian. It was her whom backed me through prayers. We chased out that spirit, the child got up right away. The student was not even aware of what happened.”

The interviewee explaining of his experience of driving away an evil spirit from his student, mentions how at the unexpected moment of finding a student unconscious after his sports class, the Holy Spirit acted and he was able to look through the spiritual eyes to realize that this girl was possessed by an evil spirit. His report sketches of his dependence on the Holy Spirit in times of difficulties. Instead of going after a school security or a school nurse, he fully relied on the Holy Spirit and ordered the evil spirit to get out.

Not only they fully depended on the Holy Spirit but these explanations also portray us of how strongly the Holy Spirit is affecting their lives. Respondent EC2_54 tells of how he was sick for years without being able to be cured even from numerous visits to different hospitals but was healed though the Holy Spirit. “Since my healing, I see that the Holy Spirit really accompanies me. This fear I had is slowly disappearing.” Interviewee EC2_71 mentions how she had a vision of the Holy Spirit descending upon her during her dream. “It comes down, it comes down slowly. When it comes down, when it comes down, I raise my hand. When I want to reach it and touch, I cannot touch and the Spirit flees. I feel how peace invades me, a peace invades me, and it is a glorious presence.” Throughout multiple interviews, I was amazed at hearing the believers’ testimony of how the Holy Spirit is working in their lives. The Holy Spirit is truly real to them, they fully depend on the Holy Spirit, and it really is influencing their lives. The lay African Christians of Evangelical Church 2 are evaluated as having a ‘HHH’ perception of the Holy Spirit.

9.2.3 Independent Church 3 Classification: ‘LHL’ Perception

The Independent Church 3 had 72.1% of its church members whom extremely highly approved of the existence of the Holy Spirit, 83.7% whom depended extremely highly on the Holy Spirit, and 72.1% of the believers whom extremely highly perceived the influence of the Holy Spirit. In this congregation, the highest component will be the dependence with 83.7%. Thus, the dependence will be evaluated as ‘high’. Although the existence of 72.1% and the influence of 72.1% are figures that seems quite elevated, when relatively comparing them to the congregation’s overall dependence on the Holy Spirit, their gap is over 7%, so they will be

considered as 'low'. The EDI based systematization of Independent Church 3 would be evaluated as having a 'LHL' perception.

Biblical figures whom have a similar perception are the seven sons of Sceva. Seeing how Paul performs visible miracles such as exorcising evil spirits, they imitate Paul while expecting to have similar results. Acts 19:13 notes about these groups of people as "tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed." The passage's illustration that states some Jews tried to invoke gives an impression that they were not fully confident on the outcome that was going to happen. The nuance, which they were not fully convinced but trying to imitate Paul, leaves us with speculations on how they were not fully persuaded of the Holy Spirit's presence and of its influence. Probably they did not yet have a personal experience of the Holy Spirit, which convinced them of its presence and work. Yet, through the indirect experiences they had through Paul, they also expected and hoped such work of the Holy Spirit to happen in their lives. Although their acknowledgement of the presence and the actual influence of the Holy Spirit they were encountering in their life was low, they had a high reliance and expectations from the Holy Spirit.

The congregation of the IC3 seems to have a similar perception of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean that the church members are not acknowledging the presence of the Holy Spirit nor do not have personal experience of the Holy Spirit for the cold figures of their perception on the existence and influence are quite elevated with 72.1% on both perceptions. However, it implies that due to the relative comparison on the congregation members' different perception on existence, dependence, and influence, they would have a similar tendency to understand the Holy Spirit. As the seven sons of Sceva were expecting visible signs, the congregation members had a propensity to recognize the Holy Spirit when visible signs accompanied.

Interviewee IC3_97 responds to the question on what could be an African way to understand the Holy Spirit as, "On most of the Independent Churches, people understand the Holy Spirit when people fall, panic, and also when you prosper in your business, you tell yourself that the Holy Spirit is with you." The participant states that we can perceive the Holy Spirit through people falling, panicking, and prosperity. The term 'panicking' could be a little odd to grasp. However, the observation I have made while participating at the Independent Church 3's service leads me to understand it as a state, which a human being is filled with the

Holy Spirit and cannot endure its presence of the Holy Spirit that makes them scream and behave in an abnormal way. When asked of her personal experience of the Holy Spirit, the interviewee accounts,

“It happened on a Sunday. While we were having a service, during the moment of prayer, I felt a spiritual visit. I felt something was going on inside me. I do not know how to explain but I started praying, moving around, panicking, and later I felt appeased, light, it is difficult to explain.”

Interviewee IC3_129 answers to the question about the personal experience of the Holy Spirit as, “Yes, sometimes during the time of worship. I do not start having crisis as some people, but I strongly feel the presence of the Holy Spirit.” The answer gives an impression that people having crisis is commonly recognized in the congregation as the presence of the Holy Spirit. Participant IC3_107 responds to the question on how one could know the work of the Holy Spirit as, “By the manifestation, by people being shaken, and also by supernatural presence one feels.” The congregation accounts on how they perceive the Holy Spirit. Ways they comprehend the Holy Spirit are through panics, crisis, and shaking. They are all visible signs. As the sons of Sceva were captivated by the visible miracles Paul was performing, the IC3 church members seem to be fascinated by the visible works of the Holy Spirit.

Although the church members of IC3 strongly expect the Holy Spirit to work visibly, it does not seem to be the case on some church members. When interviewee IC3_113 was asked on how she knows the existence of the Holy Spirit, she says, “Because it is mentioned in the Bible.” To the following question on whether she had a personal experience of the Holy Spirit she responds, “I believe and I have a strong assurance that the Holy Spirit is in me and lives in me.” Even though the respondent states to have a strong assurance on the existence of the Holy Spirit, she does not testify of any recognizable and visible influence of the Holy Spirit in her life. The congregation commonly hopes and anticipates of the detectable influence of the Holy Spirit, but such influence of the Holy Spirit does not seem to be applied to all believers. This results in a comparatively lower perception of existence and influence. Thus, the lay believers in Independent Church 3 are identified as having a ‘LHL’ perception of the Holy Spirit.

9.2.4 Independent Church 4 Classification: ‘LHL’ Perception

The Independent Church 4 had 66.7% of church members whom extremely highly approved the existence of the Holy Spirit, 81.8% whom depended extremely highly on the Holy Spirit, and 66.7% of the believers whom extremely highly perceived the influence of the Holy Spirit. The congregation’s highest component will be its dependence with 81.8%. The remaining two other component of existence and dependence are equally 66.7% that is beyond the demarcation of 7%, leading the existence and the dependence to be identified as ‘low’. Therefore, the Independent Church 4’s classification will be ‘LHL’ perception, which is similar to that of the IC3. The illustration of biblical figures with such perception will not be mentioned again for it had already been introduced on the different categorization and when classifying the Independent Church 3. However, we are to note that the gap between its components is larger than IC3.

Similarly, to IC3, the church members in IC4 also comprehend the Holy Spirit mostly through visible signs. Their description of the Holy Spirit and their anticipation on the Holy Spirit are marked with observable phenomenon. Participant IC4_138 responds to the question on when she feels the presence of the Holy Spirit at church as, “There are moments, there are moments, when the Holy Spirit is present, and it does not go unrecognized. There are manifestations, there are manifestations, because the Holy Spirit cannot arrive somewhere without effects.” The interviewee understands the Holy Spirit as something that should be recognized and that has effects. IC4_145 accounts on how he perceives the Holy Spirit, “Every time I am in delicate and disagreeable situations, I make simple prayers and I have the result. This gives me the conviction once again that the Holy Spirit is real and he can help us in diverse ways and in diverse areas.” The effective prayer that has attained the expected results are linked with the existence of the Holy Spirit. IC4_155 supports understanding the Holy Spirit through visible effects, “The Holy Spirit truly exists by feelings, by manifestations. You see for yourself how someone was bewitched but delivered, and the Good Spirit comes within you, you feel the capacity of the power of God.” The respondents states that you would be able to see and recognize yourself the work of the Holy Spirit within oneself.

The church members in IC4 mostly comprehends the Holy Spirit with visible signs such as effects, results, and one seeing himself the influence of the Holy Spirit. The approval on the

existence of the Holy Spirit also seems to be strongly linked with this detectable influence for they testify how they get convinced of the Holy Spirit's presence when they get the results. Nevertheless, this anticipated detectable effect does not seem to be applied to the whole congregation. When IC4_153 was asked on some believers whom have double fidelity, meaning although they are Christians, they also adhere to the traditional spirits, she answers, "The problem with God is that he is not fast in action for there is a process he awaits to be filled for you to obtain something from him. They are impatient of waiting God's time and they want to find a fast solution to their problems." The respondent's answer gives us an impression that for some believers, God is not as effective and influential as people have anticipated. Some other interviewees' response, such as IC4_138 and IC4_153, on their personal experience of the Holy Spirit is characterized with uncertainty. While accounting her personal experience of the Holy Spirit, participant IC4_138 says, "Before I had the Holy Spirit but I did not know... That is how I started experiencing the Holy Spirit, but I did not know... It is later on that I got to realize it was the Holy Spirit." The interviewee is telling how she experienced the Holy Spirit, but the phrase I did not know is repetitively used. This depicts of the low perception of existence. IC4_153 tells of her experience of the Holy Spirit as, "I had a personal experience with the Holy Spirit, I do not know at what moment the Holy Spirit started acting in my life. I tell myself that it is maybe when my deliverance had started." Once again, she does not recognize when the Holy Spirit started acting in her life. Unlike the expectations of the congregation, which anticipates of the visible and recognizable influence of the Holy Spirit, some interviewees' personal experience of the Holy Spirit is marked with uncertainty. They do not know when the Holy Spirit started acting in their life and they were not able to recognize clearly the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Thus, the church members of IC4 have a high reliance and expectations, but their actual acknowledgement of the Holy Spirit's existence and the actual influence of the Holy Spirit does not meet their anticipations.

9.3 The Contribution of the EDI (Existence-Dependence-Influence) based Systematization

On the previous chapter, chapter 8, we have foregone a dialogue between the theologians and the voices from the ground. This interaction had revealed us three major contributions the voices from the ground had brought to the field. The EDI based systematization further adds, develops, and ripens to these contributions.

Firstly, the dialogue revealed the theologians' misrepresentation of the African Independent Churches' understanding of the Holy Spirit. Theologians formulated the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit to be a Pneumatology that subsumes the traditional spirits. They applauded the Independent Churches to be the pioneers to give birth and practice the Africanized Theology. However, it had been disclosed that such comprehension of the Holy Spirit did not exist among the surveyed believers in Cameroon and it was speculated that although there might be some traces of such perception, it should be the stance of the very minority. Thus, it will be inappropriate to claim such understanding to be the popular Africanized Pneumatology.

Secondly, it revealed the bipolarized paradigm in which the theologians were trying to understand the Holy Spirit was outmoded and no more applicable. That is why this chapter has introduced another paradigm of perceiving the Holy Spirit. Instead of building a paradigm on looking at the context itself, this paradigm tries to analyse the empirical perception of the believers whom are living in the society in transition. The thesis has reconstructed a novel systematization of understanding the Holy Spirit. There could be critics that the proposed systematization itself does not demonstrate any traits that promotes the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit. However, this model that ponders on human being's empirical perception, leads us to a better understanding of how the surveyed lay African believers understand the Holy Spirit. Through this systematization, we have detected the distinctive perceptions that variate the surveyed lay African believers. Not only that, but it also enlightened us to find the common traits of the surveyed participants.

Thirdly, it revealed the theologians' misunderstanding of the spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers. The theologians diagnosed the spiritual vacuum to come from the ignorance

of the African spiritual world by the Western missionary influenced churches. They have grasped the persisting double dependence, to the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits, of some African believers and considered this dependence to be the key to comprehend the Africanized Pneumatology. However, the surveyed Independent Churches, founded by Cameroonian spiritual leaders, whom were acknowledging the African spiritual world, still demonstrated a form of spiritual vacuum. The newly introduced systematization has given hints on how to ponder the persisting spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers. These numerous contributions of the EDI systematization will further direct this thesis on how to develop an Africanized Pneumatology relevant to the African believers.

9.3.1 Distinguishing the Surveyed Lay African Christians' Understanding of the Holy Spirit

When locating the voices of the ground on the previous bipolarized paradigm of comprehending the Holy Spirit, we were unable to discern the differences for the absolute majority of surveyed lay believers in Cameroon confirmed the discontinuity between the spirits and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, all four churches surveyed were evaluated to have a similar stance on their understanding of the Holy Spirit. However, the EDI based systematization distinguished the four congregations into three different classifications that are the 'HHH', the 'HLH', and the 'LHL' perception. This categorization places EC1 to have a very different perception to that of the IC3 and IC4. EC1 has a high perception on existence, low perception on dependence, and high perception on influence. Whereas, IC3 and IC4 have the inverse stance. They have a low perception on existence, high perception on dependence, and low perception on influence.

Evangelical Church 1 church members commonly accounted during their interviews on what happened on Saturday morning prayer service, which I have also attended and observed. In the mid of the service, a family came up to the front so that the pastor and the congregation could pray and bless the family. Suddenly, the wife started shaking, trembling, and fell on the ground. The participant of the survey, whom also witnessed the happening, interpreted it as the work of the Holy Spirit. They understood such phenomena to be the Holy Spirit in work to chase

away the evil spirits from the woman. EC1 church members perceived the Holy Spirit to be actively influencing their lives and they highly confirmed the existence of the Holy Spirit. Although they had a high perception of existence and influence, their dependence was comparatively low. EC1_15 accounts how some friends at church still have doubts and mix the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits. EC1_21 accounts that there are always believers whom doubt and believe more what the world says than what God says. Whereas they are highly convinced of the existence and the influence of the Holy Spirit, this 'low' perception on dependence is a distinctive trait of EC1.

Independent Church 3 and Independent Church 4's comprehension of the Holy Spirit is characterized by their 'high' perception on dependence. This dependence seems to be expressed through their anticipation of visible signs and effectiveness. The church members of IC3 expect to fall, panic, tremble, and have crisis to acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit. The congregation of IC4 anticipate visible effects and results to sense the work of the Holy Spirit. Although IC3 and IC4 had high expectations of visible signs and effects, such phenomenon does not seem to be fully experienced by the congregation. During my observation on a Sunday service at IC3, an apostle invited the congregation whom was willing to be filled with the Holy Spirit to come forth. Around a fifth of the whole congregation numbering around 40 people stepped forth. The apostle laid his hands on the head of the people who came forth, however out of the 40 volunteers; only four to five church members experienced the visible signs the congregation was awaiting. The remaining 35 people whom also hoped to experience this visible signs of the Holy Spirit would have probably felt a relative deprivation. An interviewee, IC3_113, tells that her belief of the Holy Spirit is based on the Bible's account. Her faith and acknowledgement of the Holy Spirit is not through the expected visible signs as her congregation commonly awaits and comprehends as the sign of the Holy Spirit. Participant IC4_153 mentions on how God works. She refers to God as not being fast. This statement gives hints on how the surveyed respondent is understanding of the influence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not as effective and result making as the congregation is hoping. The church members await visible signs and works of the Holy Spirit, thus the Holy Spirit is not revealing himself in this anticipated way to all the congregation. IC3 and IC4 is characterized of its high

perception on dependence, yet they relatively have a low perception of existence and influence of the Holy Spirit.

Evangelical Church 2 is distinguished with the other three churches for it has a ‘HHH’ perception of the Holy Spirit. Although the figure of 83.0% of church members whom extremely highly perceive the dependence and 76.6% of the congregation whom extremely highly perceive the influence has a gap of 6.4%, since it does not cross the line of 7%, they are considered to be relatively similar. EC2 church members demonstrate a high existence, dependence, and influence. EC2_72 accounts how when one of the students he was teaching at school fell on the ground, the Holy Spirit suddenly opened his spiritual eyes and made him see that it was not a physical problem but spiritual, an evil spirit was troubling his student. He had stepped forth to cast out the evil spirit in the name of Jesus in front of numerous students. Unfortunately, he was teaching at an Islamic school and thereby he was banned from further proclaiming the name of Jesus. Participant EC2_54 tells of how during the prayer meeting, he realized through the Holy Spirit that a child whom was present among them had an evil spirit. So, he proclaimed to the evil spirit to leave the child. The church members in EC2 demonstrate a high awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit. They highly depend on what the Holy Spirit guides them and have vivid personal experiences of the Holy Spirit.

9.3.2 Finding the Common Characteristic of the Surveyed Lay African Christians’

Understanding of the Holy Spirit

The EDI based systematization not only drew the distinction between the surveyed lay African believers’ comprehension of the Holy Spirit, but it also gave hints to grasp the common characteristics found on the voices from the ground. Below is a bar graph that illustrates each congregations’ three composing factors of their empirical comprehension of the Holy Spirit. What first visually hits our attention is their propensity to have a ‘high’ dependence. All three churches, EC2, IC3, and IC4, are characterized with a high dependence that stands out compared to the other two perceptual elements. It gives an impression that the ‘high dependence’ is the key to understand the Africans’ comprehension of the Holy Spirit. However, we soon get to realize on how the cold figures on dependence of all three churches are similarly elevated, EC2

has 83.0%, IC3 has 83.7%, and IC4 has 81.8%, but the remaining two other elements all have various results, regardless of their identically elevated dependence. EC2's existence and influence are identified in 80% and in mid 70%, IC3's existence and influence are located in early 70%, IC4's existence and influence are located in mid 60%. If the high dependence that was identically found on three congregation was the key to the African understanding of the Holy Spirit, it should have had a significant effect on how the believers confirm its existence and apprehend of its influence. However, although the dependence is found distinctively high in all three communities, it does not demonstrate any sign of impact to the believers' acknowledgement of the Holy Spirit's existence and influence. This implies that the high dependence found on African believers is comparatively less associated to their experience and confirmation of the Holy Spirit. Regardless of their various empirical experiences of the Holy Spirit, this dependence remains identically high on all three surveyed churches.

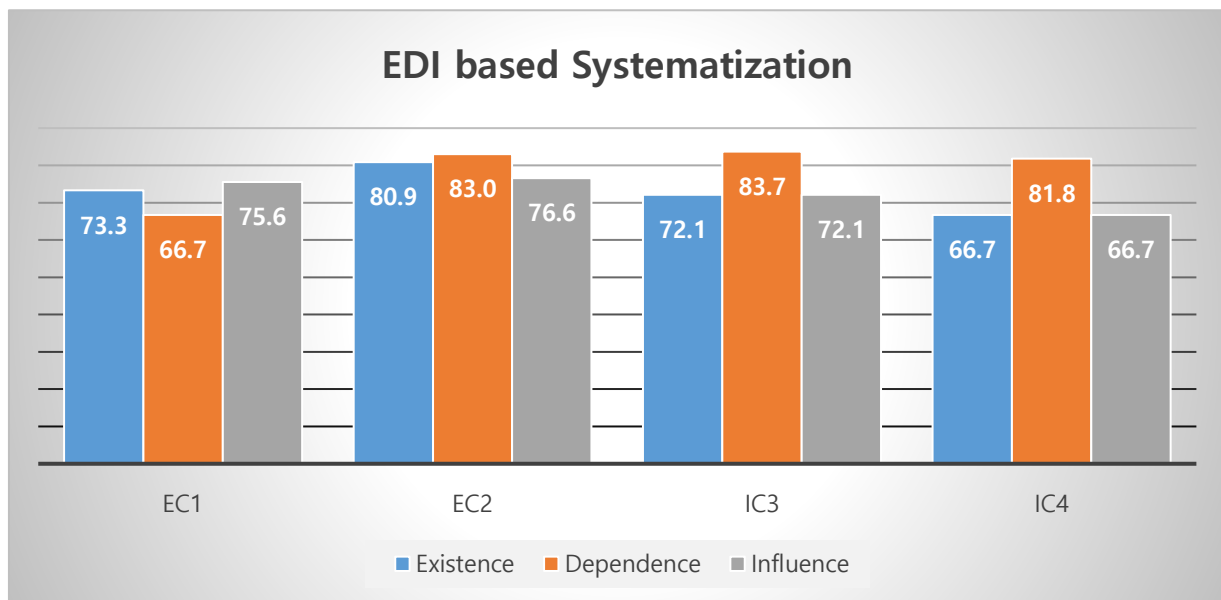


Figure 45: EDI based systematization

It has been mentioned on section 7.2.2 while dealing through the qualitative analysis on the high dependence, how the high dependence was presumed to be an inherited religiosity African believers' have acquired from the African tradition. We could visibly observe on the graph how in three surveyed churches (EC2, IC3, IC4), believers demonstrate a tendency to have a higher dependence to the Holy Spirit than they actually conceded of its existence. How could a believer whom does not acknowledge the existence of the Holy Spirit depend more on

the spiritual being than they acknowledge of its existence? This dependence is less associated of their empirical perception of the Holy Spirit and could be traced to be more closely linked to their African religiosity influenced from the tradition. The high dependence of the African believers could be understood as a unique trait of African religiosity that exceeds their Christian faith. Therefore, although we partially admit that the believers' high dependence could play a role on their understanding of the Holy Spirit, it will be incorrect to presume that the high dependence is the core that forms the particular trait of the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit. Building a Pneumatology out of this dependence, significantly influenced by the African tradition and less affined to their empirical experience of the Holy Spirit, would portrait a Pneumatology that does not truly portrait the contemporary Africans understanding of the Holy Spirit. This high dependence is the element least related to the African believers' empirical approach of the Holy Spirit.

Then what could be the key factor that marks the African believers' comprehension of the Holy Spirit? The answer is found on the correlation between the believers' existence and influence. EDI based systematization classified EC1 as HLH, EC2 as HHH, IC3 as LHL, and IC4 as LHL. In all four churches, the empirical perception of the existence and the influence of the Holy Spirit showed an intimate correlation. When the acknowledgement of the existence was found high, the influence was also perceived high. When the existence was evaluated low, the influence was also classified as low. Thus, it can be presumed that as much as an African believer acknowledges the existence of the Holy Spirit, he experiences the influence of the Holy Spirit. It could also be phrased that as much as an African believer experiences the work of the Holy Spirit, he gets to concede the presence of the Holy Spirit. The surveyed lay African believers' perception of existence and influence has a propensity to go along. Thus, the key to understand the African believers' comprehension of the Holy Spirit is by focusing on their perception of existence and the influence.

9.3.3 Directions to develop a Relevant Africanized Pneumatology

Theologians had observed the spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers. The spiritual hunger that was presumed to be caused due to the ignorance of the African spiritual

world had led some theologians to perceive the incorporation of the African spiritual world into the Christians faith as the Africanized way to understand the Holy Spirit. They expected such approach of comprehending the Holy Spirit to fill the persisting spiritual need African believers were going through. However, the lay voices from the ground revealed the theologians misunderstood the spiritual vacuum. The spiritual vacuum was observed to persist although the surveyed believers recognized the reality of the African spiritual world consciously and unconsciously into their Christian boundary of faith.

All four surveyed congregations consciously had encompassed the African spiritual world by acknowledging its existence. Their attitudes towards the African spiritual world were not favorable as African theologians would have anticipated but rather hostile. However, unlike some missionary founded churches whom totally neglected the existence of the African spiritual world, these surveyed congregations all saw this world as a reality whom the believers had to fight. Three churches (Evangelical Church 2, Independent Church 3, Independent Church 4) revealed how the church members unconsciously englobed the African spiritual world through their high dependence on the Holy Spirit. Although this high dependence first seemed as a typical trait of Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit, the EDI based systematization soon led us to realize how this high dependence did not have a strong affiliation with the empirical African experience of the Holy Spirit (as mentioned in the previous section in 9.3.2). The high dependence was rather an African traditional inheritance that unconsciously influenced the believers to anticipate in a way they used to be more familiar. However, although the surveyed African believers consciously and unconsciously comprised the African spiritual world into their religiosity, it had been observed the surveyed believers still experienced the spiritual hunger. Thus, the spiritual hunger observed by the theologians were valid, yet their diagnosis that it is due to the ignorance of the African spiritual world were invalid.

Our survey had visibly portrayed the spiritual vacuum surveyed believers in Cameroon were experiencing for in three congregations (EC2, IC3, and IC4); we were able to notice definite high dependence that exceeded the believers' acceptance of existence and influence of the Holy Spirit. The gap between the believers' expectations of the Holy Spirit and the actual influence they experienced from the Holy Spirit were causing the spiritual hunger. The believers were expecting the Holy Spirit to work and act in a certain way but they were not experiencing

the Holy Spirit to the point of their satisfaction. When basing the analysis of the Christian African religiosity on the dependence, the conclusion is that the Holy Spirit is not being enough and not doing enough. Nevertheless, the EDI based systematization highlighted that the 'high dependence' found among the surveyed African believers did not have much correlation with the believers' existential and empirical perception of the Holy Spirit. EDI illustrated the perception of dependence on all three churches to be placed very high yet the existence and the influence did not show any correlations with the high dependence. Unlike the high dependence that stands out alone and grabs people's attention, as if it is the particular trait representing African Christian religiosity, the actual analysis reveals a stronger connection of the believers and their perception on existence and influence to be more closely intertwined to their understanding of the Holy Spirit on all surveyed churches. When the acknowledgement of existence is found high, the recognition of the influence is also found high. When the existence is categorized low, the influence believers are experiencing is also evaluated as low. Such propensity is identically found on all four churches observed. The surveyed African believers' empirical perception of the Holy Spirit shows a strong correlation between the acknowledgement of the existence and the recognition of the influence experienced. The dependence felt by the believers do not show much signs of kinship with the remaining existential and empirical perception.

Therefore, EDI based systematization enlightens and directs us that in order to propose an Africanized Pneumatology that is relevant to the African believers, we need to develop our Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit basing on their approval of its existence and their unique experiences. The high dependence that grabs the attention is an inheritance of the African Traditional Religion that had been embedded unconsciously into the African Christian religiosity. Therefore, if we are to develop an understanding of the Africanized Holy Spirit on this 'high dependence' found among the African Christian religiosity, it will be a comprehension of the Holy Spirit that is less relevant to what the African believers are currently understanding of the Holy Spirit. In order to observe a more relevant and contemporary Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit, the attention should rather be shifted from their high dependence to what African believers are currently experiencing and conceding. Instead of fixing our attention solely on the context of the African tradition to develop an Africanized

Pneumatology as the theologians have done, we should rather bring light to the empirical perception lay African believers are currently undergoing from the dynamic society that is in transition. Therefore, on the next chapter, I would like to propose a popular Africanized Pneumatology that bases its ground from the surveyed African believers' existential and empirical perception of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 10: Proposing a Popular Pneumatology in an Urban African Context

The voices of the theologians raised on the academic field, portrayed African Independent Churches to have incorporated the traditional spirits into their understanding of the Africanized Pneumatology. Michael states, “The traditional concept of the good spirit can be readily associated with the Christian Holy Spirit who is also thought to give gifts, spiritual power and blessings. Most of the African Independent Church often have a problematic concept of Pneumatology because of this common association.”³⁰⁵ Uzukwu adds, “A Generalized Holy Spirit who bestows all gifts of healing and divining becomes a creative pneumatological contribution from West African Christianity to the great Christian tradition. The leading contribution of African Independent Churches in this creative pneumatology should be recognized.”³⁰⁶ The term “Generalized Holy Spirit” refers to the African Independent Churches’ Pneumatology that subsumes the ancestral spirits. He claims such understanding of the Holy Spirit to be the leading contribution of the African Independent Churches. Theologians on the academic field make it look as if the Pneumatology associated with the traditional spirit is a popular understanding of the Holy Spirit in a significant part of the Africanized Christianity.

Nevertheless, the survey undergone throughout this thesis that investigated African believers in Cameroon, revealed how the Africanized Pneumatology that incorporated the traditional spirits were not a popular comprehension of the Holy Spirit among the surveyed African believers. None of the surveyed believers comprehended the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits in continuity. While analyzing the lay believers’ process of theologization, some minority of believers were favorable to the traditional spirits, opening possibilities to understand the Holy Spirit in connection to these spirits. However, none of them explicitly stated the traditional spirits to be in continuity with the Holy Spirit. They rather drew a clear line of distinction that although to certain extent their function might look similar; there is a clear distinction when analyzing the substance between these two spiritual beings. Paul Makhubu, a

³⁰⁵ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

³⁰⁶ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness : Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 179.

leader of the African Independent Church, supports my findings for he accounts that African Independent Churches whom mix Christianity with ancestral worship to be a very small minority.³⁰⁷

Another factor that restricts of such understanding of the Holy Spirit to be a popular Pneumatology is due to the context. Africa is undergoing a fast process of urbanization and secularization. This context in transition is influencing the worldview of the African people for my investigation on the probable variables that affects a person's perception on the traditional spirits revealed how the younger generations (teens) and those whom lived in urbanity for more than 20 years are less affectionate to the traditional spirits. An interviewee identified as EC2_84 testifies, "Since time changes, the behavior also changes and then people do not rely that much on the tradition... In my village, the younger generation are not much attached to the spirits." Therefore, the Pneumatology introduced by the theologians to be a relevant Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit has no firm base of the ground for no voices claim of such understanding and it is not pertinent to the African context in transition.

Then, if the Africanized Pneumatology highly praised by Uzukwu for its creativity is not a relevant and pertinent understanding of the Holy Spirit to the contemporary urban African believers, what could be a popular Pneumatology in an urban African context? The EDI systematization, introduced on chapter 9, stressed the importance to take a close attention to the existential and influential experiences of the surveyed African believers in order to have a relevant Pneumatology. It was hinting through its results that the believers' dependence were influenced from the African tradition and did not have a strong connection with their personal experiences of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this section of the thesis will articulate proposals of Africanized Pneumatology grounding on the surveyed believers' existential and influential perception of the Holy Spirit. Two factors will be considered for the Pneumatology to be relevant and pertinent to the contemporary urban African believers. Are the voices raised relevant from the ground? Is this understanding pertinent to the urban African context? Then, the proposed popular Africanized Pneumatology will undergo a process of validation through the biblical and Christian tradition verification.

³⁰⁷ Makhubu, *Who are the Independent Churches?*, 60.

Then what could be the proposals for relevant and popular African understanding of the Holy Spirit? The EDI systematization proposed developing Pneumatology from the perception of existence and of influence of the Holy Spirit. The perception of existence of the African believers was revealed by analyzing the word frequency of their interviews. The themes that are mentioned repeatedly among the surveyed African believers would be a notion that is closely intertwined with their lives and existence. Thus, the analysis of the word frequency suggested the notion of family as a term that could be linked with their understanding the Holy Spirit. Comprehending the Holy Spirit as the familial bond would be the first proposal of the popular Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit.

The perception of influence of the African believers raised two other proposals. Section 7.2.2 of the thesis pondered on the functions African believers attributed to the Holy Spirit. There were functions that were similar to those the African believers previously had to the traditional spirits such as giver of prosperity, healer, guide, provider of strength, and mean of communication with God. The similar functions attributed to the Holy Spirit would be a dependence that was transferred from the traditional beliefs. However, there were distinctive functions mentioned that were attributed uniquely to the Holy Spirit. These newly attributed functions would have been one they have experienced from the influence of the Holy Spirit. The believers' perception of influence distinctively defined the Holy Spirit as transformer, liberator, peace giver, and truth speaker. Although all of these new insights of the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit could be developed into an African Pneumatology, the aim of this thesis is to develop a popular Pneumatology from the ground. When analyzing how many interviewees of the 26 respondents in total referred to the unique notions mentioned previously, peace giver was mentioned by 6 participants, transformer by 4 believers, liberator by 2 respondents, and truth speaker by 1 interviewee. Therefore, the two other proposal of the popular understanding of the Holy Spirit would be peace giver and transformer.

10.1 The Holy Spirit as the Familial Bond

The first proposal of the popular African Pneumatology comprehends the Holy Spirit as the familial bond. This could trigger instant discomfort to some readers for family had been a

concept generally linked to the traditional spirits in Africa. The voices of the ground also depict how their comprehension of family is a perception usually linked to the traditional spirits stating, “These spirits are ancestors,” “the traditional spirits are before all family,” “the spirits of family are the spirits of ancestors”. However, I strongly believe family, which is mostly linked to the traditional spirits, to be an important concept that could be dissociated from the spirits and be absorbed to the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Unfortunately, no voices of the ground explicitly support understanding the Holy Spirit in relation to family. Instead, such comprehension is rather more linked with the African people’s understanding of the traditional spirits. Then, am I contradicting myself on the methodological frame in which I had set prior to my studies? I had previously made criticism on how the theologians, whom illustrated the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit as one incorporating the traditional spirits, were not grounding their studies on the field but were mostly basing on personal interpretations. In addition, I had claimed that I would spotlight the voices of the unheard, the lay African believers on how they perceive the Holy Spirit and develop an Africanized Pneumatology from what they say. Although developing a Pneumatology without an explicit voice of affiliating the Holy Spirit to family may seem immoderate, yet through the data found on the ground, I firmly believe that such understanding would be a relevant and a pertinent Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit.

In order to introduce a concept, that was not explicitly stated by the voices of the ground, to be a relevant and a pertinent understanding for the African believers, I would first need to demonstrate how the term family is a relevant theme to the respondents. Then, I would need to dissociate this notion from the traditional spirits. Finally, I would need to affiliate it with the Holy Spirit and demonstrate how such understanding would be sufficiently appealing to the contemporary African believers living in an urban context.

10.1.1 The Voices Raised from the Ground

10.1.1.1 How Relevant is Family to the African People?

The first step to develop an unarticulated Pneumatology is to prove how the concept of family is actually important and relevant to the surveyed believers. I had analyzed the word frequency of the interviews with the respondents in order to grasp what notions are referred repeatedly among the interviewees. The words that would be frequently used by the respondents would be a perception that is important to the participants. When analyzing the word frequency, I have taken attention to the nouns and have withdrawn the prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, articles, and verbs from the analysis. The reason is due to the presumption that nouns would convey more key terms of the African believers' worldview than other words such as prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, verbs and articles would do. The analysis of the noun frequency is as following; spirits (706 times), Spirit (683 times), God (305 times), Church (258 times), tradition(s) (233 times), people (162 times), years (98 times), family (93 times), Lord (84 times), etc. Terms such as spirits and tradition(s) would be terms related to the traditional spirits. Terms such as Spirit, God, Church, and Lord would be terms related to the Holy Spirit. The previously mentioned terms are to be mentioned by the interviewees since the big frame of the interview was questioning their understanding of the traditional spirits and of the Holy Spirit. The remaining key concepts evoked were people, years, and family. The fact that family had been repeatedly use drew my attraction. 26 participants had used the term family 93 times. This implies that each interviewee mentioned the word family at least 3 to 4 times (3.6 times) throughout the interview. The frequency could be compared to other terms such as pastor (52 times), world (46 times), Yaoundé (46 times), Christians (45 times), ancestors (43 times), and prayer (40 times) that could seem as terms that will more likely be used on interviews on African religiosity but were only used 1.5 times to 2 times per interviewee. Other words such as grace (17 times), Africa (16 times), Satan (16 times), worship (15 times), and Cameroon (14 times) were just used 0.5 times to 0.7 times per respondents. When comparing the frequency of the word "family" to the previously mentioned words related to church (pastor, Christians, prayer, worship) or locations (Yaoundé, Cameroon), it is clearly visible how the notion of family is a term that is significantly important to the surveyed African believers. Thus, the analysis of the word frequency on the interviews clearly reveals how family is a significantly important and a relevant concept to the surveyed African believers.

10.1.1.2 The African Comprehension of Family

The respondents give impression that the value of family in Africa is different compared to other cultures. Interviewee EC2_68 states,

“In Africa, a family is not limited to parents, brothers, and sisters like in the Occident. For us, the concept of family is really broadened. Sometimes an aunt can raise you up, you depend totally on her. Here we live as a clan and if you dare disown the traditional practices, the family isolates you. You lose all the advantages you had from the familial solidarity. Although church is a family, many prefer the family they had from birth”

This statement gives us numerous information about the respondent’s comprehension of the African family. He says that family in Africa is extended. Parents, brothers, and sisters are not the only component of family as it is in the Western culture. Instead, the familial component extends to aunts and uncles. Sometimes, they raise you as if you are their own child. He also states that there is a family solidarity in the African culture and this solidarity is linked with the traditional practices. When one refuses participating in the traditional practices, the family isolates the person. Another participant IC3_97 accounts of the African value of family, “Belonging to the African family is difficult. When they decide to perform rites, they will force everyone to do so. This pressure causes people to remain attached to these spirits.” She mentions that it is difficult to belong in an African family for there are pressure, which makes everyone to act and behave in a certain way such as performing traditional rites. Through the testimonies of the interviewees, images of the African familial value illustrated to us are an enlarged familial community that is bonded with solidarity. We here need to note that the familial pressure of participating in the traditional practices mentioned by the interviewees is mostly by the families which reside in the villages. The practices are not held in the cities but in the villages and those living in urbanity are pressured to return to the villages to forego the traditional practices. EC1_15 accounts on how people in her surroundings mentions of the traditional practices as, “It is often necessary to return to the village and make sacrifices on the skulls and the sacred places to be in good health, to prosper.” EC1_21 testifies, “I sell at the market with Bamileke and when they go to the village, they invoke the ancestors through the skulls...” The illustrations given by the respondents picture us how the traditional practices are matters that are strongly connected to the village.

African family is wider than one whom live in a Western culture can conceive for it englobes even the dead. The account of the interviewee whom states uncles and aunts are part of the family could also be agreed among the readers of the Western culture for in a sense they partially are. However, it becomes a little more surprising when one gets to hear that sometimes aunts and uncles in Africa raise nephews as if they are their own child. Surprisingly, the African comprehension of family does not only extend to uncles, aunts, and nephews but it goes beyond to incorporate the dead among its family members. EC2_72 claims, “When we often mention traditional spirits, it is before all family... it is the spirits of his grandparents and his parents.” EC2_54 adds, “The traditional spirits are the spirits of ancestors.” Unlike the Western culture which forgets about the dead, the African culture remembers the dead and sympathize with them as being part of the family. Parents, grandparents, and ancestors whom are all dead are still remembered. These families are now referred to as traditional spirits or spirits of ancestors. This is the reason why some African believers have a hard time dissociating themselves from the traditional practices for that means to let go of this extended notion of family.

10.1.1.3 Traditional Spirits or Family?

An observation made here is the importance stressed on the family when referring to the traditional spirits. Section 7.1.2.3 analyses the reasons why some African believers continually depend on the traditional spirits. The qualitative investigation gives us seven reasons on why some African believers consistently depend on spirits. These are spirits being effective, spirits being part of the family, the influence from family, the pressure from family, spirits being an African cultural heritage, lack of education from church, and lack of faith. The results expose how 3 out of 7 reasons some African believers are adhering to the traditional spirits are mostly due to family. It is because they are part of the extended African traditional comprehension of family, it is because of the influence they had received from family since their youth, and it is because of the pressure African family implicitly or explicitly input on its members. Thus, the main reason for the adherence to the traditional spirits is due to the African traditional value of family. This illustrates how important family is to the African people. Without the African

traditional value of family, the traditional spirits on its own would not be as appealing to the African believers.

There are voices from the ground that also support how the adherence of the traditional spirits is due to familial reasons. EC2_68 states, “There could be many other reasons, meanwhile I think the main reason why some adhere to the spirits are due to the fact of being rejected by family. That is the main reason of adherence.” IC3_97 also testifies, “Belonging to the African family is difficult. When they decide to perform rites, they will force everyone to do so. This pressure causes people to remain attached to these spirits.” Through these accounts, we get to realize how the reverence toward the traditional spirits is being held together due to the traditional African notion of family. Spirits are not more important than family. It is because the spirits are considered as family that they are being revered. However, the contemporary urban African context questions and re-evaluates the value of the traditional African family, including the traditional spirits.

10.1.2 The Urban Cameroonian Context

The notion of family was identified to be relevant to the surveyed African believers for throughout their interviews, it was a term they significantly repeated. This means that in their consciousness and unconsciousness, the concept of family is enrooted as an important factor. However, the urban Cameroonian context is questioning and re-evaluating the African traditional value of family. Section 4.2 introduces the effects urbanization has on the African context and its subsection 4.2.2.3 mentions how urbanization influences family and their relationships. One of the effects of urbanization is devaluating the traditional familial value African people had. Gerhard Mey and Hermann Spirik underwent a study in the urbanized city of Cameroon and found that 20 percent of respondents were willing to alienate family visits. Moreover, the study exposed that a number close to a half of the surveyed population living in urbanity were considering limiting their families’ visit or even restricting their visits.³⁰⁸ This

³⁰⁸ Mey and Spirik, *La famille Africaine en milieu urbain: enquête socio-économique réalisée à Yaoundé (Cameroun)*.

comes in clear contrast with what interviewee EC2_68 claimed about the traditional notion of African family. He stated that African family extended to aunts and they were even willing to raise nephews and nieces as their own children. The contemporary urban dwellers' tendency to limit or alienate familial relationships and visits were more noticeable among people whom were more educated or had higher economic status. Such propensities lead us to presume that the influence of the modern and secularized cultures in urbanity is influencing its population to devalue the African traditional value of family and its familial relationships.³⁰⁹ The urban population's rupture with their family also has an impact on their religiosity, for traditional practices are held in the villages with their families. Thus, the contemporary urban dwellers hope to live a different lifestyle than their counterparts. Such tendency had been verified when the massive number of the people searching for labors infiltrated from the West of Cameroon to Douala in the 1950s. For the people of the West are renowned for their adherence to the traditional spirits, the infiltration expected to change the religious map of Douala. However, the religious map of Douala did not undergo any observable changes. This illustrates how the urban dwellers in Cameroon are hoping for a different lifestyle and value to that of the African tradition. This includes the traditional value of the African family.³¹⁰ Contemporary urban African dwellers are now disvaluing the core values African people used to uphold and defined as the African tradition. Therefore, there is a need to reinterpret the key notions that are disvalued from its traditional meaning but is still relevant and pertinent to the urban inhabitants. The term family needs to be reinterpreted to the urban Cameroonian context and this is where I would like to introduce the Holy Spirit as the familial bond.

10.1.3 The Validation of the Proposal

The notion of family is of significant importance among the surveyed African believers. However, this perception had long been attached to the traditional spirits for the African concept of family is extensively enlarged to the point of considering the dead. Nevertheless, the

³⁰⁹ Franqueville, *Une Afrique entre le village et la ville: Les migrations dans le sud du Cameroun*, 205.

³¹⁰ Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 69.

contemporary urban dwellers are devaluing the perception of the traditional enlarged family. Close to a half of respondents whom participated in Gerhard Mey and Hermann Spirik confessed they were considering alienating family visits.³¹¹ Traditional worldview that incorporated the far relatives and even dead ancestors into the sphere of family are losing its ground in urbanity. The word family is being re-evaluated among the urban dwellers and there needs to be a reinterpreted definition of 'family'. This is where I would like to introduce the Holy Spirit as the familial bond with God. Then how valid would such approach of understanding the Holy Spirit as One whom creates the believers' familial bond with God be in the Bible and in the Christian tradition?

10.1.3.1 Biblical Validation

The proposal of understanding the Holy Spirit as the familial bond with God is sufficiently supported through the Bible. The Bible accounts that we become God's child through the Holy Spirit. "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children" (Rom 8:14-16). The Scripture testifies how through the Holy Spirit you become adopted as God's child. Therefore, we get to call God, "father." Another passage also supports the importance of the Holy Spirit for us to be God's child. "Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit calls out, 'Abba, Father'" (Gal 4:6). God sent the Holy Spirit so that we may call him out as father. Therefore, the Holy Spirit plays an important role of fully incorporating us to the divine family of God.

There is a qualitative difference between being a family with the traditional spirits and being a family member with God through the Holy Spirit. The traditional spirits start out as a family member from this world. However, since death brings them closer to the spiritual world,

³¹¹ Mey and Spirik, *La famille Africaine en milieu urbain: enquête socio-économique réalisée à Yaoundé (Cameroun)*.

they are venerated to bring blessings and protections. Being a family with the traditional spirits leads us to have a continual interest and attachment to this world. However, being God's family member through the Holy Spirit brings a different interest and attachment. Our attachment is not headed toward this world but its gets focused to the Kingdom of Heaven. We become not only God's sons and daughters, but we become heirs of God's Kingdom. "Now if we are children, then we are heirs-heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory" (Rom 8:17).

The message that one gets to be not only God's sons and daughters but also heirs of God's Kingdom would be sufficiently appealing to the contemporary residents whom are living in urban Africa. As fore-mentioned in chapter 4, the rapid growth of the urban population and the slow economic growth rates caused plural consequences such as inflation, deepened poverty, polarisation of incomes, growing unemployment, and homelessness in major African cities.³¹² In Sub-Saharan Africa, 42% of the total population is estimated to live in extreme poverty. 62% of Sub-Saharan African's urban population live in slums.³¹³ In urban dwellers who are living in such deficient situation, the message that the Holy Spirit makes you God's family would be words of comfort. Thus, the notion of family would be re-interpreted among the contemporary urban Africans as being affiliated with God and the Holy Spirit.

10.1.3.2 Christian Tradition Validation

Not only the comprehension of the Holy Spirit as the familial bond is validated through the Bible but also the Christian tradition supports such understanding of the Holy Spirit. Augustine of Hippo also known as the father of Pneumatology in the West, had a similar understanding regarding the Holy Spirit through the concept of relation. He defined the uniqueness of the Holy Spirit as the communion and bond of love between the Father and the

³¹² Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 137.

³¹³ UN-Habitat, « State of the World's Cities 2010/2011: Bridging the Urban Divide ».

Son.³¹⁴ While trying to explain about the Trinity, he gives an example of him loving something. “Behold, when I, who conduct this inquiry, love something, then three things are found: I, what I love, and the love itself. For I do not love ‘love’, unless I love a lover, for there is no love where nothing is loved. There are therefore, three things: the lover, the beloved, and the love.”³¹⁵ Through this example, Augustine guides his readers to understand Trinity as the relationship between the lover and the beloved. God the Father is the lover and Jesus Christ is the beloved Son. Then where would be the place of the Holy Spirit in this relationship? The Holy Spirit is the love that mutually connects the Father and the Son. Augustine further goes to add another illustration to explain the Trinity. It is the example of the mind loving itself. When a mind would love itself it would need to know itself for one cannot love something it does not know. Here, Augustine leaves room for the readers to replace the mind as the Father and the knowledge of itself as the Son. The love of loving oneself would be the Holy Spirit. “But just as there are two things, the mind and its love, when it loves itself, so there are two things, the mind and its knowledge, when it knows itself. Therefore, the mind itself, its love and its knowledge are a kind of trinity; these three are one, and when they are perfect they are equal.”³¹⁶ Augustine resolves that the Holy Spirit is the communion of divine love between the Father and the Son. This concept remained central key comprehension of Western Catholic Pneumatology since then.³¹⁷

The lay African believers are adding a supplementary aspect to the Augustinian understanding of the Holy Spirit being the mutual bond between the Father and the Son. Englobing the African notion of the enlarged family, it enriches the mutual bond to be widened and expanded to God’s children through the faith in Jesus Christ. The reinterpretation suggests the Holy Spirit to be not only the mutual bond between the Father and the Son but also to be the

³¹⁴ Hans Dieter Bertz, ed., “Spirit/HolySpirit”, in *Religion Past & Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012), 210.

³¹⁵ Saint Augustine of Hippo, *On the Trinity. Books 8-15*, ed Gareth B. Matthews, trans Stephen McKenna (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 25–26.

³¹⁶ Augustine, *On the Trinity*, 27–28.

³¹⁷ Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas, ed., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 745.

mutual bond between the Divinity and his children residing on earth. Proposing the Holy Spirit as the familial bond with God would be a relevant popular Africanized Pneumatology that brings insights to contemporary urban dwellers whom have a tendency to disvalue the African traditional notion family and to the Western Augustinian Pneumatology that had found its limit on restricting the Holy Spirit as the bond between the two divine Persons. He is not only the bond of the two divine Persons whom seem to lose ground of its distinctive role in the Trinity, but he is the one whom reveals the sonship to God's children on earth and keeps the familial bond with the Divinity.

10.2 The Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver

The second proposal is understanding the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver. This proposal finds its roots on the ground. It enroots on the African lay believers' account of the distinctive influence experienced of the Holy Spirit as transformer, liberator, peace giver, and truth speaker. For the aim of the thesis is to develop a relevant and a popular Pneumatology from the ground, the comprehension of the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver and as the Transformer were spotlighted. Noticeable number 6 participants claimed understanding the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver and 4 respondents testified of the Holy Spirit as the Transformer. Whereas only 2 interviewees accounted of Holy Spirit as the Liberator and 1 surveyed believer perceived the Holy Spirit as the Truth Speaker. This section will develop the Africanized Pneumatology of the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver. 6 out of 26 respondents, who participated in the semi-directed interview, explicitly stated on how they understood and experienced the Holy Spirit as the Giver of Peace. Such comprehension of the Holy Spirit was formulated from church members of all four churches surveyed. Following are their expressions on how they comprehend the Holy Spirit and his presence.

10.2.1 The Voices Raised from the Ground

Interviewee EC1_40 responds to the question on what the Holy Spirit does, "In Ephesians 6, the Bible tells us on what the Holy Spirit brings to the life of God's children. He

brings humility, love, peace, joy. The Holy Spirit brings only that which is positive.” Although the interviewee bases from what the Bible says, he would refer of what best fits his personal perception. He answers that Holy Spirit brings peace. IC3_102 comments of what she thinks of the Holy Spirit, “The Holy Spirit is something that cannot be explained. It's a peace that you manage to welcome.” For her, the Holy Spirit is peace.

EC2_54 accounts on the similarities and differences the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits have, “The family spirit is the spirit of the ancestors who sometimes disturb. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of peace, love, and progress.” The first word that the respondent choses to use while describing the Holy Spirit is peace. EC2_71 tells of her personal experience of the Holy Spirit,

“About the Holy Spirit, I had personal experience while I was sleeping. While I was sleeping, I had a vision. In the vision, I see a spirit represented as we represent angels. It is represented as angels are represented and it comes down. I was in a threatened situation by the evil spirits! It comes down. I see how it comes down, it comes down, and it slowly comes down. When it comes down, when it comes down, it comes. I raise my hand to touch it. When I want to touch it, I cannot touch and the stuff flees. And I feel how a peace invades me, a peace invades me, it is a rather a glorious presence.”

I asked on what makes her think that it was the Holy Spirit present. She answers, “It's hard to explain, it's hard to explain. Well, for me especially, I feel... I do not know how to explain. But, I feel how God is present. I feel peace, I feel peace, I feel peace...” She had dreamt of a spirit that descended while she was being attacked by evil spirits. It was represented in a form of angels and as she tried to touch it, it flew away but it gave her peace. When asked on how she had recognized it was the Holy Spirit, her answer is because she felt peace. For this respondent, the Holy Spirit is a peace giver. On the later part of her interview, she states once again, “The Holy Spirit comes with peace...” Another participant, EC2_84, adds her perspective on the Holy Spirit, “The Holy Spirit comes like this. It comes as if you feel relief. It comes like that and it is like taking away a burden from you. You feel light as if we take away burdens off your shoulders. You feel that it becomes peace...” For her, Holy Spirit comes to take away burdens and the burdens are changed into peace.

Respondent IC4_160 testifies to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit during worships as, “I feel a joy in me, a peace that makes all burdens and all worries disappear within me.” His presence is a peace that removes all burdens and worries. When asked on how she will introduce

the Holy Spirit to someone whom does not know about the Holy Spirit, she answers, “I will tell them that when the Holy Spirit comes, it first soothes the heart. We usually come to church with worries. But, if our hearts are connected to the Spirit, we will have no more worries.” She will introduce the Holy Spirit as someone whom soothes and relieves our tormented heart. Thus, the Holy Spirit gives peace. We are to note that the peace given by the Holy Spirit accounted by the surveyed lay African believers are mostly inner peace. It is neither the change of the circumstances nor of the situation. However, an inner peace is given to the hearts of those whom experience the influence of the Holy Spirit.

10.2.2 The Urban Cameroonian Context

The numerous and explicit accounts of the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver lead us to speculate that this understanding could be proposed as the popular understanding of the Holy Spirit on the contemporary urban African believers. However, a verification of how compatible this approach is to the urban Cameroonian context is needed in order for this understanding to be truly pertinent. Thus, I would like to recall on section 3.4 whom noted key features to remember from the Cameroonian context.

The contemporary Cameroonian society is superficially undergoing a voluntary drastic stage of transition such as urbanization. However, beneath the transformation that seems to walk along the global trend, the society has key features that are reaping fruits from the forced dramatic changes. As most African nations had experienced, Cameroon had undergone multiple periods of colonization by Germany, France, and Britain. Fearing insecurity, they had turned toward Germany for security and stability of the land, but Germany whom was supposed to be the guardian, triggered war against the inhabitants of Cameroon for personal benefits.³¹⁸ Regardless of the inhabitants’ opinion, the land had been turned over to Britain and France. The arrival of new colonial rulers influenced the lives of the inhabitants in various different ways from official languages, education, social orders, etc. The repeated unwanted drastic changes have created a sense of insecurity among the population. They are paranoid that a certain

³¹⁸ DeLancey, *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence*, 9.

unexpected incident can destroy and capsized their lives at any given time. This insecurity had been aggravated during postcolonial period for President Ahidjo uses fear in order to concentrate the power of the nation unto himself. Furthermore, the presidency of President Biya undergoes economic crisis that results the population not being able to meet their basic needs. The sense of fear and deficiency escalates in the Cameroonian society.³¹⁹ Thus, underneath the title of the Cameroonian society being one of the most rapidly urbanized African country that keeps pace with other nations in development, the inhabitants of the contemporary society demonstrates senses of insecurity, paranoia, fear, and deficiency. These key features of the contemporary urban Cameroonian society mentioned were also noticeable throughout interviews.

Interviewee EC2_54 tells of the sickness he had for years. When asked on the reason he was sick, he answers, “Before I was afraid of everything ... it's something that always traumatized me when I was young. I was too scared, when I wanted to do something. I was afraid that this person would make fun of me. They insulted me, they made fun of me.” The respondent points out that the cause of the disease was fear that was implanted in him since his youth. The first feeling he had while being healed through prayers was that this fear was going away little by little bit. He accounts, “I started to feel the healing gradually. My neck that was stiff, I did not feel it any more. My hands that trembled all the time, I did not feel it any more. The frustration, the fear, I did not feel it anymore. My feet that trembled, the bad thoughts, also left little by little.” The reason he was able to be healed was due to this fear and frustration going away. Although this is a personal experience of a respondent, the Cameroonian context that pointed out fear as one of the key features of the society leads me to speculate that the society’s ambiance had partially influenced this personal experience of having an imputed fear from youth.

Participant EC2_76 testifies of his perception of the African society that illustrates the society’s atmosphere of paranoia,

“We are in Africa. There is a lot of jealousy. Even for nothing, people can use spirits for certain purposes. The person, who comes maybe out of jealousy, will see that if I am doing a certain thing, it is to eliminate the person that she will use another force that is contrary. Being in Africa, the problem in general is what happens is that there are people we do not know. That's why it's dangerous.”

³¹⁹ DeLancey and Benneh, “Cameroon”.

He accounts how in Africa people are jealous and for no reason, they would use traditional spirits to eliminate other persons. Sometimes, people do not even know who is attacking. This description of the society the interviewee tells, depict the sense of paranoia present in the Cameroonian society. They presuppose that anyone could attack for no other reason than jealousy. The reason given to such odd happenings is, “We are in Africa.” Another respondent further adds to this sense of paranoia present in the Cameroonian society. IC4_160 says, “It is often said that family members act badly towards their brothers. They are jealous of the fact that their brother is higher than they are. This bothers them. They usually go to the witch doctors so that the projects of their brothers fail.” In this account, the person attacking and hindering the plans are pointed out to be family members. The society atmosphere is distrustful and suspicious that anyone could attack to harm and that anyone could even be family members. Therefore, the contemporary African people are thirsting security and peace. The Holy Spirit who is to settle the torments and to bring peace would be a relevant and popular Pneumatology for the people in Africa. This is what the surveyed lay believers are accounting. I was afraid, I was paranoid, I was insecure, but the Holy Spirit came to settle my tormented heart and gave me inner peace.

10.2.3 The Validation of the Proposal

The testimonies of the Cameroonian society’s ambiance by the interviewees match to what was introduced on section 3.4 as key features to note from the Cameroonian society. The unwanted dramatic changes the Cameroonian population had to experience in the past centuries had formed the contemporary society to feel insecure, fear, and paranoid that anyone could suddenly attack at any given time. Such sudden accidents had been repeatedly experienced throughout the colonial periods and had built an auto reflexive nerve among the population. This hysteric atmosphere is especially vivid to the inhabitants in the urbanized contexts for those were the actual scenes where all these unwilled dramatic changes occurred. Therefore, the urbanized context of Cameroon thirsts for security, stability, tranquility, rest, and calmness. All these words could be summarized in the word, peace.

The surveyed African believers account that they had experienced the relief of this thirst. Respondent EC2_54, who confessed he was sick from youth due to an unknown continual fear

he resented, accounts as he came to church and started praying, the fear started going away little by little. Then he did not feel any more fear or frustration. He now firmly states, “The spirit of God is the spirit of peace...” Interviewee IC4_160 states that even family members could act badly toward others because of jealousy. Family members even go to witch doctors to make their siblings or family fail in their projects. How hard would a person’s life be when they suspect their family could act badly at any time? However, she states when she worships, she feels the presence of the Holy Spirit and all her burdens and worries disappear.

Thus, the urban Cameroonian context and the voices of the ground raises in one voice that understanding the Holy Spirit, as the Peace Giver is a relevant and a pertinent Pneumatology. The urban Cameroonian context thirsts for peace. In addition, the voices of the ground accounts of the peace they have felt due to the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when the Holy Spirit will be introduced to the urban context, it will be an understanding that will be sufficiently appealing. And such introduction of the Holy Spirit would be sufficiently relevant for significant and plural voices of the surveyed ground. The surveyed lay African believers propose understanding the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver. Then, how valid would this Africanized Understanding of the Holy Spirit be to the Bible and to the Christian tradition?

10.2.3.1 Biblical Validation

The Bible sufficiently validates the understanding of the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver. As part of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit is often referred to the God of peace. “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you” (Phil 4:9). The God that is with the believers is the Holy Spirit. The statement that the God of peace is with the believers is referring to the Holy Spirit. “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes 5:23). Once again, the New Testament literature attributes the function of sanctification to the Holy Spirit. Thus, the God of peace who is to sanctify for the coming of Jesus Christ would be the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is often referred as the God of peace in the Bible.

Not only the Holy Spirit is the God of peace, peace is a resource that Holy Spirit gives to the believers. “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom 14:17). The Bible accounts that when a believer has the Holy Spirit, he will reap spiritual fruit in which peace is numbered among. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness” (Gal 5:22). Peace as the fruit of the Spirit leads the readers to understand how the Holy Spirit brings inner peace for the fruit of the Spirit mentioned such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness are all fruits that are reaped in one’s mind.

The peace given by the Holy Spirit does not restrict to a person’s state of heart but even changes circumstances and situations to peaceful state. “Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord” (Acts 9:31). Acts 9 accounts of the persecution against the Christians among whom Saul was numbered among the persecutors. Saul miraculously converts to Christianity, yet the persecution against the church continually increases and the Jews are now going after the life of the betrayer, Saul. However, the passage suddenly accounts of a dramatic change from persecution to peaceful time for the churches. No particular reasons for this sudden appearance of peaceful state are described except that the Holy Spirit strengthened and encouraged the churches. Thus, the readers get to speculate that this sudden appearance of peaceful time that breaks the continual persecution is due to the works of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has changed the circumstances and has brought peace to the churches while strengthening and encouraging them.

Therefore, the Bible tells us that peace is a nature that is strongly related to the Holy Spirit for the Spirit is also referred to the God of peace. It also testifies how the Holy Spirit brings inner peace, which had also been stated by the surveyed lay African believers. However, the Bible takes it further than what the surveyed respondents account for it claims how the Holy Spirit even changes circumstances to a peaceful state.

10.2.3.2 Christian Tradition Validation

The next curiosity raised is the validity of understanding the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver in the Christian tradition. The early Christianity gives a familiar ground of presenting the Holy Spirit and peace together. The Holy Spirit is connected to the image of dove through the Gospel and the dove is connected with the symbol of peace. To have a better understanding, there is a need to comprehend that the New Testament illustrates the Holy Spirit in the form of dove and that the Old Testament connects dove sent by Noah as one whom brings the message of peace on earth.

The New Testament illustrates the Holy Spirit in the form of dove. All four Gospels accounts the baptism of Jesus where he is baptised by John the Baptist and the Holy Spirit descends in the form of dove.³²⁰ “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him” (Mt 3:16). Due to this illustration, Christianity strongly connected the image of dove with the Holy Spirit.³²¹

The image of dove already conveyed an implicit message to the Jewish people for they already had a fore-allusion of dove in the Old Testament. In Genesis, God seeing the wickedness of the human race decides to wipe out the face of the earth and pours rain for forty days and forty nights. Noah sends dove to search for dry land and to see how far the floodwaters have receded. The dove returns with an olive branch, giving the message to Noah that the flood waters have significantly receded. Thus, the dove sent by Noah brought the message that time of peace has come to the earth.³²² Dove became the universal sign of peace.³²³

³²⁰ Dorothy Willette, “The Enduring Symbolism of Doves”, Biblical Archeology Society, 2018.6.13, <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/ancient-cultures/daily-life-and-practice/the-enduring-symbolism-of-doves/>.

³²¹ Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, éd., « Dove », in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 161.

³²² Willette, « The Enduring Symbolism of Doves ».

³²³ Hans Dieter Betz, ed., “Dove”, in *Religion Past & Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), 176.

Although Jews never explicitly used dove as the symbol of peace, this association gained popularity among the early Christians. The early Christians in Rome used the image of dove and olive branch accompanied by the word “Peace” in funerals.³²⁴ Augustine contributes to the early Christians’ understanding of dove as the symbol of peace. “The only reason why we find it easy to understand that perpetual peace is indicated by the olive branch, which the dove brought with it when it returned to the ark, is that we know both that the smooth touch of olive oil is not easily spoiled by a fluid of another kind, and that the tree itself is an evergreen.”³²⁵ He mentions the dove as one whom had brought the message of peace.

The illustrations of the Bible link the Holy Spirit and Peace to dove. The New Testament portrays the Holy Spirit in the form of dove. The Old Testament depicts dove as the messenger of peace. Thus, these illustrations of the Holy Spirit, dove, and peace create an atmosphere in the Christian tradition to have a familiar approach of comprehending the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver.

10.3 The Holy Spirit as the Transformer

The third proposal for the popular Africanized Pneumatology is the Holy Spirit as the Transformer. While analyzing the semi-directed interviews, 4 respondents out of 26 clearly expressed their recognition of the Holy Spirit being the transformer of believers’ lives. The respondents whom testified in such a way found on three churches of the four churches surveyed in total. Thus, the approach of understanding the Holy Spirit as the transformer would be a relevant and popular Pneumatology for the African believers.

10.3.1 The Voices Raised from the Ground

Respondent EC1_18 answers to the question on her personal experience of the Holy Spirit as, “I had an experience of the Holy Spirit in my life when I gave my life to the Lord, the

³²⁴ “Doves as Symbols”, Wikipedia, 2019.6.23, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doves_as_symbols#References.

³²⁵ Saint Augustine of Hippo, *On Christian Doctrine* (Michigan: Grand Rapids, 2000), 29.

Holy Spirit manifested in me and I felt his presence in my life. Feeling his presence, he allowed me to give up everything, the things I did before I did not do it anymore because the Holy Spirit transformed me.” The interviewee states that the Holy Spirit has transformed her. She gave up everything including things she used to do before she experienced the Holy Spirit. By things she used to do before, it seems to imply actions and practices that are of sinful nature.

Interviewee IC2_102 replies to the question on what she thinks of the Holy Spirit. “The Holy Spirit is something that cannot be explained. It's a peace that you manage to welcome. It is a transformation of life.” The participant while mentioning the peace that come from the Holy Spirit claims that it is a transformation of life. A transformation that is so impactful that it is referred to as the transformation of life.

Participant IC3_116 testifies of the transformation she had experienced.

“After my conversion, my life was completely transformed to the level where I can not really explain it. I no longer see the spirits of the world but rather visions. God shows me in advance things that must happen. When He shows me, even though I sometimes take it lightly, these things always happen. The Spirit of God manifests in me when I praise God. I feel a heat that fills me as if I became another person. When praising, I sometimes do not know the songs, but I start singing very well as if I mastered it. It is only the Spirit of God that can do such things.”

The interviewee accounts of different transformations, such as, no longer seeing the traditional spirits and seeing visions of things to come. She feels warmth when praising God and it feels as if she became another person. The Spirit of God also helps her when praising God for sometimes she does not know the songs, but the Spirit enhances her worship as if she new the songs. All these are recognized to be the work of the Holy Spirit. The account of transformation of no longer seeing the traditional spirits, the testimony of her feeling as if she had become another person depict how she recognizes the Holy Spirit to be the one making all these transformations in her life.

The interviewee IC4_145 tells of when he realizes the Holy Spirit to be present at church. “Well, to visualize when the Holy Spirit is working at church, you just need to see the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. There are days when the Spirit of God fills the room and lives are transformed. Someone can stand up and give a testimony of what the Lord has done in his life.” A way the participant recognize the Holy Spirit is the transformed lives of the believers.

People stand up to account of the changes they had undergone because of the work of the Holy Spirit.

10.3.2 The Urban Cameroonian Context

The surveyed lay African believers raise their voices claiming the Holy Spirit to be understood as the transformer. Then how is such comprehension compatible and pertinent to the urban Cameroonian context? When recalling Marie Mengue's study on poverty from the socio-economic perspective, one gets to realize the introduction of the Pneumatology as the Transformer could sufficiently be appealing. Surprisingly, the Cameroonian society partially seems to illustrate its fertile ground ready to develop such comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Mengue whom has undergone her study on 276 people asks the dwellers in the city of Yaoundé on personal thoughts on the cause of poverty.

The given answers from the ground are the government, European colonial forces, lack of work, and witchcraft. We here get surprised on how urban dwellers are blaming the witchcraft as one of the reasons to cause poverty. A participant claims, "The situation of poverty that I am living in today is a curse of the witches from my village. I cannot do anything, it is like they have tied me with a string and are pulling it." The perception that witchcraft is causing poverty is not only a personal view point but one shared among the society. A Cameroonian state attorney appealed before the court as, "We are all Africans. We should not pretend that witchcraft does not exist. It is very much alive here in the East Province. We cannot allow all these primitive villagers to threaten government agents who are transferred to work here in the East. It is witchcraft that is drawing back development in this province."³²⁶ Witchcraft that is closely intertwined with the African tradition is nowadays understood as hindrances and drawbacks in the Cameroonian society. Such perspective of witchcraft even further spreads throughout the postcolonial African societies.³²⁷

³²⁶ Fisiy, *Palm Tree Justice in the Bertoua Court of Appeal: The Witchcraft Cases*.

³²⁷ Moore and Sanders, *Magical Interpretations, Material Realities: Modernity, Witchcraft, and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*, 235.

However, Mengue does not end her study here but then pursues on the attitudes urban dwellers decides to take toward the poverty faced. Although there are varied ways of responding to poverty, one of the groups state they had resolved to rely on religion. By religion, they mostly refer to Christianity for term such as churches are often mentioned. Mengue's study is revealing how the urban context of Cameroon is blaming witchcraft to have caused poverty and is turning toward Christianity for a socio-economic transformation. Takyi and other scholars also support the observation made by Mengue among her respondents, for they state that in many postcolonial African nations, poverty have influenced the rise of African religiosity. By African religiosity, Christianity is to be highlighted.³²⁸ Therefore, it could be comprehended that the society of Cameroon is hoping and perceiving Christianity as the mean of transformation. In such context, the introduction of the Holy Spirit as being the transformer will be of much pertinence.

10.3.3 The Validation of the Proposal

The voices of the ground are proposing the comprehension of the Holy Spirit as the transformer. The introduction of such understanding is expected to be of much pertinence and relevance to the Cameroonian society for Mengue's study illustrates how some of her participants are expecting Christianity to be source of socio-economic transformation. Other scholars whom have surveyed the postcolonial African society also observed the expectation people have on Christianity as a mean of transformation. Thus, the introduction of the Holy Spirit as the transformer would be much appealing in a society that hopes for change and transformation from the deficient situation. Then, how valid would such understanding of the Holy Spirit be when verified to the Bible and the Christian tradition?

³²⁸ Zuckerman et Shook, *The Oxford Handbook of Secularism*, 204.

10.3.3.1 Biblical Validation

The New Testament portrays the Holy Spirit as the one transforming one's life. Clear examples could be seen among the disciples of Jesus, especially Peter. Peter was one with ardent zeal for Jesus. Before Jesus had been arrested, he assures Jesus how he would never leave him nor betray him. Yet, when the guards of the High Priest arrested Jesus and Peter secretly followed him, he is faced with people whom recognize him to be among Jesus' followers. However, Peter denies Jesus three times before them. Through this account, the readers get to realize how although Peter was zealous toward Jesus and made confessions of faith, he is frail when his faith is confronted. Those with delicate faith is not only limited to Peter, for other disciples shiver with fear upon death of Jesus. "On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!'" (Jn 20:19). It was not only Peter whom was caught up with fear, but all of Jesus' disciples were captivated with great fear that they are hiding with doors locked.

However, such fear is suddenly vanished and a dramatic change occurs in Peter and in the disciples after they receive the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. They fear no more and they go out to the streets to proclaim boldly. "Then Peter stood up with Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say'" (Acts 2:14). The descent of the Holy Spirit has totally changed the attitudes of the disciples. Peter who feared random people asking if he had any connections with Jesus is now solid. In Acts 5, Peter and the apostles stand firmly before the Sanhedrin and the high priest proclaiming Jesus is the Savior whom forgives sins. They adamantly testify before the Jewish leaders whom they once feared locking the doors, "We are the witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him" (Acts 6:28).

Other passages of the Bible support the understanding that the Holy Spirit transforms people. "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Ti 3:5). Titus links salvation with the work of the Holy Spirit by attributing the role of washing and renewal. The Holy Spirit washes and renews a human being. "And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory,

which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:18). 2 Corinthians state that people are being transformed into the image of the Lord by the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Holy Spirit is the transformer. He transforms the believers into the image the Lord’s glory. Thus, the Bible validates the proposed Pneumatology by the lay African believers that is the Holy Spirit as the transformer.

10.3.3.2 Christian Tradition Validation

The comprehension of the Holy Spirit as the Transformer is also supported by the Christian tradition. The representatives are the Orthodox Church and John Wesley. The Orthodox Church emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit as the Transformer in their religious rituals. John Wesley believes that the Holy Spirit totally changes a human being to the point of being holy before God.

The Orthodox Church stresses the role of the Holy Spirit as the transformer and the sanctifier. In the Orthodox ritual of consecration and ordination, they make an epiclesis prayer that is a prayer calling the presence of the Holy Spirit for he will be transforming and sanctifying those consecrated and ordained. The Orthodox Church’s highlights on the Holy Spirit’s role of transformation could also be observed in Eucharistic. They believe that the substance of the Eucharist elements, bread and wine, will be transformed into the flesh and the blood of Jesus Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit.³²⁹ Therefore, the recognition of the Holy Spirit as being the Transformer would be an understanding that has firm supports from the Orthodox Church.

John Wesley also supports comprehending the Holy Spirit as the Transformer. He states, “Yea, we do believe, that he will in this world so cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that we shall perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name.”³³⁰ Wesley believes that the Holy Spirit will cleanse all the evil thoughts that are aroused

³²⁹ Betz, “Spirit/HolySpirit”, 212.

³³⁰ John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (Michigan: Grand Rapids, 2004), 57.

from the hearts, to the point that the believer will be able to love God with all their hearts. John Wesley firmly believes the Holy Spirit to instantly and completely transform a human being. The Holy Spirit causes holiness, rectifies our wills, and renews our sinful nature.³³¹

10.4 Conclusion on the Proposal

The voices of the theologians, whom were the only ones to raise their voices on the academic field, were revealed to be without ground. It was not a relevant comprehension to the contemporary lay African believers. Then what could be proposed as an Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit that would be relevant to the inhabitants and pertinent to the contemporary urban African context? This thesis has raised the unheard voices of the ground in order to have relevant and pertinent answers to this question. The surveyed lay African believers proposes the Holy Spirit as the Familial Bond, the Peace Giver, and the Transformer.

The first proposal is understanding the Holy Spirit as the Familial Bond. The word frequency analysis of the semi-directed interviews brought light to the surveyed believers' worldview. Although the theme of the interviews were the Holy Spirit and the traditional spirits, the repeated use of the word family that was not directly relevant to the main theme of the interview showed how much importance the surveyed believers had put on the notion of family. The notion of family surveyed African believers had was mostly defined by the African tradition. The key particularity of the Africanized perception of family is the enlarged that even englobes the dead as part of the family. However, this traditional understanding of family is losing ground and disvalued on the contemporary urban dwellers. Thus, there is a need to introduce a reinterpreted definition of family to the dwellers in urbanity. It is here that the Holy Spirit is introduced as the familial bond with God. He makes us be part of the Godly family. Such comprehension of the Holy Spirit has sufficient ground on the Bible for it states that believers are adopted as God's children. The Christian tradition also backs such stance for Augustine of Hippo shows an analogous comprehension of the Holy Spirit. He understands the Holy Spirit as the mutual bond between God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. The lay African believers

³³¹ Betz, "Spirit/HolySpirit", 213.

further enlarges this mutual bond to extend this bond of love to God's children on earth. The lay African believers reinterpret and enlarges the Augustinian Pneumatology.

The second proposal is comprehending the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver. 6 out of 26 respondents of the qualitative survey had explicitly claimed on how they link the Holy Spirit with peace. Introducing the Holy Spirit as Peace Giver is pertinent to the context for the inhabitants of Cameroon had undergone unwanted drastic changes throughout its history. Cameroonians are insecure, paranoid, and are captivated with fear. Introducing the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver to a society, that thirst for stability and peace would be sufficiently appealing. The bible validates such approach by accounting on how the Holy Spirit brings inner peace and outer peace. The Christian tradition also partially supports the lay African believers' proposal although this support is not explicit. The New Testament's illustration of the Holy Spirit in the form of dove, the Old Testament's allusion of dove that is correlated with the message of peace, are impactful images that gathers the Holy Spirit, dove, and peace in a stage. The repeated exhibitions of these themes throughout the Christian tradition have created a familiar atmosphere that implicitly linked the Holy Spirit to peace.

The third proposal is understanding the Holy Spirit as the Transformer. 4 out of 26 respondents have stated on how they comprehend the Holy Spirit to transform the believers' lives. The introduction of the Holy Spirit as the transformer would be appealing to the contemporary African society, for they partially blame the African tradition and witchcraft as hindrance and drawbacks to development. An example of this is Mengue's study. The investigation revealed how the respondents blamed witchcraft as one of the causes of poverty. One of the way respondents have resolved to react to poverty was to adhere to Christianity. The African society rather has a tendency to hope and expect Christianity to bring changes and transformation to the current deficit situations. The understanding of the Holy Spirit as the transformer is sufficiently grounded on the Bible for the Bible accounts of how Jesus' disciples had been totally transformed upon the descent of the Holy Spirit. The Christian tradition also backs such understanding for the Orthodox Church puts a strong emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit as the Transformer. Wesley also had a strong belief that the Holy Spirit would transform sinful human nature into holiness.

The proposal of the popular Africanized Pneumatology in an urban African context is understanding the Holy Spirit as the Familial Bond, the Peace Giver, and the Transformer. The proposal given could be differentiated with the proposals made by the fore running theologians for these proposals ground its voices from the ground in order to be relevant, they are pertinent to the contemporary urban context, and have been validated through the Bible and the Christian tradition. Further contributions on developing and maturing the proposed popular Africanized Pneumatology by the succeeding theologians would bloom African Pneumatology that once used to be an empty stage.

Conclusion

Recall of the Problematic

Here we are at the end of the intellectual journey of inquiry. This trip had departed from the curiosity of how lay African believers living in an urban context would synthesize the encounter of the African traditional spiritual world and that of the Christian spiritual world. Formulating this curiosity into a phrase would be, “Who is the Holy Spirit to an African believer?” The journey to relieve this intellectual curiosity has brought us to encounter theologians whom have also pondered on this subject. The works of the African theologians, Matthew Michael and Elochukwu Uzukwu, have especially grabbed my attention for they were comparatively recent and performed by local theologians. They wrote their works in similar period and observed similar regions. However, I was surprised to find out how the Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit presented on the academic field by the African theologians was so discrepant.

Uzukwu states, “A Generalized Holy Spirit who bestows all gifts of healing and divining becomes a creative Pneumatological contribution from the West African Christianity to the great Christian tradition. The leading contribution of African Independent Churches in this creative Pneumatology should be recognized.”³³² Uzukwu acclaiming of the Independent Churches’ effort to incorporate the African spiritual world into the sphere of the African Christian spirituality, supports the continuity of the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit.³³³

On the other side, Michael perceives such way of understanding the Holy Spirit as problematic. “The traditional concept of the good spirit can be readily associated with the Christian Holy Spirit who is also thought to give gifts, spiritual power, and blessings. Most of the African Independent Church often has a problematic concept of Pneumatology because of

³³² Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 179.

³³³ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 46.

this common association.”³³⁴ Michael views the African traditional spirit to be in discontinuity with the Holy Spirit and worries that the preconception of these traditional spirits could distort the biblical understanding of the Holy Spirit.³³⁵

The dissonance on the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit introduced by the African theologians were surprising enough, but I was further astonished to realize how the claims by the African theologians were without explicit survey of the ground. They were rather based on personal interpretations and theological orientations. Therefore, I started questioning on how the lay African believers on the ground, whom would have already synthesized the encounter of the African spiritual world and that of the Christian spiritual world, have on their own theologized their comprehension of the Holy Spirit. As Kwesi Dickson states, “Every Christian theologizes.”³³⁶ Thus, I have decided to bring light to the theological process of the ground.

Findings by Chapter

The introduction of the thesis had presented of the questions and objectives that each chapter were to focus on. Part I of the thesis, formed of the first two chapters, presented the literature review on the African understanding of the Triune God. Chapter 1 revealed insights African theologians had on how they comprehended God and Jesus in the African context. Chapter 2 introduced the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit by the theologians. It illustrated the dissonance found on the Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Part II of the thesis, constituted of the following two chapters, gather overall information from the participants and the surveyed ground. Chapter 3 dealt with understanding the Cameroonians whom were to be the participants of the survey. Chapter 4 brought its attention to perceive the urban contemporary context of the surveyed ground. Part III of the thesis, composed of chapter 5 to 7, pondered on the survey that was to be done on the ground. Chapter 5 presented the methods of the survey that were to be used to approach the respondents in order to learn of their

³³⁴ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

³³⁵ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 191.

³³⁶ Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 13.

understanding of the Holy Spirit. Chapter 6 tried to portray the actual popular Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit by the lay believers. Chapter 7 went beyond chapter 6 and expounded why the lay African believers had resolved to understand the Holy Spirit as illustrated in chapter 6. If chapter 6 were the results, chapter 7 could be understood as the explanations of the results. Part IV of the thesis, formed by chapter 8 to 10, proceeded into a stage of developing the results acquired from part III and further articulating it to make the voices of the ground proper to the academic stage. Chapter 8 opened up a stage of dialogue between the newly raised voices of the lay African believers and the voices of the African theologians. Chapter 9 attempted to introduce a systemized categorization that would be able to distinguish and classify the varied voices raised from the ground on their comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Chapter 10 summed all the findings and proposed popular Africanized Pneumatology that is relevant and pertinent to the urban contemporary African believers. Each chapter mentioned above, has brought findings to ripen and flourish the results of the thesis. Therefore, this section of the thesis will recall once again the findings each chapter has contributed to the thesis.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 summed the literature review on the African understanding of God and Jesus. In order to proceed into an Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit, the literature review on God and Jesus were indispensably worth to be noted. Yet it deviated from our objective to cover with much attention the vast studies done on God and Jesus by the African theologians, therefore this section focused on portraying the significant work on the Africanized understanding of God and briefly illustrating the varied ground where theologians have Africanized Jesus. Not many issues were raised on the African understanding of Christology, except the remark that the African theologians have done pioneering works to familiarize Jesus in varied African context. However, the issue of continuity and discontinuity were raised when jumping into the comprehension of God the Father and this same issue extended to the Africanized Pneumatology.

Missionaries presumed the African spiritual world to have had no understanding of God and be against the Christian understanding of the spiritual world. However, pioneering African theologians such as John Mbiti protested against such presumption and claimed the African traditions' understanding of the Supreme Being to be in continuity with the Christian God.³³⁷ Although the theme of continuity and discontinuity became a subject of debate, those supporting the continuity seemed to gain more weight. African theologians whom wanted to preserve the African tradition to the African believers explicitly supported such stance. However, it was also partially supported by theologians and missionaries whom claimed the discontinuity of the two religions, but had the purpose to selectively bridge the essence of God and the Supreme Being due to the purpose to evangelize.

Chapter 2

The debate of continuity and discontinuity extended to the African understanding of the Holy Spirit. Due to the similarity of the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit, the debate on how to understand these two spiritual beings came into strong dissonance. Some theologians such as Gerhardus Oosthuizen and Matthew Michael claimed these two spiritual beings to be different entities and to be in discontinuity with one another. Theologians such as Allan Anderson and Elochukwu Uzukwu took a different stance and supported the two spiritual beings to be in continuity. It was surprising to realize that the argument that revolved around the Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit by the African theologians, Michael and Uzukwu, were without any explicit studies of the ground but based on personal interpretations and theological orientations. This unending controversy found on the academic field had led my curiosity to turn towards the contemporary lay African believers whom would have theologized on their own to live their life as an African Christian. The findings of the literature review on the continual dispute of the Africanized Pneumatology have led my attention toward the voices of the ground that were unheard on the academic field.

³³⁷ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 29.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 contemplated on the Cameroonian context and its people by having a brief glance of the country and analyzing the nation's and the church's history. The studies on Cameroon have brought us to note three key features of the Cameroonian people and its context. First is the unwanted transformation the Cameroonian society had experienced through the colonial history. The unwilling drastic changes experienced throughout the nation's history by being ruled by three different colonials have brought a sense of paranoia that an unsolicited incident can destroy their life at any given time. Thus, Cameroonian people thirst for security. Second is the ongoing transformation throughout the postcolonial period that further escalated the sense of insecurity. The first President of Cameroon, President Ahidjo, used fear as a mean to concentrate power unto himself. In Paul Biya's presidency, whom is the second and the current President of Cameroon, the nation has undergone a period of economic crisis that made the citizens face the reality of a deficient life.³³⁸ The ambiance of fear and deficiency that Cameroonians encountered throughout the postcolonial regime further accumulated to the sense of insecurity. Third is the transformation that affected the churches in Cameroon. The church history also encountered different stages of transitions by having mother churches changed constantly along with the colonial regime. The ambiance of the insecurity felt by the Cameroonians were not only restricted to the society but also to their spiritual life at church. Therefore, the key features from colonial, postcolonial, and church's history marks the Cameroonians' thirst for security and stability.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 brought its attention to the urban contemporary context of the surveyed participants. Although chapter 3 also had brought light to the Cameroonian context, it enlightened us more on whom the Cameroonians had become to be. However, chapter 4 had been more concerned on the context of the urban contemporary African religiosity. The studies

³³⁸ DeLancey et Benneh, « Cameroon ».

on the context focused on the transformation of the society and religiosity. Thus, the two major components of this chapter was the Africanization of Christianity and the urbanization.

The remark to note from the Africanization of Christianity is on the reasons why African believers had decided to start their own churches. The reasons were the ignorance against the African tradition, the discrimination against the African believers, the historic churches' slow reaction to the transforming African society, and the desire to interpret the Bible from an African perspective. From the studies on the Africanization of Christianity, we get to highlight the African believers' desire to familiarize and adapt Christianity in an African way.

The studies on the urbanization of Africa have brought many insights, but there is a need to bring a special note to the effects it has brought into the African society. The effects of urbanization in the African society are poverty, secularization, and familial relationship. The first effect of urbanization in Africa is poverty. The slow economic growth rate of the African cities was not able to support the rapid growth of the urban population. Therefore, unlike the standard understanding of urbanization that is supposed to be closely connected with the growth of the economy, urbanization in Africa has brought poverty.³³⁹ The second effect of urbanization in Africa is secularization. Secularization in African society seems to bring an effect out of the norm for unlike other Western countries, secularization has increased religiosity in Africa.³⁴⁰ A study done by Mengue on citizens in Yaoundé studies the causes of poverty in the city and the stances people have taken to overcome this problem. Some respondents claimed to blame witchcraft to be one of the causes of poverty, whereas Christianity was regarded as one of the solution to face the poverty.³⁴¹ The cause of poverty is approached from a religious perspective and the solution of the problem is also approached from a religious perspective. The third effect of urbanization in Africa is familial relationship. A study performed by Gerhard and

³³⁹ Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Shimeles, and Yameogo, *Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, 137.

³⁴⁰ Zuckerman et Shook, *The Oxford Handbook of Secularism*, 203.

³⁴¹ Abéga, *Citadins et ruraux en Afrique subsaharienne*, 423-426.

Hermann illustrated how urban dwellers in Cameroon want to alienate or limit family visits.³⁴² Such propensity to alienate familial exchange also had an impact on their religiosity, for most of the traditional rituals and practices are done in the villages. Thus, the impact of modern and secularized cultures is influencing urban dwellers to disvalue their tradition and their familial relationship.³⁴³

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 contemplated the preparation for the studies that were to be done on the ground in order to hear the unheard voices of the lay African believers. The studies were formulated over two main objectives. First was to visualize the popular and the actual Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit among African believers in cold figures. The literature review gave an impression as if the African Independent Churches overall understood the traditional spirits to be in continuity and to be subsumed as the Generalized Holy Spirit.³⁴⁴ Therefore, the survey wanted to actually reach out to the believers of the Independent Churches, to verify if this actually was their popular perception of the Holy Spirit. Second was to comprehend why the African believers had resolved to understand the Holy Spirit in a certain African way. No matter what the outcome of the cold figures were, there was a longing to comprehend truly why they have theologized to perceive the Holy Spirit in a certain manner. The best methodological tool to achieve these two objectives was the Sequential Mixed Explicative Method. This method first tried to picture the actuality of the phenomenon through the quantitative study, then proceeded to a qualitative study that gave explicative information about the quantitative results.³⁴⁵

³⁴² Mey et Spirik, *La famille Africaine en milieu urbain: Enquête socio-économique réalisée à Yaoundé (Cameroun)*.

³⁴³ Franqueville, *Une Afrique entre le village et la ville: Les migrations dans le sud du Cameroun*, 205.

³⁴⁴ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 179.

³⁴⁵ Corbière et Larivière, *Méthodes qualitatives, quantitatives et mixtes: dans la recherche en sciences humaines, sociales et de la santé*, 631.

Therefore, I have jumped into the field and processed the quantitative survey by analyzing four churches, two Evangelical Churches and two Independent Churches. Although I had aimed for 200 respondents that is 50 respondents per church, due to different restrictions as not having enough volunteer or the questionnaires not being properly filled, data from 168 respondents were considered valid. The qualitative study tried to listen carefully the varied comprehensions of the Holy Spirit revealed through the quantitative results. It selected 26 participants from those whom have previously foregone the quantitative study and inquired on why they comprehend the Holy Spirit in a certain way.

The epistemological posture I have taken for this study was that of the Grounded Theory and the Theory of Stranger. The pioneering African theologians had written their works on the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit but the weakness they had was that we were not able to hear what the actual voices of the ground had to say. I wanted to make a difference in my study on not articulating another personal interpretation of the phenomenon based on my personal theological orientation, but to bring light to the unheard voices of the lay African believers. A weakness I as a non-African theologian could have was the distanced stance I had from the African traditions and practices. However, this at the same time became an advantage for African theologians such as Biniamina criticized how African theologians needed to be detached from their obsession of the African culture and traditional religion in order to create an innovative African theology.³⁴⁶ My interest toward the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit and my distanced stance from the personal empirical experience of the African tradition became factors that enhanced to have a comparatively objective interpretation of the surveyed data.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 enlightened the actuality of the African believers in cold figures on how they understood the Holy Spirit. The investigation was proceeded in four churches, where two were

³⁴⁶ Biniamina, *L'incarnation de Jésus-Christ et les traditions abrahamiques en JN 8: Un christianisme africain à la façon de l'ancien testament*, 119.

Evangelical Churches and the other two were Independent Churches. These two denominations were chosen for the writings of the African theologians portrayed these two denominations as having a contrasting comprehension of the Holy Spirit. In total of 168 respondents were questioned on how they understood the traditional spirits and how they perceived the Holy Spirit.

The first section of the quantitative study analyzed on how the respondents perceived the traditional spirits. The literature review from the works of the African theologians led us to speculate that congregation members from the Independent Churches were more favorable towards the traditional spirits and that the church members of the Evangelical Churches were more hostile toward the traditional spirits. However, the result is to be that the theological orientations of the churches in Cameroon did not mark any distinctive differentiations on how the congregation comprehended the spiritual beings. What Uzukwu stated of the African Independent Churches' understanding of the Holy Spirit and of the traditional spirits did not seem to be the case among the lay African believers in Cameroon. Regardless of their theological backgrounds, all four churches' members shared a low perception on the traditional spirits. The majority of 61.1% claimed they had never depended on the traditional spirits. However, the majority 62.5% approved of its existence and 65.4% recognized that the traditional spirits has had an influence in their lives. Although the traditional spirits are not being part of their faith and dependence for the majority disproves, African believers still acknowledge that these spirits are existent and that they influence their lives regardless of their personal intentions.

The second section of the quantitative investigation brought its attention to the lay believers' comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Through the quantitative analysis of the lay believers' perception on the Holy Spirit, the study was able to disprove the African theologians' illustration of the Independent Churches' understanding on the Holy Spirit. Uzukwu stated one of the greatest contributions of the African Independent Church to be its creative Pneumatology that incorporated a Generalized Holy Spirit that subsumed the characteristics of the traditional spirits under the one Holy Spirit.³⁴⁷ Michael, an evangelical theologian, reproached African Independent Church's comprehension of the Holy Spirit as being problematic for it associated

³⁴⁷ Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness: Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, 224.

traditional spirits to the Holy Spirit. He urged African churches to find ways to overcome this problematic understanding of the Holy Spirit.³⁴⁸ However, the analysis of the quantitative results on the Holy Spirit made us confirm that the different theological orientations did not bring any distinctive variations on the church members' understanding of the Holy Spirit. At least for the believers surveyed in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

An interesting discovery that the study enlightened on the African believers' understanding of the Holy Spirit was that they had higher dependence on the Holy Spirit than they actually acknowledged of its existence. In exception to one Evangelical Church surveyed, the remaining three churches congregation demonstrated such tendency. How would it be possible for someone to depend more on a spiritual being than he acknowledge of its existence? My personal interpretation of these phenomenon observed in three churches was that the African spiritual worldview that fore existed before the conversion of Christianity have created a spiritual ambiance of dependence towards spiritual beings. While Africans believers have started attending churches, not all of them have got to truly experience and acknowledge the existence of the Holy Spirit, yet this spiritual ambiance of dependence preformed from the African tradition toward spiritual beings remained. Another interesting remark was the believers' dependence that was higher than the actual influence they were experiencing. Such tendency was observed in three churches. The issue found on these three churches were regarded as a factor that could bring negative effect into the churches. For since the expectation believers had toward the Holy Spirit was not met, this could lead to a shift of dependence towards other spiritual entities whom could fulfill similar functions in order to fill their needs.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 tried to give meanings to the cold figures illustrated on chapter 6. It had foregone to a semi-directed interview with 26 respondents whom had already participated in the quantitative study. Participants with various stances on the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit were selected in order to have a solid picture of how African believers synthesized these two

³⁴⁸ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 198.

spiritual beings. This section of the study proceeded into inquiring on the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit.

The qualitative analysis of the lay African believers' understanding of the traditional spirits is that they are diverse. This diversity is not referring to the variety between churches, but the difference among the church members of the same congregation. Although respondents were attending the same church and nourished by the same church leader, the way each member comprehended the existence, dependence, and the influence of the traditional spirits were varied. Most of the African believers approved the existence of the traditional spirits, yet significant numbers stood disapproving its existence and others confessing its existence to be confusing. Among the believers that approved the traditional spirits to be existent, which was the stance of the majority of believers, the personal attitude toward this existent traditional spirits varied from being hostile, neutral, and favorable. The majority of the surveyed participants claimed it was not acceptable to depend on the traditional spirits, yet a significant number stated they were confused on how to deal with the reliance of the traditional spirits. Others confessed there were Christians whom actually depended on the traditional spirits. The reasons interviewees have given on why some Christians depend on the traditional spirits were due to their effectiveness. They were considered as part of the family, due to familial influence and pressure, the lack of education from church, and the lack of faith toward the Holy Spirit. The perception on the influence of the traditional spirits also differed for some claimed the traditional spirits to influence the believers, yet others stated that the traditional spirits were not able to influence believers. The reasons interviewees have given on why some Christians were being influenced by the traditional spirits were due to personal dependence, weak state of faith, lack of education, and due to attacks from others.

The qualitative analysis of the lay African believers' comprehension of the Holy Spirit has brought numerous insights on the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit. It first gave the answers to the observation made on the quantitative study that was on the believers' high dependence on the Holy Spirit, which exceeded their recognition of its existence and acknowledgement of its influence. It was a very odd discovery to find out that the African believers relied on a spiritual being more than they approved of its existence. I had hypothesized to interpret such phenomenon to be possible if it were a dependence that had been transfused

from the fore adhering African spiritual world. This hypothesis had come to be proven true for the qualitative interview revealed how the expectations African believers had toward the Holy Spirit were very similar to that they used to anticipate from the traditional spirits. They attributed Holy Spirit the roles of giving prosperity and good life, healing, guiding, providing strength, and the mean of communication with God. The roles they used to expect toward the traditional spirits had been transfused to the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the odd phenomenon of the dependence on the Holy Spirit being higher than the African believers' acknowledgement of its existence could be interpreted as the residues on the reliance of the traditional spirits that remained in the minds of the African believers. Another curiosity raised was the dependence on the Holy Spirit that was higher than the actual influence African believers recognized. Three surveyed congregations depicted through the quantitative that the believers in Cameroon had an unmet dependence due to the actual influence of the Holy Spirit not meeting the anticipated need. This unfilled dependence resulted in some Christians doubting God and others returning to the reliance on the traditional spirits.

The quantitative result that captured the African believers' high dependence of the Holy Spirit, which went beyond their recognition of existence and influence, led us to trace the persisting influence of the traditional spirits amongst some Cameroonian Christians. These remaining residues of the traditional spirits on the African comprehension of the Holy Spirit gave impressions as if the spiritual being of the traditional spirits were an indispensable factor to the African religiosity. However, the qualitative analysis further revealed how the lay African believers drew a clear distinction between these two spiritual entities. They claimed to comprehend the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit as distinctive spiritual beings. They confessed of the turning point that led them to deter from the reliance of the traditional spirits. They diagnosed how the identity and the nature of the Holy Spirit were clearly different with the traditional spirits. Most believers understood the Holy Spirit to be good, whereas the traditional spirits were perceived as evil. Although there were a very small minority of the surveyed participants, whom comprehended the traditional spirits to be partially good, they still made a clear distinction by claiming only the Holy Spirit was eternal and that it could give salvation.

Therefore, the qualitative analysis on the Holy Spirit led us to conclude on how the lay African Christians theologized the collision of the two spiritual word, the African tradition and Christianity. They have first theologized to transfuse their dependence of the traditional spirits to the Holy Spirit. Evidence of this transfusion is the high dependence on the Holy Spirit that surpasses the believers' recognition of its existence. However, this transfused dependence from the African spiritual world did not mean that they had decided to incorporate the essence of the traditional spirits into their understanding of the Holy Spirit, for they have theologized to draw a clear boundary between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. When the lay African believers theologized on how they understood the identity and the attribute of the Holy Spirit, a clear distinction was made. The surveyed lay African believers firmly stated the identity of the Holy Spirit to be God and the Spirit of God. They strongly affirmed that the nature of the Holy Spirit was being eternal and to give salvation. Although the roles attributed could seem partially similar, the identity and the nature of these spiritual entities were definitely considered different.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 opened up a stage that introduced the newly raised voices of the ground to join a dialogue with the voices of the African theologians. The dialogue between the voices of the surveyed lays African believers and the theologians have revealed three original contributions of the newly raised voices of the ground. It revealed the misrepresentation of the African Independent Churches' Pneumatology, it revealed the misunderstanding of the spiritual need felt by the African believers, and it revealed the outmoded paradigm of the Africanized Pneumatology.

First of all, it revealed the misrepresentation of the African Independent Churches' Pneumatology. Theologians whom monopolized the academic field to raise their voices based on their personal interpretation and theological orientations portrayed the particularity of the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit to embrace the traditional spirits under the "Generalized Holy Spirit". The accounts of the theologians whom introduced this exotic Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit gave an impression that such comprehension of the Holy Spirit was a popular Pneumatology among the African believers, especially the African

Independent Churches. This exotic and unique introduction of the Africanized Pneumatology became the ground of dissonance among theologians, for some accepted and supported the continuity, others refuted supporting the discontinuity. However, the surveyed lay African believers have raised their voices to reveal the African Independent Churches' Pneumatology portrayed by the African theologians were misrepresentations.

Secondly, it revealed the misunderstanding of the spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers. Theologians observed among the African Christians a sense of unfilled spiritual hunger and have diagnosed it to be caused by the eradication of the African spiritual world by the historic churches which considered such world to be non-existent. The theologians praised the African Independent Churches claiming the incorporation of the African spiritual world into their comprehension of the Holy Spirit would fill the spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers. This spiritual vacuum was also observed on through the survey, for the unmet dependence that exceeded the actual influence of the Holy Spirit would have created a sense of spiritual hunger among the African believers. However, the surveyed members of the African Independent Churches demonstrated that the spiritual need persisted among believers. Thus, the theologians' diagnose given on the spiritual vacuum were incorrect.

Thirdly, it revealed the outmoded paradigm on which the African theologians have developed their Pneumatology. The works done by the theologians on the African comprehension of the Holy Spirit were mostly developed on a dichotomized scale of the African tradition and the Westernized Christian tradition. This bipolarized paradigm had lead to the ongoing debate of continuity or discontinuity between the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit. However, the voices of the ground revealed how developing a contemporary understanding of the Holy Spirit on a bipolarized scale is a crucial error for the process of transformation contemporary African societies are undergoing are not only grounded on these dichotomized factors. Other factors contemporary context would need to take seriously into account would be factors such as urbanization and secularization. Thus, there is a need to deconstruct the outmoded bipolarized paradigm on which the theologians have formerly developed their understanding of the Africanized Pneumatology and to consider a reconstruction of a new systematization that would be able to identify and classify the newly raised contemporary voices understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 had put efforts to develop a new system of categorization, that could overcome the limit of the previous bipolarized paradigm of understanding the Holy Spirit, in order to englobe the contemporary voices' comprehension of the Holy Spirit. For the context itself is always susceptible to more changes, this systematization shifted its attention to the senses of the human beings, on how the human beings' senses reacted and perceived contextual changes. It considered the senses of the believers in order to systemize a person's empirical perception of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the believers' thoughts on the existence, the believers' emotions on the dependence, and the believers' experience of the influence would all be factors that formulate a person's understanding of the Holy Spirit. Due to the factors this systematization was based on, this systematization was named EDI, Existence-Dependence-Influence based Systematization. The three component factors of the systematization, existence-dependence-influence, were evaluated relatively through the results of the quantitative survey and have been evaluated as high or low.

The newly introduced EDI systematization has led to distinguish the surveyed lay African believers. Whereas the four surveyed churches were all categorized indifferently when located on the bipolarized paradigm of understanding the Holy Spirit, they were distinguished into three different classifications when analyzed with the EDI systematization. Evangelical Church 1 was categorized as having an HLH perception, Evangelical Church 2 was identified as having an HHH perception, Independent Church 3 and Independent Church 4 was classified as having an LHL perception on the Holy Spirit. This systematization has led us to analyse the key factors that could mark the African believers' comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Unlike the theologians whom brought their attention to the high dependence African believers had, this systematization revealed that the high dependence transfused from the African tradition were less relevant to the Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Evangelical Church 2 (HHH), Independent Church 3 (LHL), and Independent Church 4 (LHL) all had a high perception on the dependence, for the middle alphabet represent the perception on the dependence. However, their perception on the existence and the influence of the spirits were indifferent. Evangelical Church 2 had a high perception of existence and influence, whereas Independent Church 3 and Independent Church 4 had a low perception of existence and influence although their perception

on the dependence of the Holy Spirit was similarly high as Evangelical Church 2. Thus, the key factor to the African comprehension of the Holy Spirit was not the dependence that had been transfused from the African tradition, but rather the African believers' acknowledgement of its existence and their experience of influence from the Holy Spirit. The newly introduced EDI systematization revealed that in order to develop a relevant and pertinent Africanized Pneumatology, our attention need to be shifted toward the African believers' perception of existence and influence.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 have englobed all the findings of the previous chapters to propose a popular Africanized Pneumatology in an urban contemporary African context. The main objective while proposing the Africanized Pneumatology was to introduce a relevant and a pertinent Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Three proposals were made basing on the voices of the lay African believers raised from the ground. The surveyed lay African believers have proposed understanding the Holy Spirit as the Familial Bond, the Peace Giver, and the Transformer.

The first proposal of the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit was as the Familial Bond. The analysis on the word frequency of the interviews gave light to the respondents' worldview. Although the theme of the interviews was focused on the traditional spirits and the Holy Spirit, the interviewees repeatedly and significantly used the word 'family'. Thus, I was able to realize how family was a factor that was closely intertwined with the existence of being an African. Unfortunately, the traditional definition of family was losing ground. It was disvalued among the contemporary urban dwellers and there was a need to reinterpret the definition for the dwellers in urbanity. It is at this point of societal transformation that the Holy Spirit was proposed as the familial bond with God. He enabled us to be part of the Godly family. The lay African believers have reinterpreted the Pneumatology of mutual bond introduced by Augustine and have extended the boundary of the bond of love from God's only Son to God's children whom are present on earth.

The second proposal of the Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit was as the Peace Giver. 6 out of 26 respondents of the qualitative survey explicitly claimed that they linked

the Holy Spirit with peace. When recalling the Cameroonian context, which had undergone unwilling drastic changes throughout its history, the introduction of the Holy Spirit as the Peace Giver are expected to relieve the society's thirst for security and stability.

The third proposal of the Africanized Pneumatology is understanding the Holy Spirit as the Transformer. 4 out of 26 respondents have stated throughout their interviews on how they perceived transformation the Holy Spirit have brought to the believers' lives. To the African society, whom already have a tendency to partially blame the African tradition and witchcraft as hindrance to development, the introduction of the Holy Spirit as the transformer are expected to be thoroughly appealing.

Contributions and Limits

The long lasting journey of our intellectual quest is to end with the evaluation on the contributions and the limits this study has. Although they were mentioned throughout the formulation of the thesis, when recapitulating and gathering the contributions into a place, this thesis could be assessed as having brought five major contributions to the academic field.

Firstly, it has raised the unheard voices of the urban contemporary lay African believers. The African theologians, such as Uzukwu and Michael whom had recently published their works about the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit, did not demonstrate any kind of explicit study of the ground. Their voices monopolized the academic field as if their personal interpretations based on their theological orientations were representing the Africanized comprehension of the Holy Spirit. There could be remarks that the works previously done by Oosthuizen and Anderson did contain some studies of the ground. However, when considering that these studies were concentrated on the Christianity of Southern Africa and that it dated back to over 25 years, a clear distinction could be drawn between the precedent studies. This thesis had raised the unheard voices of the urban contemporary lay African believers in West Africa and shed light to the lay believers' process of theologization.

Secondly, it had revealed the misrepresentation of the Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit. The arguments raised between the African theologians illustrated as if the African

Independent Churches had a unique understanding of the Africanized Pneumatology that subsumed the African spiritual world. By some, this was regarded as the innovative contribution to Christianity yet others viewed it as a problematic understanding. Nevertheless, the surveyed lay African believers' account, both Evangelical and Independent believers, revealed that such understanding was not present among them. Thus, the unique Africanized understanding of the Holy Spirit portrayed as popular by the African theologians were found to be a misrepresentation.

Thirdly, it had revealed the outmoded paradigm of doing theology by the African theologians. As Uzukwu mentions in one of his work, African theologians mostly had developed their theology based on two factors, the African tradition and the West Christian tradition.³⁴⁹ The dissonance on continuity versus discontinuity that resounded on the academic stage of Africanized Pneumatology was based on this bipolar paradigm of doing theology. However, this study has unveiled, with the support of the lay African believers, that the dichotomized factors on which the African theologians were doing theology were outmoded. The African continent that is currently undergoing one of the most dynamic stage of transformation have other contextual factors such as urbanization and secularization that is significantly affecting the inhabitants. Thus, this thesis calmed the dissonance that resounded due to the bipolarized paradigm by revealing how it was outmoded and deconstructing the dichotomized stage of doing Pneumatology.

Fourthly, it had revealed the incorrect diagnosis of the spiritual vacuum felt by the African believers. African theologians had observed the phenomenon of how some African believers returned to the traditional spirits when the Holy Spirit did not meet their needs. African theologians diagnosed such phenomenon to occur because African spiritual world were an indispensable factor in African Christianity. They acclaimed African Independent Churches to have filled this spiritual void by incorporating African spiritual worldview into their comprehension of the Holy Spirit.³⁵⁰ However, this study revealed that the spiritual void were not filled by the incorporation of the African spiritual world into Christian faith, for the congregations of the two Independent Churches surveyed demonstrated a higher tendency to

³⁴⁹ Ikenga-Metuh, *African Inculturation Theology: Africanizing Christianity*, 33.

³⁵⁰ Michael, *Christian Theology and African Traditions*, 196.

have an unmet reliance. They had expectations toward the Holy Spirit but their account of the actual influence of the Holy Spirit was significantly distant from their expectations.

Lastly, it had shifted our attention on how to properly develop a popular Africanized Pneumatology. The former African theologians have developed their unique African Pneumatology by focusing their attention to the significantly high dependence found among the African believers. However, this study restrained our attention on focusing on the high dependence found among the African believers, for this spiritual reliance is less affined to their actual comprehension of the Holy Spirit and rather a residue of the African spiritual world. Through the newly introduced EDI systematization, this study revealed that in order to have a proper popular Pneumatology that is relevant to the African believers, our attention should be shifted on the believers' perception of existence and the influence they are currently experiencing from the Holy Spirit.

Then, let us go on to the limits this thesis has. Although there are additional limits this thesis might have, I would like to highlight the three noticeable ones. This thesis had as the objective to hear what the lay African believers had verbalized on their empirical comprehension of the Holy Spirit. Due to the specific objective, there emerged two limits. Firstly, there are regrets that this thesis restrained the density of its literature review in order to not deviate from the main purpose, which was to focus on the actual ground. Secondly, another remorse raised is that the proposals made by the lay African believers could have been further widened into a well-formulated systematic Pneumatology. However, this study will content on the pioneering work of raising the unheard voices into the academic field and having triggered the first steps of dialogue between the African theologians and the lay African believers. Thirdly, this study limited its investigation to four churches in Cameroon, two which were Evangelical Churches and the other two which were African Independent Churches. The selection was made in order to clearly visualize on if the dissonance of the theological orientation found on the academic field were valid. Nevertheless, this numerically restrained sample implies that it would be hard to represent all the churches in Africa. We are to clearly precise that this study had brought interesting insights of some of the churches in Yaoundé, yet we have to keep in mind that it will be incorrect to generalize a limited study as representing the rest of the churches in Africa.

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Annexe I: Letter from the Research Ethics Committee



Comité d'éthique de la recherche- Société et culture (CER-SC)

Montréal, le 17 janvier 2020

M. Kwan Jin Youn

Candidat au doctorat,
Institut d'études religieuses - option spiritualité

M. Jean-François Roussel,

Professeur agrégé,
Institut d'études religieuses,
Université de Montréal.

Objet : Manquement à la *Politique sur la recherche avec des êtres humains* de l'Université de Montréal - Projet CPER-17-075-D « The Holy Spirit in an Urban African Religiosity, Between Tradition and Transformation : A Case Study in Two Christian Denominations in Yaounde, Cameroon », M. Kwan Jin Youn, Candidat au doctorat, Institut d'études religieuses - option spiritualité M. Jean-François Roussel, professeur agrégé, Institut d'études religieuses, Université de Montréal.

Messieurs,

Le projet de recherche cité en objet a été initialement déposé pour évaluation au Comité plurifacultaire d'éthique de la recherche (CPÉR) le 20 juin 2017. Le projet a été jugé à risque minimal et impliquait des participants âgés de 18 ans et plus. Le CPÉR a émis des commentaires et a suspendu son évaluation dans l'attente d'informations supplémentaires et des modifications demandées. Ces commentaires du CPÉR ont été envoyés par courriel à M. Kwan Jin Youn une première fois le 2 août 2017. Par la suite, M. Kwan Jin Youn a communiqué avec le comité en début septembre 2017 pour demander des nouvelles de l'évaluation de son projet. Les mêmes commentaires lui ont été retournés le 27 septembre 2017.

M. Kwan Jin Youn a communiqué avec le comité d'éthique de la recherche – société et culture (CER-SC)¹ en début septembre 2019 pour l'informer qu'il avait mené son projet de recherche sur le terrain (entrevues et questionnaires au sein de communautés

¹ LE CER-SC agit en remplacement du CPER suite à une réorganisation des comités d'éthique sectoriels de l'Université de Montréal effective le 1^{er} novembre 2018.

religieuses en Afrique) et avoir réalisé ne pas avoir de certificat éthique alors que cela lui était exigé pour le dépôt de sa thèse.

Suite à cette communication, M. Kwan Jin Youn a soumis une réponse aux commentaires initiaux du CPÉR, des documents modifiés et a spécifié qu'il a obtenu un consentement signé de la part des 26 participants et que ceux-ci sont disponibles sur demande.

Il résulte des faits exposés ci-devant que M. Kwan Jin Youn a mené son projet de recherche sans avoir obtenu au préalable l'approbation éthique requise auprès du comité d'éthique de la recherche concerné de l'Université de Montréal, ce qui représente un manquement avéré aux exigences de la Politique sur la recherche avec des êtres humains de l'Université de Montréal (Politique 60.1).

Lors de sa rencontre plénière du 21 novembre 2019, le Comité d'éthique de la recherche-Société et culture (CER-SC) a été informé de la situation. Les comités d'éthique de la recherche (CÉR) sectoriels de l'Université de Montréal – tel que le CER-SC - ont le mandat de traiter avec diligence toute allégation de manquement et manquement à la Politique 60.1 et d'en évaluer la gravité.

Ainsi, si selon l'évaluation faite par le CÉR le manquement est jugé mineur - un manquement est jugé mineur s'il est démontré, à la satisfaction du comité, que la recherche s'est déroulée dans le respect des principes et normes éthiques du cadre normatif en vigueur (i.e. l'obtention d'un consentement libre, éclairé et continu, la minimisation des risques, le respect de la confidentialité, la conservation sécuritaire des données, etc.), d'une façon semblable et conforme à ce qui lui aurait été demandé par le comité dans le cadre de l'évaluation éthique du projet, et ce, pour tout le continuum de la recherche, allant de la sollicitation des participants à la publication des résultats - le CÉR déterminera les correctifs à apporter et fera le suivi auprès du chercheur.

Si le manquement est jugé grave par le CÉR, le dossier sera alors soumis au Comité Universitaire en Éthique de la Recherche (CUER) qui procédera à une enquête plus approfondie.

Considérant ce qui précède, le CER-SC vous fait part de sa décision :

Considérant que les professeurs et les étudiants ont le devoir, pour chacun de leurs projets de recherche, qu'il se déroule à l'Université ou ailleurs, d'obtenir au préalable les approbations requises, auprès du comité d'éthique de la recherche compétent de l'Université et de se conformer aux procédures prévues (Politique sur la recherche avec des êtres humains, Article 2.1.4).

Considérant que le projet de recherche de M. Kwan Jin Youn exposait les participants à un niveau de risque minimal, que le projet de recherche a été initialement soumis à l'examen du CPÉR et que l'étudiant avait reçu les commentaires du CPÉR, que le projet de recherche ne soulève pas d'enjeux éthiques majeurs et que le consentement a été obtenu auprès des participants.

Considérant que M. Kwan Jin Youn a fait la démonstration à la satisfaction du comité que la recherche s'est déroulée dans le respect des principes et normes éthiques du cadre normatif en vigueur (obtention d'un consentement libre, éclairé et continu; minimisation des risques, le respect de la confidentialité conservation sécuritaire des données, etc.), d'une façon semblable et conforme à ce qui lui aurait été demandé par le CÉR dans le cadre de l'évaluation éthique du projet, et ce, pour tout le continuum de la recherche, allant de la sollicitation des participants à la publication des résultats.

Considérant que les comités d'éthique de la recherche sectoriels de l'Université de Montréal ne peuvent procéder à l'évaluation éthique d'un projet *a posteriori* de sa réalisation (Énoncé de politique des trois Conseils : Éthique de la recherche avec des êtres humains (EPTC 2 2018 : [Article 6.11](#));

En conséquence, le Comité d'éthique de la recherche en santé conclut que l'étudiant, M. Kwan Jin Youn, et son directeur, M. Jean-François Roussel, se trouvent en situation de manquement **mineur** à l'égard des règles en matière d'éthique de la recherche avec des êtres humains qui prévalent à l'Université de Montréal.

Il est résolu:

1. De ne pas s'opposer à la diplomation de l'étudiant;
2. De demander que la présente lettre soit annexée à la thèse de l'étudiant;
3. D'exiger de l'étudiant la complétion du didacticiel de l'EPTC 2 : FER (Formation en éthique de la recherche). (<http://eptc2fer.ca/welcome>)

Par ailleurs, le CER-SC tient à vous souligner que le fait de ne pas tenir compte de ses commentaires initialement exprimés par le CPÉR a potentiellement pu être nuisible à la qualité des résultats.

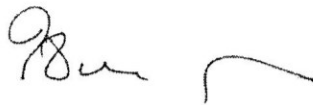
Le CER-SC tient à rappeler le rôle important du directeur de thèse dans l'accompagnement de ses étudiants dans les différentes étapes de leur projet de recherche. La responsabilité de l'étudiant face à l'éthique est moins importante que celle du professeur. Ce dernier a le devoir de guider l'étudiant dans toutes les étapes de la réalisation du projet de recherche, incluant la soumission au CÉR, jusqu'à l'obtention d'une approbation éthique.

Par ailleurs, le CER-SC vous rappelle l'importance de suivre les exigences éthiques encadrant la recherche avec des êtres humains et vous recommande d'agir avec diligence et rigueur si vous entreprenez un projet de recherche avec des êtres humains.

Enfin, nous vous rappelons que le comité d'éthique de la recherche est la seule instance au sein d'un établissement à pouvoir se prononcer sur la nécessité d'obtenir une approbation éthique ou sa dispense.

La présente décision vise à permettre à l'étudiant le dépôt de sa thèse à son unité académique afin de permettre que soit entamé le processus de formation du jury qui procédera à l'évaluation.

Cordialement,



M. François Duchesneau,
Président par intérim

- c.c. Mme Marie-Josée Hébert, Vice-rectrice à la recherche, à la découverte, à la création et à l'innovation
M. François Duchesneau, président, Comité universitaire d'éthique de la recherche
Mme Fabienne Lescot, TGDE, FAS- Institut d'études religieuses

Annexe II: [Quantitative Study] Questionnaire

1) I feel the presence of the spirits around my surroundings.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always
2) I think spirits will help me in times of needs.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always
3) I think the spirits are helping when I face difficulties.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always
4) People around me think the spirits are real.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always
5) I think the spirits are present in this world we are living.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always
6) I believe spirits will help me in times of needs.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always
7) I feel the presence of the spirits in the activities of my daily life.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always
8) People around me have felt the presence of the spirits.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always
9) I believe the spirits are existential in this world that I am living.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always
10) I ask for help to the spirits in times of needs.						
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

11) I have experienced assistance from the spirits when I was in need.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

12) People around me have experienced the existence of the spirits.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

13) I have personally experienced the existence of the spirits.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

14) I have felt assistance from the spirits when i was in trouble.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

15) I believe spirits are protecting me from my enemies threats.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

16) People around me believe in the existence of the spirits.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

17) I feel the presence of the Holy Spirit around my surroundings.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

18) I think Holy Spirit will help me in times of needs.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

19) I think the Holy Spirit is helping when I face difficulties.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

20) People around me think the Holy Spirit is real.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

21) I think the Holy Spirit is present in this world that we are living.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

22) I believe the Holy Spirit will help me in times of needs.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

23) I feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in the activities of my daily life.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

24) People around me have felt the presence of the Holy Spirit.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

25) I believe the Holy Spirit is existential in this world that I am living.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

26) I ask for help to the Holy Spirit in times of needs.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

27) I have experienced assistance from the Holy Spirit when I was in need.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

28) People around me have experienced the existence of the Holy Spirit.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

29) I have personally experienced the existence of the Holy Spirit.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

30) I have felt assistance from the Holy Spirit when I was in trouble.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Never	very rarely	rarely	don't know	occasionally	very frequently	always

Annexe III: [Qualitative Study] Semi-Directed Interview

Society's perception on spirits

- 1) Have you heard people talk about spirits? What is it about?

- 2) Have you heard stories about someone personally experiencing spirits?

- 3) How do the majority of the society perceive the spirits?

Personal perception on spirits

- 4) What do you mean when you use the term “spirits”?

- 5) What do you feel when people talk about spirits?

- 6) Do you think they do exist?
 - i) If yes, then continue to question 7 and 8.
 - ii) If no, why not?

- 7) Do you believe they can intervene and influence people's life?

- 8) Have you ever relied or consulted the traditional spirits when you have encountered times of difficulties?

Church and Christians' perception on spirits

- 9) What is your church's official stance on the traditional spirits?

- 10) Do they accept their existence, neglect, or rebuke?
 - i) If they accept their existence, are they favorable or hostile toward the spirits?

 - ii) If they rebuke, why?

- 11) Why do you think the church is taking such stance?

12) Do most congregation members agree with the church's stance?

Personal understanding of the Holy Spirit

13) What image come up to your mind first when thinking of the Holy Spirit?

14) How would you explain the Holy Spirit to someone who does not know about Him?

15) Was there an occasion you personally came up to realize the Holy Spirit was present in you and working in you?

16) Was there an occasion you came to realize the Holy Spirit was present in your congregation?

17) Do you believe the Holy Spirit is God?

18) How do you understand the Holy Spirit?

19) Do you think there are any typical ways African Christians understand the Holy Spirit?

Personal process of theologization

20) Have your personal perception on spirits changed after you have converted to Christianity?

21) How do you think an African Christian should understand the spirits?

i) Could there be possibilities that spirits could be in accord with the Holy Spirit?

22) The Holy Spirit and the spirits

i) What are their similarities?

ii) What are their differences?