Religion and development in the EELC

Exploring religious influence and the relationship between religion and development in the PLS-project, Cameroon

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Foreword

Though it only carries my name, several people have had a decisive role in making this thesis possible. I would like to express my gratitude firstly to my supervisor, Kjetil Fretheim, whose guidance and advices have been very important. Thank you for repeatedly assuring me that my project is relevant and interesting.

My stay in Cameroon was made possible by Erik and Sandra Bischler, who helped me in everything from giving me a lift to the supermarket, to booking train-tickets and making hotel reservations. Also, all representatives from the EELC were most generous in facilitating my field-work. I would particularly like to mention Remi Kalnimé and Valentin Gbetnkom Ntieche who helped arrange many of my interviews, as well as the observation.

In Norway, both the NMS and Digni were most helpful in providing documents on the project. Furthermore, my parents have contributed massively through both moral support and valuable input. Thank you very much.

Lastly, a special word of thanks belongs to Kristina, for support and patience. Thank you for reminding me that after all, it is just my master thesis.

Abstract

After decades of negligence, religion has increasingly become recognized as a factor in development. In trying to explore and explain the role and position of religion in development, several approaches have emerged. This thesis draws particular attention to three significant approaches. The first is the instrumentalist approach that suggests an ambivalence of religion in development, and consequently explores its constructive and destructive sides. The second approach claims that there is no fundamental difference between religion and development, based on the assumption that development work is what religious people do because they are religious. Thirdly, it draws attention to the integral approach, which suggests that development is an organic process which changes considerably from situation to situation. On this basis, the relationship between religion and development must also be considered organically in each context.

In an attempt to nuance and contribute to the growing understanding of the relationship between these important and much debated concepts, this thesis has explored religious dimensions and influences in the *All against AIDS*- project (PLS) which is run by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon (EELC). Through qualitative interviews and participant observation, I have explored the project from within, and tried to see it through the eyes of the practitioners.

These investigations ended with an identification of seven religious dimensions in the PLS, which in different ways influence development. It was shown that the PLS is a project rooted in a holistic understanding of the Christian gospel. The project is initiated as a response to the diaconal calling of Christ and many of its workers are motivated by their Christian faith in their work. This opens up for a range of religious expressions in the project, most of which seem to play a positive and sometimes even vital part in development.

The relationship between religion and development is shown to be complex and differing. All the approaches that were explored contribute to the understanding of it. The two main conclusions, however, turns out to be that in the eyes of the PLS- workers, there is no fundamental separation between the two concepts, in reality, religion and development are conceived in holistic terms. Secondly, an integral approach is also fruitful, as the

relationship between religion and development is not a constant one but dependent on several factors, such as religious tradition and societal context. In sum, it is suggested that religion must be included in its entirety into development theory and practice. In Cameroon, religion possesses valuable spiritual capital, and relates development work to a spiritual reality which is central to the Cameroonian culture and society. The influence of religion must, however, always be critically scrutinized, because of its potential for conditional development and abuse of religious authority.

LIST OF ACRONYMS:

AIDS   Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

BN   Norwegian Missions in Development, now Digni- umbrella organization for Christian Norwegian mission- organizations which are engaged in development.

DDVE   The Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics

EELC   The evangelical Lutheran church in Cameroon (Eglise Evangelique Lutherienne au Cameroun).

FBO   Faith- Based Organization

FpC   Women for Christ (Femmes pour Christ)- Womens group of the EELC

HCV   Home-based care volunteers. This specific group of people work mostly as councillors for People living with HIV/AIDS, and as contacts for the PLS in local communities (Volontaires de Relais Communautaire).

HIV   Human Immunodeficiancy Virus

MC   The Mobile Caravan (Caravane Mobile)

NMS   The Norwegian Missionary Society.

NGO   Non- Governmental Organization

NORAD   The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.

OEV   Programme for orphans and vulnerable children. (Orphelins et Enfants Vulnérables) Sub- project of the PLS

PLS   The "All against AIDS"-project (Programme de Lutte contre le VIH/Sida).

PLWHA   People Living With HIV/AIDS

PTME   Programme of transmission from mother to child (Programme transmission mère/enfant). Sub- project of the PLS

SG   Support- Group (for HIV-positive people)

SIK   Centre for Interultural Communication (Senter for Interkulturell Kommunikasjon)

SM   American Sudan Mission

WFDD   World Faiths Development Dialogue

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Due to a strong focus on economics (Fretheim 2013:86), and the near paradigmatic status of secularization theories in the social sciences (Deneulin & Bano 2009:70), religion has often been either considered an obstacle to desired development or not considered at all (Fretheim 2013:84). This picture has changed. Development, from being solely an economic term, now often entails several aspects of human existence. Most recently, with the paradigm of human development, the term has been defined as a value-based process (Deneulin & Bano 2009:45-46). This has inspired several development scholars to suggest religion as an important variable in development processes. In different ways, they argue, religion is and have always been very important to development practices (Haynes 2007:7; Marshall & Van Saanen 2007:2).

In academic circles, the growing interest has resulted in numerous studies exploring and explaining the many and different roles of religion in development, as well as the relationship between these two concepts. In this study, some historical contributions, as well as three significant approaches will be presented and form the academic background for discussion. Firstly an instrumental understanding of the relationship is provided, which considers how the two concepts may draw on the other instrumentally to reach own objectives. Secondly I present the view which suggest that a fundamental separation between religion and development does not exist, as development work is what believers do because of their religion (Deneulin & Bano 2009:4-5). Lastly, an integral approach to development suggests that the relationship between religion and development is organic in that it is always changing and differ according to diverse contexts. Thus, each situation must be analysed and nurtured independently (van Wensveen 2011:90).

This discussion is not just of academic interest- it is a discussion of pragmatics, real life stories and everyday choices. Moreover, it is a discussion with political implications. In 2010, the Norwegian department of foreign affairs initiated a project to raise questions of religion in Norwegian foreign policy, which culminated in a report of religion and development commenting the religious dimension in areas as development, conflict and reconciliation as well as Human-Rights and democracy (Oslos. & Ud. 2012).

By looking empirically at one concrete faith-based developmental initiative, the aim of this study is to investigate the ways in which religion is present and influence development in faith-based development work, so as to gain a better understanding of the relationship between these concepts. Even though this assignment will focus mainly on religious influence on development, where my material allows it, I will also comment on the influence that development has on religion. It is important to stress that by influence, I do not refer to any potential causal effects between the two, but the potential ways in which they mutually nuance, challenge or redefine each other.

The project I have chosen is the *Programme de Lutte contre le VIH/SIDA (PLS)* run by the *Eglise Evangelique Lutherienne au Cameroun (EELC)*. This is a developmental project within health, which is a core category within contemporary development discourse. Religion is of particular interest to the health- category because of the central role played by religious actors (Haynes 2007:172). Furthermore, this church- run project is mainly funded through the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), through the Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS).

Such a project can arguably said to be in a middle-position in the sense that both religious and secular partners have a say. NORAD, historically and arguably still in practice, does not allow its funding to be spent on religious propaganda or church-building activities. The EELC, however, is a church, and religion is both constitutive to its existence, as well as the very objective for its doings. Such a project, I would argue, is exactly where we can expect to find clear examples of mutual influence, as well as possible tensions between developmental traditions, in this case religious and secular.

1.1 Objectives and research questions

The aim of this study can be divided into three core objectives. Firstly, I wish to identify the religious dimensions in the PLS- project, by pointing to different roles, expressions and manifestations of religion. Also, I seek a better understand of the ways in which these dimensions and roles challenge, shape and nuance development. Finally, the former insights

will hopefully enable me to discuss the relationship between religion and development. On this basis, my fundamental research question becomes:

What is the relationship between religion and development in faith-based development work?

To answer this question, the following questions will be assessed:

1. Which dimensions of religion do we find in the PLS- project, and which roles do religion play?

2. How do these dimensions and roles influence development understood as a value-based process?

3. What is the relationship between religion and development in faith-based development work?

Though the central terms of this research question, as well as related important terms will be defined in sections 3.1 through 3.3, it is necessary to provide a basic understanding of these terms already at this point.

By *religion*, I point to a tradition of thought, which is constituted by four main characteristics, namely religious truth, practice, community and institution (Deneulin & Bano 2009:61-64). This tradition of thought is furthermore a dynamic entity, with the inherent potential of diversity and change (see 3.2).

Based on Amartya Sen's definition of development as freedom (Sen 2000:4), I regard *development*, as a value-based process which seeks to enhance people's fundamental freedoms (see 3.3).

Faith-based Organizations (FBO's) point to organizations which teachings and principals inspire or guides its activities (Clarke & Jennings 2008:6). This account treats one specific FBO within the Christian evangelical Lutheran tradition. For this reason, when making general statements about faith-based actors or organizations, this particular tradition is the backdrop. The statements that are made, though referring to FBO's in general terms acknowledges that these are not static (Fretheim 2013:90), and neither are religious traditions (Deneulin 2009:63). Statements and suggestions concerning FBO's should

therefore be considered s input and suggestions to the general discussion, not normative statements regarding all FBO's.[1]

1.2 Outline of the project

I will now provide a short outline of this thesis. Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter where the study, its background, objectives and outline is presented.

Chapter 2 provides important background material about the local context both with regards to Cameroon, and the position of religion in Cameroonian society. Furthermore it presents the main actors in the study, HIV/AIDS with its dimensions, and lastly the PLS-project, its history and aims. Chapter 2, in other words, explores the frames within which the study is conducted.

Chapter 3 is the literature chapter, where important terms are defined, and the academic frames are given. As this study is a study of religion and development, these terms will firstly be defined. Subsequently, the chapter will provide an overview of the literature on the academic field of religion and development, emphasizing three different ways of understanding the relationship between the two concepts.

Chapter 4 will provide insights into the methods that have been used in this study, as well as a general discussion of these, stating strengths and weaknesses. In addition it will assess the limitations that apply to this study in particular.

Chapter 5 is both the presentation of the material collected in the empirical study in Cameroon, as well as an analysis of this material. As it is inevitable not to analyse somewhat when presenting the material, I have chosen to do both in the same chapter. This chapter has been divided into six sections, being categories that represent the religious dimensions

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[1] Many authors point to the need to divide more specifically into different kinds of FBO's (Jones & Petersen 2011:1298; Fretheim 2013:90-91). Gerard Clarke, in that respect, identifies five types of faith-based organizations (Clarke & Jennings 2008: 25). This thesis will, however, not go into further details about the nature of the FBO(s) that are reviewed. This is because the definition of the FBO is not the central task, but rather the relationship and between religion and development. Therefore, the basic understanding of FBO's as given above will act as a definition for the term.

that I identified during my field-work. The sections in each of these categories present different roles that religion plays connected to the religious dimensions. At the end of each section, there is a discussion which analyses the content with regard to research-question two, concerning religion's influence on development.

Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter, where I will present the core findings of the study, as well as draw some conclusions.

Each chapter will end in a short summary. This summary can obviously not go into details, presenting all the important specifics from the chapter, but in order to move on it is fruitful to sum up main issues in the chapters. In chapter 5, summaries will be given as we go, meaning that each category will have a short summary before moving on the next category.

Chapter 2: Background, context and actors

The following chapter will present the context for the study. It provides an overview of the country, and the position of religion in northern Cameroonian society, as well as development initiatives in this area. Then the PLS itself is presented. Thirdly, I present main actors in the project, before exploring the HIV/AIDS- situation in Cameroon. As the PLS is a health-initiative, some specifics on religion and health will be provided, as these will undoubtedly be important for the analysis. In sum this will provide an important framework for the analysis to come.

2.1 Cameroon

Cameroon is located in west-Africa, and neighbours with Nigeria, Chad, the Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. Having been under colonial rule by Germany, Great Britain and France, French Cameroon became independent in 1960 under the name of the republic of Cameroon. In 1961 it was supplemented by a portion of British Cameroon, thus forming the Federal Republic of Cameroon. In 1972, through a new constitution, Cameroon became a unitary state named as we know it today, the United Republic of Cameroon. The relative political stability of the country has allowed the construction of infrastructure such as roads, railways and petroleum-industry as well as the development of agriculture. A multiparty policy has been present since 1990, and the country moves slowly towards a more democratic reality, but the power still lies firmly in the hands of the reigning president of 31 years, Paul Biya, who succeeded former president Ahmadou Ahidjo.[2]

Though the EELC is a national church, it has always been centred in Ngaondéré, in the Adamoua region. It is mainly established and active in the mid and the north of Cameroon,

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[2] Source: CIA World Factbook, accessed 16/07-2013 (https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cm.html). For additional information about Cameroonian history, see Njeuma Martin, 1989, *Introduction to the history of Cameroon in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,* Macmillian Publishers London, or Eyongetah Tambi & Brain Robert, 1979. *A history of the Cameroon,* Longman London.

which makes these regions of particular interest for this study. For this reason, and because the religious landscape of north and south is quite different, it is the northern parts that will be considered in the following background presentation.

2.1.1 Northern Cameroon- historical background and present challenges

In the first half of the 19th century, the mighty Fulani tribe, originally from Senegambia, occupied the northern parts of Cameroon. The territory was divided into smaller kingdoms called *Lamidats*, each governed by a local king called the *Lamido* (Hansen 2000:2).[3] At first the Lamidats of northern Cameroon were merely vassals under a superior Lamido in northern Nigeria, but in time many freed themselves and became independent. The lamidat-structure have persisted, is still present, and though lacking its former supremacy, the Lamidos still enjoy great benefits and influence. Through history, they governed their territories harshly and kept slaves. It was also through the Lamidos that the French colonial power ruled territories in the north. The Lamidos were Muslim-rulers, thus these territories were governed as Muslim- territories. As the country's first president, Ahmadou Ahidjo, was a Muslim from the north, these lands were still considered and governed as Muslim lands. It was, for instance a difficult task to get a post within governmental administration if one bore a Christian name (BN 2003:45).

The Lamidats gained income through cattle and commerce, often slaves. Also agricultural products were claimed as taxes. Today's northern Cameroon, is considered a poor and under-developed area, but production of meat is still large, and thus a major source for income. The area is poor, however, and its population is growing with too few possibilities for work. Famine has not been a problem until now, but there is a recognizable need for clean drinking water and nutritious food (BN 2003:46).

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[3] For more information about the Lamidat-system and how it has shaped political culture in north- Cameroon, see Kjetil Fred Hansen *The Historical Construction of a Political Culture in Ngaondéré, Northern Cameroon* by, University of Oslo 2000.

The area suffers, as does all of Cameroon, of being utterly corrupt. In 2012 it was ranked 144/176 on the ranking from Transparency International[4]. Corruption permeates the country on all levels- nationally, regionally and locally. There are also reports of Human-Rights breaches, and altogether these unfortunate traits severely threaten the country's development of democracy. Health-conditions have also been alarming- northern Cameroon had Cameroons highest prevalence of HIV/AIDS at the start of the millennium, estimated to 11, 8%. This has improved and the current statistics are around 5, 3%.[5] War with neighbouring countries or civil-war has not happened in modern days (BN 2003:46).

2.1.2 Religion in northern Cameroon

Whereas the United Republic of Cameroon is a secular state, its population is religious. It is common to count a percentage of 40% Christians, 40% animists and 20% Muslims[6]. Religion play, and has always played a great part in Cameroonian society, as in Africa in general. The secularism of the west has not got a hold, except perhaps within certain academic circles. Religious voids, Tomas Drønen states, "simply do not exist in Africa, not even in modern, so-called secularized cities. Religion has been part of the social organisation of African communities as far back as collective memory can recall." (Drønen 2013:70). Klaus Winkel has made the point that Africans conceive of Europeans as very godless, and that some speak of sending missionaries the other way around (Winkel 2007:126).

Concerning religious demographics, one could say that the south is predominately Christian, and that the population grows more and more Muslim the further north you go.

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[4] Sources: Contemporary prevalence estimate is taken from UNAIDS, accessed 16/07-2013. The numbers are from 2011 (http://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/cameroon/). Historic numbers can be found at Transparency International, accessed 16/07-2013 (http://www.transparency.org/country#CMR).

[5] Source: Index Mundi, accessed 16/07-2013. The 5,3 percentage represent numbers from 2009 (http://www.indexmundi.com/g/g.aspx?c=cm&v=32)

[6] Source: the World Fact book- CIA, accessed 16/07-2013 (https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cm.html)

The Norwegian Interdenominational Office for Development Cooperation (Digni)[7] states that several statistics point to a fifty- fifty division between Christians and Muslims in the Adamaoua- region, but also state that many people claim to be animists, which is not always considered in statistics (BN 2003:46). Animism does have a high score on the numbers from the CIA world fact book, and it must be acknowledged as an important part of the religious landscape in northern Cameroon. Though Islam and Christianity seem to be the religious actors of importance in northern Cameroon, indigenous beliefs still play a vital role. Many people still have such beliefs, and can be including or syncretizing parts of them in their religion, whether Christian, Islamic or something else (Winkel 2007:126-127; Drønen 2013:70-71). However, animism is not an organized religious body (as Christians or Muslims), and it was not a religious body that any of my informants mentioned. Thus it is difficult to measure its reach and impact. For these reasons, my study will not integrate indigenous beliefs into the analysis. [8]

Islam and Christianity are the only major organized religions in the area, a reality which is due mainly to two developments:

1) Historically, large parts of northern Cameroon is Muslim territory. The Fulani-people came about in the beginning of the 19th century and in time became close to hegemonic in northern Cameroon, establishing themselves at the political, religious and cultural supremacy (Drønen 2013:6). Whereas the population initially held indigenous beliefs, the Fulani were strongly Islamic, and succeeded in Islamising large parts of northern Cameroon (Tazifor Tajoche 2003:37-43; Drønen 2013:74-76).

2) Todays Christian presence is mostly a result of extensive missionary activity. For a long time, the French colonial-administration refused lasting missionary activity in the

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[7] As of 2012, this umbrella-organization changed its name from *The Norwegian Interdenominational Office for Development Cooperation (Bistandsnemda (BN)) to Digni. Henceforth I will make reference to this organization as Digni.*

[8] I will neither present these beliefs in this thesis, nor will they play a central part in the analysis. Whereas it would be immensely interesting to include them, they seem to be too varied and unorganized to be treated inside the scope of this thesis. We note however that such beliefs are still alive and dynamic. They contribute to both individual and tribal identity and do not seem to be disappearing (Messina & Slageren 2005:15-16). For short and good presentations of the core teachings of traditional religious beliefs in Cameroon, see Messina & SLageren 2005:16-21; Drønen 2013:71-74 or Drønen 2003:6-20.

Muslim north, but were unable to continue this policy after world war one (Lode 1990:255). In the beginning, the Christian influence was predominately protestant, but after the 1950s, the Catholics, who were strong in southern Cameroon followed (Drønen 2013:81-84). Conditions got better for Christian organizations in northern Cameroon after the presidency passed from Muslim Ahmadou Ahidjo to Christian Paul Biya in 1982 (Drønen 2013:86-87).[9]

Furthermore, we recognize the emergence of a multireligious culture, particularly in the city of Nagaondéré, which is the biggest and most influential city in northern Cameroon.[10] Here, the religious landscape is dominated by Islam and Christianity, but traditional African religion also plays an important role. This landscape is furthermore challenged both by Arabs who give away scholarships to Arab countries and thus influence future leadership with a more "pure" Islam, and charismatic Pentecostals (Drønen 2013:69-71).

In Cameroon, as in Africa in general, religion is not just numbers and statistics, it is a lived reality. The religious or spiritual dimension of life, for many, is virtually everything, subsuming all parts of life to a great extent (Ellis & Ter Haar 2004:7-8). Drønen states that because religion is about everything, there are no clear divisions between the secular and the holy, or between the spiritual and the material (Drønen 2003:6). NMS representative, Erik Bischler, said "What is religion and not religion in this society and to these people? It is utterly impossible to divide the religious dimension as a separate entity apart from what their other doings" (Mr. Erik Bischler, NMS- representative, Cameroon). These notions are confirmed by Kjetil Fred Hansen, writing about the power of the Lamido in Ngaondéré. Religious authority is one of the reasons the Lamidat still enjoys power. Hansen states that "A sacred institution and a sacred leader were and are not destroyed by rational laws and formal bureaucracy" (Hansen 2000:94). Though he is writing of political power, and specifically about the Lamidat-system, this points to the extent to which religion is important for people in Ngaondéré and northern Cameroon in general.

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[9] For additional information about the arrival of both Islam and Christianity to northern Cameroon, see Drønen Thomas Sundnes, 2009, *Communication and conversion in Northern Cameroon: the Dii- people and Norwegian missionaries, 1934- 1960.* Brill, Leiden.

[10] For a short presentation of contemporary Ngaondéré, see Drønen 2013:7-9

There is another important feature when considering the religious climate in northern Cameroon. Though Muslims and Christians are opponents, the inter-religious relationship between Christian and Muslims is quite peaceful in Cameroon, which stands in stark contrast to the situation in neighbouring Nigeria (Drønen 2013:199).[11] Instead of fighting and seeking conflicts, for the most part they co-exist peacefully (Haafkens 2005:362). My informants suggested different reasons for this, including mutual respect and benefit between the religions, and the particular spirit of tolerance which allegedly is strong among Cameroonians.

2.1.3 Development in northern Cameroon

Cameroon is characterized as being in a crisis of leadership and development, which has political, economic, socio-cultural and moral dimensions (Vudo 2008:192). The government has not introduced necessary democratic reforms, a fact that shows in breaches of Human Rights as well as widespread corruption. Civil society is weak and has also failed to contribute significantly to social transformation (Gam Nkwi 2010:149).[12]

Concerning northern Cameroon, a 2003 report from Digni stated that there has been relatively few structures or institutions overall, leading significant developmental projects in the Adamaoua-province. The UN-system was not very visible, but UNICEF was engaged in a vaccination project. Furthermore, the American Peace-corps has been a presence in the region for some time, but are now mostly situated in other areas of the country. Concerning international Non- Governmental Organizations (NGO's) the report stated that there were as good as none in the areas where EELC was present. CARE was one exception, with sporadic presences in fighting HIV/AIDS among truck-drivers and in forming local anti-AIDS-groups.

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[11] Drønen also notes, however, that the relationship is moving in a more fragile direction argues that this relationship is moving in a more fragile direction (Drønen 2013:222-223).

[12] Gam Nkwi argue that reasons for which the civil society is so weak is partially because it is threatened by particularism and ethnicism. It must seek to cross boundaries that divides it, and consider the perspectives and struggles of ordinary Cameroonians, in order to contribute to meaningful development (Gam Nkwi 2010:149). Emmanuel Yenshu Vudo also recognizes the importance of civil society in the search for development alternatives (Vudo 2008:193-194).

The report also noted some smaller national NGOs working within different areas such as health-information, development and agriculture. In addition to these undertakings, the report mentioned that there was some presence of Micro-finance agencies (BN 2003:51).

2.2 Key actors

On a daily basis, the PLS is run by the EELC. The funding, comes from NORAD in Norway, through Digni, which is an umbrella organization working for 19 Norwegian Christian organizations.[13] Among these is the NMS, which is one of the missionary organizations that established the EELC in 1958. They still have missionary presence in Cameroon, though it is much smaller than it used to be. Two of my informants are NMS- workers in Cameroon, whereas the rest either belong to the EELC or are in some way involved in the PLS- project. The key actors that will be presented are the NMS and the EELC. NORAD will also be shortly presented, as it provides the PLS funding.

2.2.1 The Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS)[14]

August 8th, 1942, 184 delegates from some leading Norwegian Christian traditions met in Stavanger Norway, and founded Norway's first official missionary society, Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS). Their first area of engagement was the land of the *Zulus* (South-Africa) to which they sent a missionary the following year.

Many years have passed since then, and so has the scope of NMS' work. The organization is now engaged in 13 countries on four continents and has about a hundred missionaries in service. In most of these countries national churches have been established.

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[13] Dgini works as the coordinator of the NORAD-funded developmental projects of its member- organizations. It also works with controlling these projects and with competence building, advocacy and communication. Source: http://www.digni.no/newsread/document.aspx?nodeid=5270. Accessed 13/08-2013.

[14] This is a very brief summary of some 170 years of activity. For a closer look, both on the history of the NMS itself, and the history in each country of engagement, see: Torstein Jørgensen (ed.) 1992, *I tro og Tjeneste,* Misjonshøyskolen Stavanger.

Besides the obvious focus on evangelism the NMS has a notable emphasis on diaconia[15] and other social initiatives in the countries where it operates.

The NMS is an independent organization within the Church of Norway, viewing itself as a tool for the missiological and diaconal goals and callings of this church. According to the basic document, NMS's vision is to "in word and deed, give witness to the mercy in Jesus Christ, contribute to the growth of the global church and the expansion of the kingdom of God among all peoples."[16]

The history of the NMS in Cameroon is very closely connected with that of the EELC, which it helped establish and through which it now almost entirely operates. The NMS reached Ngaondéré in 1925, establishing their first mission-station. From there missionaries extended their work to surrounding places like Mbé, Tibati, Yoko, Bankim, and Banyo. In addition to building churches, chapels and evangelizing, the missions did diaconal work and built schools, dispensaries and dormitories for orphans. In Kåre Lode's history of the EELC, *Appelés à la liberté,* he stresses the particular role the missionaries had in the fight against social injustice, exemplified by the fight for abolition of slavery (Lode 1990:116-121). In 1958 NMS joined initiatives with the American Sudan Mission (SM) who had come to Cameroon about the same time but led its work in other areas of northern Cameroon.[17]

2.2.2. The Eglise Evanglique Lutheriénne au Cameroun (EELC)

In 1958, three years after both of the missions had established a mission station, the SM[18] in Tcholliré and the NMS in Gadjiwan, they agreed to join forces under the name of the EELC

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[15] For a definition of evangelism and diaconia see 3.1.

[16] The basic documents of the NMS can be found following this link: http://www.nms.no/nms-dokumenter/category400.html. Accessed 13/08-2013. The only document available in English is the basic document for mission. Otherwise all documents are in Norwegian.

[17] An in depth presentation of the NMS- history in Cameroon can be found in Lode 1990. See also Jørgensen 1992 (footnote 13)

[18] Now Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA)

(Evangelical Lutheran Church from Cameroon) [19]. The EELC was registered as a religious body in 1965. Whilst being a child of two foreign parents, the EELC is now an independent church, though still with strong ties to, and cooperation with both NMS and ELCA. Its structure is comprised by 10 regions, 84 districts and about 1500 congregations. In addition, the church runs one theological institute, 5 bible schools, 3 district hospitals, 17 health centres, 35 elementary schools, one high-school and a local radio.

The EELC, according to article 4 of its constitution has one goal with three tenets: to bring salvation to humans, spirit, soul and body (EELC 2007:7). Organisationally it has three main departements, namely 1) The department of evangelisation and Christian education 2) The department of diaconal matters 3) The department of communication. Thus, it is an organization of both evangelism and diaconia. The diaconal work have been especially centred with the areas of health and education, but of late they also run a project of rural development and a project of internal reinforcement of capacities. As an organisation, in other words, the EELC work within a broad scale, touching many different layers of society, and was for long the second biggest provider of work in the region of Adamaoua, only beaten by the Cameroonian state.

In spite of its establishment by foreigners, the EELC has for long been a Cameroonian church. Though drawing on thoughts from their western establishers, the church is deeply rooted in local culture and tradition, making it possible for Cameroonians to identify themselves with a structure and expression which is Cameroonian in essence (Lode 1990:256).

2.2.3 NMS, EELC and development

For the NMS, development has always been an integrated part of their work. Ever since the first missionaries to Zululand, proclamation of the Christian gospel was done together with medical, educational and construction work. Both material and spiritual dimensions of life

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[19] French: Eglise Evangelique Lutherienne du Cameroun. This name has recently changed to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon (Eglise Evangelique au Cameroun (EELC).

were assessed (Hovland 2008: 174-175). This holistic way of thinking was characteristic until very recently, when heavy criticism for mixing evangelism and development came up. Hovland relates the main traits of this debate, and concludes that due to the resulting compartmentalizing between mission and development, NMS as an organization, as well as its staff now experience tensions in their development work and a serious challenge to identity and integrity (Hovland 2008:184). She also notes the new strategy within the NMS, where their work is divided into three compartments, namely 1) Church and Christian Evangelization work, 2) Development work 3) Capacity Development.[20] The PLS belongs to the second category.

As for the EELC, social and economic development has always been a focus within the church. The missionaries had elements of these aspects, to differing degrees, in their strategies from the very beginning, [21] but it was especially the Cameroonians themselves who saw economic and social development as a goal in itself (Lode 1993:257). They would never hesitate to bring any kind of concern to the church. For the Cameroonians then, the church was conceived of as an instrument for social progress. Lode states that when speaking of social and economic development, the church has been a success, maybe even at the expense of the evangelism (Lode 1990:257). Whereas this probably has several reasons, Lode notes that there was more funding available for developmental projects. This stems from the fact that it was easier for the mission- organizations to acquire funding for non- evangelizing projects. Secondly, for many the church is not only considered as their spiritual guide in life. The most important for many employees, he states, is their monthly salary (Lode 1993:258).

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[20] Specifics on each can be found at http://www.nms.no/eng/. Accessed 18/8- 2013

[21] Lode states that the Sudan Mission was far more restrained concerning a focus on social and economic development, than was their Norwegian peers (Lode 1990:256)

2.2.4 The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)

Laying under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NORAD is the official branch of development of the kingdom of Norway. Its functions are defined in the agency's terms of reference, as well as annual letters of allocation issued by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This makes it the major administrator of Norwegian long-term development assistance. It also provides funding for NGO's, in the case of which it serves as councillor on what is required to achieve results, as well as communicating the results. The agency is meant to secure the quality of Norwegian development. [22]

In 2012, NORAD provided Digni with NOK 159 600 000, to fund the long- term development projects of its member-organizations, and support the running costs of the organization.[23] Thus the PLS has been funded by NORAD, through Digni and NMS since the beginning of the project in 2002.

The fact that NORAD is a part of the Norwegian government has implications for its distribution of funds. Historically, to avoid misuse of NORAD funding, the so-called paragraph of neutrality was inserted. This paragraph stated that governmental funding was not to be used in furthering any specific political or religious objective (Tvedt 2009:78).[24] As of 2001 this paragraph was erased, but the principle is still valid.

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[22] Source for this presentation: http://www.norad.no/no/om-norad, accessed 05/07- 2013

[23] The list of Digni's member organizations is found at
http://www.digni.no/newsread/document.aspx?nodeid=5217. Accessed 04/07-2013. As of then, the list counted 19 organizations.

[24] A short summary of the history of the neutrality- paragraph as well as the discussion of it, can be found in Tvedt 2009:76-81.

2.3 The PLS project

All against AIDS, officially called *le Programme de Lutte contre le VIH/SIDA* (PLS), is a project that has been running since 2002. There has been two phases to the project. Phase 1 was finished in 2008, the second phase then commenced in 2009 and has terminated this spring of 2013. From 2003 until today the project has been coordinated by the EELC in Cameroon, the NMS in Norway, while "Senter for Interkulturell Kommunikasjon" (SIK) has played an important part in monitoring the project, especially during its first phase. Within the EELC, it is regarded as a diaconal project under the department for diaconia.

The PLS has the benefit of being able to draw on the entire church-structure. Administratively this structure is the frame within which PLS operates. There is furthermore a project- board meeting twice a year to discuss project activities and development, and proposes potential changes of course and/or strategy. The board is constituted by the national bishop, the general secretary, the leader of the developmental work, the leader of women-related work, the leader of the youth- ministry and the NMS- representative in Cameroon. On an everyday basis the project is run by a project-group with a coordinator (50%), an employee, one person in charge of the economics and a secretary. The Head Quarter of the project is in Ngaondéré.

As my study concerns the project as it is now, it is its second phase which is of most relevance. This phase is the one I myself have experienced, and the only one some of my informants have experienced. I will however present the core objectives of both phases, as it is important to grasp the project as a whole.

2.3.1 Phase 1 [25]:

Phase one, being the very start of the project, was predominately concerned with stabilizing and diminishing the number of HIV-infected people. To achieve this, a number of activities were undertaen. Firstly, spread the knowledge of the existence of HIV/AIDS, how the virus transmits, and engage the local society to fight the disease. Secondly, the PLS wanted to encourage sexual fidelity for couples, sexual abstinence for people outside couples, as well as the use of condoms. These three, manifested in the slogan Abistinence, Fidelity, Contraception,[26] constitute the three ways to avoid HIV-infection. The project wanted to contribute to change sexual behaviour in society, and help change the often discriminative attitude towards HIV-positives in Cameroonian society. In addition, they wanted to establish routines and activities to take care of other groups which were vulnerable as a result of HIV/AIDS, such as orphans and widows.

To accomplish the abovementioned objectives, several initiatives and activities were undertaken, the most important of which were to train persons who would do the sensitizing work on a local basis, called facilitators[27]. They would create facilitation-teams of three facilitators in each church- district, including a priest, a representative for the women's circle and a youth-representative). The training and the follow-up of facilitators constituted the main part of the project. Furthermore, an undertaking was to train teachers at all of EELC's elementary and high schools, so the teachers could integrate HIV/AIDS-related themes in their teaching. Training was also given to teachers at the theological faculty and the Bible-schools in order that future leaders in the church should have knowledge of HIV/AIDS, and to people in EELC health-centres and hospitals who were working psychosocially with HIV- positives. Other measures were to produce relevant radio-broadcasts and written materials on HIV/AIDS

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[25] The following resymé of phase 1 is based on SIK-report 2006:3, pages 33-35. The following pages (35-40) gives an analysis of the results.

[26] French: "Abstinence, Fidelité, Preservatif"

[27] French: "Animateur"

Two smaller subprojects were also initiated, namely the *Orphelins et Enfants Vulnérables* (OEV) which had an aim to support orphans with schooling, medicines and food, and the *Programme transmission mère/enfant* (PTME) which offered counselling, free HIV-testing to pregnant women, and medical treatment to mother and child to reduce possible infection during labour. [28]

2.3.2 Phase 2[29]:

Given the positive results from phase one, sensitizing was no longer the most pressing concern. While continued sensitizing initiatives was to take place, the main focus in phase 2 turned to taking care of People living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). Now the focus was to establish support-groups in each church district through which PLWHA can support each other, learn about living with the virus, create and run income-generating activities. In addition, the project should educate home based care voluntaries (HCV's) that would be the project's hands locally in conveying messages, help create support-groups, do home-visits, and take care of PLWHA.

In Ngaoundéré, a specific building called the "centre d'écoute", on the hospital grounds of the EELC- protestant hospital was to be finalized to centralize activities and thus provide a help- centre for PLWHA. The project was furthermore to continue free HIV- testing and condom-promotion, and the subprojects OEV and PTME continued.

Concerning sensitization, it was suggested that the most important group to sensitize is the youth. Thus, the Mobile Caravan (MC) is one of the central sensitization initiatives in this phase. The MC is a group of youths travelling and sensitizing with a band and a drama-

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[28] These subprojects will not play central roles in this study. This is not to say that they are in any way unimportant or uninteresting. As for what concerns religion and development, Haynes, among others, have commented that supporting orphans is one of the main contributions of Christian organizations in HIV/AIDS-related work (Haynes 2007:172). However, as they are sub-projects, and my informants have been selected mainly from the core- initiatives in the PLS, they will not play any particular part of this thesis. Also, I decided only to sample informants over 18 years which leaves out the possibility of interviewing orphans.

[29] The source for this summary is the PLS- project document sent to Digni, see Literature- Digni.

group.[30] The facilitator- teams and their activities from phase 1 were to be followed-up. It is however mentioned as follow-up, whereas the goal of the MC is sensitize, which arguably makes the MC the central sensitization initiative in this phase.

The central initiatives in phase 2 thus became sensitization mainly through the MC, as well as the initiation of support-groups and training of HCV's in order to offer psychosocial aid to PLWHA.

2.4 Religion and health

Though this thesis aims to contribute to the wider discussion of religion and development, as a background it is important to recognize some particular features concerning religion and health. Health is a key area in contemporary development discourse. We recognize the centrality of health- issues is in the Millennium Development Goals (MdG's) (see 3.3.2) as well as within the Human Rights, which article 25 states that

> Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.[31]

In the process towards better improved health in Africa, religious health-initiatives are, and have been crucial (Oslos. & Ud. 2012:34; Haynes 2007:172; Marshall & Van Saanen 2007:33-34).

James Cochrane asserts that religion is crucial to health-work for two capital reasons. One is pragmatic, in that religious actors are widely engaged in health-work either way one sees it. Thus to not consider it would be non sequitur. Secondly, there is the programmatic

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[30] The MC was initially a small theatre troupe who performed during Sunday-services. During the first phase of PLS, they were considered to inhabit a potential of reaching out to youth with information about HIV/AIDS. Since then they have travelled to different areas of north-Cameroon and educated the people in three main ways: through theatre-sketches, through singing and through educational séances.

[31] Source United Nations: http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/. Accessed 18/8-2013.

reason- the reasons for people's choices and actions are often connected to religion, which would make it wrong to ignore (Cochrane 2011:232).

Though several authors have provided examples of successful partnerships between religious and secular health-initiatives (Haynes 2007:158-174 ; Marshall & Van Saanen 2007:49-91), it is also stated that health is one of the toughest areas to bridge. Cochrane identifies a conflict between scientific and religious traditions. Adherents of the different traditions will view reality and thus see their "healthworlds" differently (Cochrane 2011:251).

A particularly difficult area is that of women's reproductive rights. Sacredness of life in most religious traditions morally prohibits any form for abortion or contraception. Whereas there are different stances on this issue within religious traditions, it is nevertheless a very touchy subject. Equally so, on the other hand, for non-religious environments, where such rights are often considered imperative. Deneulin & Bano note that the issue is most troubled on the right to abortion. Contraception seems an issue where some traditions are closer to finding common ground. Many Christian denominations, with the very notable exception of the Catholic Church, are open to some forms of contraception (Deneulin and Bano 2009:111)[32]. However, as HIV/AIDS have so close connections with sexual morals, it is a difficult concern, not only in the Catholic Church, but also in a significant number of other religious traditions, including evangelical Christians and Muslims.

The issue of whose morals to follow underlies many debates about faith-based health- initiatives, and indeed religion and development altogether. Marshall and Van Saanen quote a catholic pastor who is irritated about the "moral conditionality" with which funding for health care come. At the same time, many in a secular tradition would make the case that issues such as women's reproductive rights is a moral imperative, and thus oppose many religious traditions on morals (Marshall & Van Saanen 2007:43). The question is often who has got the higher ground, or which ethical norms should be bottom-line of health-

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[32] Especially in this context, it is imperative to stress the fact that theory and practice are not always one. There are numerous examples of Catholic practitioneers who distribute condoms, even though the Vatican is opposed to it (Deneulin & Bano 2009:111-112)

initiatives? Both large issues as the ones we have mentioned and smaller particular issues may manifest themselves as examples of such underlying moral concern.

These issues are important to notice as we undoubtedly will encounter some of them in the empirical data and analysis of this study. As the PLS is an HIV/AIDS- project, I will in the following present some specifics on the HIV/AIDS- situation in Cameroon.

2.5 HIV/AIDS

As the PLS is an HIV/AIDS-project in northern Cameroon, a basic background on HIV/AIDS is important. The following section will shortly present the virus, and give an overview of the situation in northern Cameroon.

2.5.1 HIV/AIDS

The *Human Immunodeficiancy Virus* (HIV)*,* is a virus that infects cells of the immune- system. Having infected these cells, the virus weakens or destroys the cells functioning, and thus also the immune- system. Having an impaired or destroyed immune- system renders the infected person very susceptible to infections.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), is the most advanced form of HIV. Developing the syndrome may take up to 10-15 years, after having been infected by the HIV. No cure has been found as of today, but antiretroviral drugs may hinder the virus in reproducing itself and therefore slow down the process. AIDS is lethal, not in itself, but by rendering the human defence mechanisms more or less powerless to fight infections or diseases.

The virus is mainly spread via sexual intercourse, both anal and vaginal, but also through sharing contaminated blood, needles, and may also be transmitted from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding (World Health Organization)[33].

2.5.2 HIV/AIDS in northern Cameroon

Statistics of HIV/AIDS prevalence in Cameroon were very elevated at the turn of the millennium, with an estimated 11,8% of the population being infected. Presently, these numbers have decreased dramatically, and one now speaks of a prevalence around 5,3%. The numbers have at all times been higher in the Adamaoua- region in northern Cameroon, particularly in the city of Ngaondéré. Some reasons for this include little knowledge of HIV coupled with high illiteracy rates, and the influence of cultural and religious traditions such as polygamy and early marriages. Other contributing factors include poverty and gender inequality. In addition, the city of Ngaondéré is a meeting point for transport to the north of the country as well as to neighbouring countries. Called *la ville Carrefour,* "the crossroads-town", it is the terminus of the railway coming from Yaoundé, and a city through which almost all truck-drivers pass (EELC 2010:9).

Treatment of the virus is difficult in this area. The health system is neither large nor advanced enough to treat all patients and treat them rightly. Whereas in a western context, one would go regularly to the hospital to monitor ones level of white blood cells (CD4-testing), in Cameroon people cannot afford it. Being a poor region, few can afford the treatment at all. Even though the state sponsors the treatment itself, to get it one must firstly open a medical journal which costs money, and secondly take the necessary CD4 test which has additional costs. The road to free treatment, in other words, is costly.

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[33] Source: World Health Organization, accessed 17/07-2013 (http://www.who.int/topics/hiv_aids/en/)

2.5.3 HIV/AIDS and religion

Due to the centrality of religious ideas in Africa (Ellis & Ter Haar 2004:7), for many, everything in one way or another is connected to the spiritual world (Ellis & Ter Haar 2004:51). Health then, is not just about health, it is about spirituality. Sickness is a spiritual problem as much as a physical one. There are a couple of notions we should make concerning HIV/AIDS' and religion in northern Cameroon.

Spiritual warfare is a common feature in the north of Cameroon (Drønen 2013:6). The world is believed to be inhabited by spiritual forces which may be influenced in one way or another, for instance to harm one's enemies. From this stems the belief that one can throw sorcery upon another person. The HIV-virus can therefore be conceived of as a sickness caused by others (Ellis & Ter Haar 2004:92).

There is also a strong fear for HIV/AIDS. This fear may not stem entirely from the spiritual dimensions, but are definitely strengthened by them. One way that this fear manifests itself is by the fact that many do not even want to pronounce the name of the disease. Instead, many call it the 'disease of the century' (SIK 2006-3: 13). This fear, as well as the moral precepts of religious confessions, have contributed to various social difficulties, such as discrimination and stigmatization of PLWHA.

2.6. Chapter summary

The aim of this chapter has been to provide a brief overview of the context of my study, as well as important background material for the analysis to come in chapters 5 and 6.

I have briefly presented the country of Cameroon and in particular northern Cameroon which is the geographical context of my study. An emphasis has been added on the religious climate and developmental context.

Also, the key actors that relates to my study have been presented. These entail the Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon (EELC)

and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). The EELC is by far the most important actor, which is why considerable space has been given to it.

Thirdly, I have presented the All against AIDS- project (PLS). As there has been two phases in the project, specifics and objectives in both of these have been explained. My study is, however, concerned with phase 2.

Though the thesis does not treat issues of religion and health in particular, some of these are important for the wider discussion of religion and development. Therefore I have chosen to present a number of issues that concerns religion and its relationship to health-work.

Following the thread of religion and health, information about HIV and AIDS has been provided. Again an emphasis on the situation in northern Cameroon has been added, in addition to HIV/AIDS' close links with religion.

Chapter 3: Definitions, existing theory and literature

To be able to discuss my main concerns, important terms and concepts must be clarified. Firstly, this includes the Christian mission with its central terms evangelism and diaconia. Then considerable space will be given to defining religion and development.

Subsequently, I will present important analytical concepts and literature on the subject of religion and development, particularly concerning the relationship between the two entities. There is a growing body of literature discussing religion and development (Jones & Petersen 2011:1295), and my thesis might contribute to this discussion. For that reason, I do not depart from any one theory concerning the relationship between these two concepts but will present an overview of dominant ways of viewing it.

3.1 The Christian Mission- evangelism and diaconia

Whereas religion and development is the academic frame for this study, it is linked to the theological discipline of *missiology,* which is the science of the Christian mission. This *mission* in evangelical Christianity can be defined as communicating the gospel in word and deed so that people may come to faith and join the Christian church through baptism. [34] Thus, it is the sending of the church into the world (Berentsen 1994:15-16). This communication of the gospel is often divided into *evangelism* and *diaconia*[35]. These are important terms in this thesis, and consequently a basic definition of them will be given. As this thesis is not

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[34] Because the EELC is an evangelical Lutheran church, I choose to define the Christian mission as many understand it in the evangelical Lutheran tradition.

[35] Even though it is the tendency to identify diaconia as an integrated part of the mission of church, and thus an objective in itself, some regard this mission mostly in terms of proclamation of the Christian gospel, where diaconia play an instrumental role (Nordstokke 2011:109). The definition of "mission" is currently debated in the Norwegian Christian media, where some protagonists from the more conservative organizations want to define mission more narrowly (Norwegian journal "Vårt Land", Wednesday 3. July 2013, page 26). For a history of diaconia, see Brodd Sven Erik et al., 1997, *Dikonins teologi,* Verbum Stockholm.

fundamentally a theological one, I will not provide an overview over the myriad of available definitions, but a basic evangelical Lutheran understandings of the terms.[36]

Evangelism, according to David Bosch, is "the proclamation of salvation in Christ to those who do not believe in him, calling them to repentance and conversion, announcing the forgiveness of sin, and inviting them to become living members of Christ's earthly community and begin a life of service to others in the power of the Holy Spirit (Bosch 1991:10-11)." Whereas other definitions emphasize other characteristics, the notion of proclamation is common. The strength of Bosch's definition, is that proclamation is widely defined, including both conversion, repentance as well as the forgiveness of sins. This will act as the basic understanding of evangelism in this thesis.

Diaconia has different usages in the church. Kjell Nordstokke states that this is due to the fact that in itself, the term has no apparent theological meaning (Nordstokke 2011:27). He himself, though not attempting to provide a strict definition of the term, subscribe to that of the Norwegian church, namely that "diaconia is the caring ministry of the Church. It is the Gospel in action and is expressed through loving your neighbour, creating inclusive communities, caring for creation and struggling for justice" (Nordstokke 2011:9).[37] Moreover, diaconia is identified as a central part of the Christian mission, regardless of whether the Christian mission is defined in terms of the all-embracing task of the church (which corresponds to the definition in this thesis), or if it is identified solely as *kerygma*- the Christian message of salvation as such (Nordstokke 2011:109). Thus diaconia can both be understood as a special objective of the church, but also as instrumental to the evangelistic objective of the church. We note however, that there is a growing consensus that diaconia is an integrated and unquestionable part of what it means to be a church (LWF 2006:11)

Evangelism and diaconia should not be defined as contrasting concepts, but rather as integrated and interlinked in a so-called *holistic mission*, which indicates that one tenet is insufficient without the other (LWF 1988:22). Mission is thus the collective of Christian

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[36] The EELC is situated within the evangelical Lutheran tradition, which implies that the definitions that are given has to be in tune with basic understandings within this tradition. As the EELC is a part of the Lutheran World Federation, the definitions that are proposed will be in tune with those provided by this federation.

[37] Though not seeking to provide a definition of the term, Nordstokke provides a broad account of theological theoretical perspectives which can be assessed in Nordstokke 2011:11-62)

action in both word and deed, and needs to be understood holistically, encompassing all aspects of human existence (Messenger 2004:34-35)[38]

3.2 Definitions of religion

The way we define religion lays the foundation for how to understand its role in developmental thought. Substantive definitions are concerned with the content of religion-what religion *is*, and which elements it consist of. Such definitions often refer to a transcendent reality, and tend to focus on theoretical statements about religion instead of considering the effect that religion has in different situations (Furseth & Repstad 2006:16).[39]

Functional definitions try to discern how religion functions- what it *does*, and in which ways it influences or affect people or communities (Furseth & Repstad 2006:16). Some may be very broad and include movements or practices that are not normally conceived of as religious, for example sport-fans or humanists. Because in such definitions, the essence of religion is not in its content but lies in the functions religion has in peoples or communities lives.[40]

Many definitions of religion scope either too broad or too narrow (Furstad and Repstad 2006:23-24). The concept of religion, however, is far too complex to be explained in just a few sentences. We are dependent then on having different definitions, which together shed light on the different aspects and functions of religion, and contribute to our growing understanding of the phenomenon. A fruitful definition which entail aspects of both, is that of Bruce Lincoln who identify four characteristics, namely 1) religions claim to truth based on transcendental authority through a transcendental discourse 2) its set of practices which are the embodiment of the former discourse, 3) its community, which constitute their identities on the basis of the two former, and 4) the existence of some kind of institution (loose or very

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[38] The LWF- publication "Mission in context" emphasizes that mission thus encompasses ecological questions, communitarian ones (such as social, political, cultural, economic), as well as the whole human being (spiritual, mental, relational and environmental needs) (Messenger 2004:34-35)

[39] For some substantive definitions, see Furseth & Repstad 2006:16-20

[40] For examples of functional definitions, see Furseth & Repstad 2006:20-22)

rigid) that regulate, reproduce and modify all the three former characteristics (Lincoln 2006:5-7).

3.2.1 Religion as tradition

The way in which we define religion, is crucial for our investigation of its influence on, and place in development theory. With Deneulin & Bano, I would submit that religion, in this regard, is best defined as a tradition of thought, along the lines of Alasdair MacIntyre, who states that such a tradition of thought is an

> Argument extended through time in which certain fundamental agreements are defined and redefined in terms of two kinds of conflict: those with critics and enemies external to the tradition who reject all or at least key parts of those fundamental agreements, and those internal, interpretative debates through which the meaning and rationale of the fundamental agreements come to be expressed and by whose progress a tradition is constituted. (MacIntyre in Deneulin & Bano 2009:61-62)

The strength of this approach to religion is that it is not identified as a set static set of beliefs and traditions which can be analysed concerning their influence or relationship to other spheres of social reality (such as development). Religion in large, is not this. When considering Christianity, which is the most relevant religion in this project, there is a considerable internal diversity with regards to beliefs and traditions. Also within Christian traditions, differences are common. The evangelical tradition is a prominent example (Deneulin & Bano 2009:79-80). Deneulin and Bano continue to state that the major difference between religious and non-religious traditions of thought is that the religious ones also include an agreement on the existence of, and relation to, a transcendent reality (Deneulin & Bano 2009: 62-63). By defining religion as a tradition of thought, we open up for the possibility that religion can, and do, change and evolve. In this thesis, religion as a tradition encompassing the four main characteristics named by Bruce Lincoln will provide the basic understanding of religion. [41]

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[41] Though religion is the central term in this thesis, the term spirituality will also be used, then pointing to the transcendent reality to which religion relates.

3.2.2 Secularization theory

In addition to how we define religion, the place of religion in society is debated. Many definitions, especially functional ones, suggest that religion do contribute to shape and influence social reality. The view that religion is, in fact, such a force is becoming more usual. This has not always been so. As modernity became more and more influential in Western Europe, a body of literature called the "secularization theory" achieved near paradigmatic status within the sociology of religion. Very shortly, this theory identifies a close correlation between religion and modernity. As modernity grows, religion loses its social significance, both in society and for individuals (Berger 1999:2).[42] The roots of these thoughts can be traced back to the fathers of sociology of religion, Max Weber and Emile Dürkheim, who both suggested an inverse relationship between these two concepts (Deneulin & Bano 2009:52-53).

However, starting with the Iranian revolution in 1979, several events in the 80s suggested that the public role of religion was not over (Casanova 1994:3), and made sociologists of religion question their own paradigm. Casanova explains that the most striking phenomena was "the revitalization and the assumption of public roles by precisely those religious traditions which both theories of secularazation and cyclical theories of religious revival had assumed were becoming ever more marginalized and irrelevant in the modern world" (Casanova 1994:5). This in turn diminished the influence of old secularization theory, and many sociologists, like Peter L. Berger, either modified or changed their positions (Berger 1999:2-3).

Today, the debate is more concerning religions role in the public sphere. Some sociologists, such as Steve Bruce, contend that religion is still losing ground and is becoming more a matter of the private sphere (Furseth & Repstad 2006:99). Others argue for the continued role of religion also in the public sphere (Furseth & Repstad 2006:99-100).

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[42] When one refers to the secularization theory, it should be mentioned that there are several facets of it, and therefore several secularization theories, both historic and contemporary ones. An elaboration of them can be found in Furseth & Repstad 2006:82-96. The presentation given above is meant to introduce and shortly define central characteristics of historic secularization theory.

Casanovas famous theory of the deprivatization of religion is a good example in that tradition.[43]

3.3 Development

As was the case with the definition of religion, development has had numerous meanings at different times. This thesis will not provide a comprehensive history of development as a term and project, but I will nevertheless give a short history of the term, before presenting the definition which will act as the basic understanding for this study.

3.3.1 A brief history

Though there is considerable unease as to when development actually commenced, development as a political project can arguably be said to have commenced around the post-World-War II era (Payne and Phillips 2010:6), and since the thoughts from this era are the ones to which this thesis relates, that is where I draw the line.

There is a vast number of definitions and thoughts on what development should contain and not contain, what defines successful development and how to get there. For a long time the term was primarily understood in economic terms (Deneulin & Bano 2009:30-31).[44] Development understood as economic growth, however, was not going to keep its undisputed status. In 1981, marking a shift, the World Bank published the study *First Things first: Meeting basic Human Needs in Developing Countries.* As the title suggests, the focus was to shift from economics to providing the basics needs for those in wanting. These needs were defined both materially and non-materially, encompassing notions such as "self-

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[43] This theory contends that religions refuse to accept the marginalized and privatized role which has been ascribed to it. Thus social religious movements challenge the legitimacy of central secular spheres on a religious basis (Casanova 1994:5).

[44] For more about the different approaches and paradigms to bring about this economic growth, see Payne & Phillips 2010:56-117.

determination" and "self-reliance", but also "sense of purpose in life" (Streeten *et al* 1981:34).

The declaration of Human Rights of 1948, in its article 18, state the right to religious freedom and the need to respect and not discriminate people because of their religion. The Human Rights did not become a norm for development until later, much due to the fact that development was considered an economic term (Deneulin & Bano 2009:40). But from 1990 and onwards the Human Rights seemed to emerge as a norm for development. This raised new questions, as to which of the rights that should take precedence over the others. In our context, interestingly, the 2004 UNDP *Human Development Report* stated that development concerns such as health and education were more pressing than religious and cultural rights, thus favouring the former in a potential conflict.

Gradually the term of poverty has been redefined. Whereas the economic perspective, and whether people have access to the bare necessities of life will always remain at the heart of the term, it has grown to encompass other dimensions of human existence as well. The 2000 World Bank publising "*Voices of the poor*" added yet another dimension to the development discussion. By interviewing people living in poor circumstances about what significant development was to them, new questions were asked:

> What is significant change, and what is good? And which changes, for whom, matters most? Answers to these questions involve material, physical, social, psychological and spiritual dimensions… The increments in wellbeing that would mean much to the poor widow in Bangladesh- a full stomach, time for prayer, and a bamboo platform to sleep on- challenge us to change how we measure development. (Narayan et al 2000: 264)

As a consequence, poverty was now understood as a multi-dimensional problem, and development the solution to these problems- a solution that had to deal with several dimensions of human existence.

When discussing contemporary development theory, one must also mention the influential role of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), pronounced by the United Nations in September 2000.[45] In emphasizing a set of concrete goals within specific fields, these goals mark a new

> **The Millennium Development goals**
>
> 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
> 2. Achieve universal primary education
> 3. Promote gender equality and empower women
> 4. Reduce child mortality
> 5. Improve maternal health
> 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
> 7. Ensure environmental sustainability
> 8. Develop a global partnership for development

way of thinking development. The objectives are supposed to be met within 2015, and are, as we see, quite broad in their scope. In our context, we remark the specific goals on health and HIV/AIDS.

3.3.2 Development as a value-based process

Common for most approaches to development is that it is understood as a positive term which brings along positive processes.

One of the most notable additions to developmental thought in recent time is the paradigm of human development. Building on the works of economist Amartya Sen's work in *Development as Freedom,* the notion of human freedom, and the realisation of human capabilities are central to this paradigm. Poverty, he states, is better understood as a deprivation of human capabilities, than as a lowness of income[46]. These capabilities are plural elements which promote life quality, and within the term he acknowledges elements as education, health, bodily integrity and political participation. Thus the capability-approach focuses on deprivations that are intrinsically important, not just instrumentally important (Sen 2000:87)

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[45] The Millenium Development Goals are found at http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/. Accessed 16/7-2013

[46] However, income poverty is definitely a major part of poverty understood as deprivation capabilities, as well as the latter influences the former (Sen 1999:87-90)

Sen argues that development is fundamentally about the freedom of every individual to choose health, education, community life and so on. Development then becomes the practices which expand people's possibilities to pursue the freedoms that they have reason to pursue. Freedom is central for two capital reasons:

> 1) The evaluative reason: assessment of progress has to be done primarily in terms of whether the freedoms that people have are enhanced;

> 2) The effectiveness reason: achievement of development is thoroughly dependent on the free agency of people. (Sen 2000:4)

Freedom then, is both the means and the ends of development. Whether progress has been made is dependent on whether people's fundamental freedoms have been enhanced. Freedom is also the instrumental means to enhance fundamental freedoms, and Sen identifies five forms of such instrumental freedoms, namely political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guaranties and protective security. These freedoms are interconnected (Sen 2000:38-41).

Furthermore, he argues that the interaction between different political actors is what lays the premises for development. He thus brings back politics to centre stage of the development discussion and argue that by understanding this, he also opens up for the fact that social norms and values play a central part (Sen 2000:8-9). Sen recognizes social values as constitutive of- and instrumental for- substantive freedoms, but emphasize the values that people have a *reason* to pursue. With this it is not meant that the authoritative power should implement and define these values, but that they should reflect the outcome of a public and democratic process, thus reflecting the will of the people as a whole (Sen 2000:78-81; 287).

On this basis religion becomes important, as it helps shape and influence societal values (Deneulin & Bano 2009:46). Furthermore, Deneulin & Bano draws attention to the fact that politics are brought back into the discussion. This because development is a product of the interaction of different political actors. In analysing this process, one must also pay attention to possible religious influences on these actors (Deneulin & Bano 2009:46).

Through the Human Development approach with its focus on indigenous perspectives, values and Civil Society, a lot more space has been created in including new

perspectives into the discussion. This conception of development as freedom, and a value-based process, constitutes the basic understanding of development in this study.

3.4 Religion and Development

To frame my study, and present the discussion into which I wish to contribute, I will in the following section, present notable studies that contribute to an understanding of the relationship between religion and development. As my study concerns religious influence on development and the relationship between the two concepts, literature and concepts that provide insights to these concerns will be emphasized.

3.4.1 Relevant historic perspectives

During the first decades of development, when economic growth was considered as its key component, few studies explored the role of religion. *The theory of economic growth* by Arthus Lewis is an exception, in that it gives considerable space to religion. Lewis argues that religion may either be instrumental for, or an obstacle to economic growth depending on what it preaches. He states that "some religious codes are more compatible with economic growth than others" (Lewis 1956:105). Thus, it depends on the particular religion and its message. He affirms, however, that religious permeates people's beliefs, and therefore influences economic behaviour, either positively and negatively (Lewis 1956:106-107). He also states that religion tends to favour the *status quo* in social relations, which often makes it resist any form of change (Lewis 1956:103).[47]

Another interesting account is Charles Wilber and Kenneth Jamesons study *Religious Values and Development* (1981)*.* Here, they noted and questioned what they conceived as four widely held views on the role of religion in development thought. These views were: 1)

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[47] He adds that it does however have its occasional prophet's, who speak against the *status quo* (Lewis 1956:103).

An instrumental view concerning to which degree religion positively, or negatively influences economic growth;[48] 2) That religion, due to its incompatibility with rationality, hinders development; 3) That religion, if remaining a matter of the private sphere does not influence development. 4) The view that development, having come far enough, would make religion disappear. Seen together, these four views contend that religion is irrelevant to development (Jameson & Wilber 1981:471).

In contrast to this, the claim of Jameson & Wilber was that religion acts as a moral base upon which much of societies are built, and provides moral frameworks. By denying its influence, one only alienates development from its target group, and may create unease or even opposition to it (Wilber & Jameson 1981:475). Having arrived at these insights, they argue that development needs to build on the values of the target group or country, without which it may become a factor of conflict. They further name four important links between religion and development, namely 1) religion's influence on individual behaviour and attitudes 2) religion's position as the moral base of society 3) religion as positively encouraging development, as the Christian Base Communities in Latin-America fighting for redistribution policies, and 4) religion's role through the role of large transnational religious actors such as the Catholic Church (Jameson & Wilber 1981:475-477). They also suggest that religion is not merely an instrument of development, but also a part of its end, as a broad definition of meeting basic human needs would include religious values. The relationship between religion and development, they state is one of mutual influence and thus greater understanding of it is vital (Jameson & Wilber 1981:475).

Even though it does not consider religion as such, I would also draw the attention to the already mentioned World Bank study, *Voices of the poor*. In many ways a ground breaking study, it sought to explore poverty by interviewing those who fell under the definition "poor". Some of its findings were utterly interesting, particularly considering the role of religion.[49]

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[48] Such an approach was often referred to as *the Protestant Ethic Approach* after Max Weber in in the book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1930)*. See additional literature for a modern English translation.

[49] The study was presented in two parts, which are both available in their entirety at worldbank.org. A short account which presents selected findings can be found in Belshaw et al. 2001:39-48.

Firstly it was apparent that religion permeated the lives of the poor, a fact that showed in several ways: 1) It was an inseparable feature of their understanding of wellbeing (Narayan 2000:38); 2) Religious leaders often had high ratings in people's lives (Narayan 2000:190-191); 3) Faith-based organizations were much higher rated than state institutions (Narayan et al 2000: 184; 222).[50] The way religion is considered a fundamental feature of true wellbeing among the target group challenged how the development organizations should think about their work.

3.4.2 A renewed interest

The body of literature on religion and development is growing (Ter Haar 2011:3). Jeffrey Haynes state that the renewed interest in religion is due to three core factors, "deepening globalisation, pervasive calls for better governance and widespread religious resurgence" (Haynes 2007:2), He notes a consensus of development being a far more complex issue than merely an economic one, and that there is a growing interest in human development. Furthermore, there is also a growing consensus that the developmental potential of religion, has been neglected and should be investigated (Haynes 2007:7). The call has already made its mark in several circles, the most prominent example being the World Bank. Already in response to the MDGs in their *World Development Report* of 2000/2001, the Bank called for a stronger involvement of a broader arrange of societal actors and stated that decentralized structures should reflect the cultural norms and heritage where they were situated (World Bank 2000: 12). This opens up for faith-based organizations and places an emphasis on the cultural, and thus also religious, environment in developing countries. This direction from the start of the millennium was continued. Under former president James D. Wolfensohn, the World Bank tried to close the apparent gap between religion and development. Wolfensohn himself helped establish the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) and The Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics (DDVE). The latter was led by the central World Bank figure Katherine Marshall who was the leading figure of a series of World Bank Publications on faith-based developmental work. Particularly worth noting is the book she

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[50] State institutions were often considered as ineffective and corrupt (Belshaw et al. 2001:43-45).

co-wrote with Marisa Van Saanen, *Development and Faith: Where Mind, Heart, and Soul work together*, which give a broad account of faith-based work in development, and attempts to bridge the secular and faith-based traditions. In its concluding paragraph, the authors state "that secular development practitioners of today cannot do their jobs well without a basic understanding of the perspectives and work of faith organizations" (Marshall & Van Saanen 2007:306). Furthermore they argue that the opposite is also true, and that dialogue between the two traditions is needed, especially concerning the tough issues, of which the most obvious are women's rights and reproductive health. The authors emphasize that faith- organizations are of extreme value concerning the mobilization of people, "given their ethical calling and mandate and their extraordinary practical reach" (Marshall & Van Saanen 2007:307).

3.4.3 An instrumental relationship

In many accounts of religion and development, an instrumental relationship between religion and development has been suggested, emphasized and criticised. Though alternative views are emerging, many recent publications are still labelled as proposing an instrumentalist relationship between the two concepts (Jones & Petersen 2011:1296-1297). In the following I will present the main lines of this discussion.

3.4.3.1 Development as instrumental for evangelism

In *Transforming Mission,* David Bosch states that one of the most difficult areas within Christian mission is the relationship between the evangelistic and the societal dimension (Bosch 1991:401). Terje Tvedt, writing about the Norwegian context, argues that the Norwegian government established a neutrality-paragraph in order that development and aid- industry should not end up being a new form for imperialism. State funding should not serve economic, political or religious goals, which was why such a paragraph was necessary (Tvedt 2009:79). However, Tvedt claims that mission-organizations have always done

missionary work, while describing it as diaconia and relief in Norway (Tvedt 2009:80).[51] He accuses Norwegian mission-organizations of being solely concerned with saving souls, and their development and relief initiatives are therefore to be fundamentally considered as instruments for missionary activities (Tvedt 2009:196-197). Based on these concerns, there is a call for a critical investigation of the relationship between diaconia and evangelization within religiously based developmental organizations. Fretheim argues that it is crucial that FBO's define core terms as mission, diaconia, evangelism and relief, and also differ between their overarching goals and different ways to reach these goals (Fretheim 2013:92-93).

Tvedt's accusations first came about in 2004, and launched a public debate about the relationship between mission and development. Responding to Tvedt's accusations, then NMS-leader Kjetil Aano responded by saying that value-based development is not only carried out by FBO's. Development work can never be value-neutral (Hovland 2008:178-179). The question, Aano states, is on which values development should be established. Due to the demands of division between spiritual and material work, Hovland identifies an internal tension in NMS as they view their mission as holistic, entailing both material and spiritual dimensions. She continues by stating that much of this debate stems from a vague undefined fear of religion, and accuse development of being the exact same, namely a secular project or even mission (Hovland 2008:178-180).

3.4.3.2 Religion as instrumental for development.

Many accounts on religion and development, through pointing to various characteristics in the relationship between religion and development, remained mainly concerned with exploring the constructive and destructive potentials of religion to achieve developmental goals. A general trait of the exploration has been that it has been focused around what religious organizations has to offer in the development process (Jones & Petersen 2011:1296-1297). Jeffrey Haynes' book *Religion and development: conflict or cooperation,* represents an important contribution in this tradition. Haynes touches upon several themes,

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[51] Tvedt's definition of missionary-work or mission points to evangelistic practices, not the holistic understanding of the Christian mission which has been suggested in this assignment.

such as conflict and conflict resolution, economic growth, poverty and hunger as well as environmental issues, health and education, and considers the developmental role of religion to be crucial especially concerning two issues;

1. Engendering and influencing values, which in turn can affect the formulation of underlying policy considerations and governmental policies;
2. Worsening or help resolving political conflicts depending on the circumstances (Haynes 2007:212)

Haynes furthermore states that religion is a developmental factor of growing importance in the areas from which his cases were taken, and further that the specific confessional and cultural characteristics of the FBOs in question were of major importance to their work (Haynes 2007:213). He also argues that religion may actually play a central part in what is understood to be wellbeing. As well as making a reference to *Voices of the Poor*, Haynes asserts that religion may add value and meaning to life in spite of being poor (Haynes 2007:55). This, he explains, give reasons to why religion is so important for people in under-developed countries, but also explains why religion can be important to development.[52] He suggests the role of religion in relation to development to be ambivalent. Positive if it "motivates civil engagement in pursuit of socially and developmentally constructive goals," but negative, if it "(1) seeks to exclude others, (2) perhaps resorts to conflict and violence, and (3) overall seriously undermines achievement of socially and developmentally constructive goals" (Haynes 2007:62).

Gerard Clarke and Michael Jennings' book *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular,* is a descriptive account of the role of FBOs in development practice in several geographic regions and with different religious bases. The study tries to bridge religious and secular initiatives, which the authors state, have been finding common ground for over a decade (Clarke & Jennings 2008:4) At the core of this account lies the question of what FBO's may contribute to development (Clarke & Jennings 2008:260). The authors conclude that whether or not FBOs should play a central role in development is a meaningless discussion, as there is a consensus that they do. They further name a number of characteristics that makes the FBOs different from their secular

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[52] He also adds that religious reality and secular reality may collide. Often, he states, adherents to these different realities may attack the other for its lack of realism (Haynes 2007:57)

peers and important in development practice. These characteristics include their developed networks on several levels both globally, nationally and locally, their ability to mobilize their adherents, being less dependent on donor-funding and their expertise in many areas of development practice (Clarke and Jennings 2008:269-272).

3.4.4 Religion *in* development

As religion has been increasingly included as a factor in development thought, authors have begun to criticize the instrumental approach to the discussion (Jones & Petersen 2011:1296-1297, Ter Haar 2011:23-24; Deneulin & Bano 2009:5-6). This notion has made several authors call for a new way of understanding religion in development thought. This call is not new, considering the criticisms of Charles Wilber and Kenneth Jameson (3.4.1) and the insight that religion is an important aspect of wellbeing (Narayan 2000:38), but alternative frameworks have not been so common. In 2009, however, Severine Deneulin and Masooda Bano co-wrote *Religion in Development: Rewriting the Secular Script,* which is a theoretical analysis of religion's role in development. They seek to provide the discussion with a theoretical conceptual framework, and end up saying:

> Relying on a large variety of empirical material, the book advances the key argument that there is no separation between religion and development. Development is what adherents to a religion do because of who they are and what they believe in. The engagement of religious communities in development activities derives from their core beliefs and teachings. (Deneulin & Bano: 2009:4-5)

In other words they do not try to describe the positive or negative potentials of religion, because this does not take into account that each religion should be treated on its own terms with an awareness of its possibility for inter-dynamic change and variations of meanings. As they state, giving food and shelter to poor people may be the deepest expression of faith to one Christian whereas changing structures may be so to another. Yet another expresses his faith by giving testimony to Jesus Christ (Deneulin & Bano 2009:6). The authors claim that "the development work of a faith- community cannot be separated from its identity as a worshipping community, with all that entails" (Deneulin & Bano 2009:156). This do not mean that they disregard the potential of conflicts. They very much affirm it, but

do not think that it should not be in the way of fruitful engagement (Deneulin & Bano 2009:156). For these reasons they demand that development theory should rewrite its script concerning the role of religion. The present script, they claim, considers religion a significant force within development, but needs to engage with its entirety and not just its potential positive or negative effects on development objectives that has already been defined (Deneulin & Bano 2009:5-6;135). They therefore call for increased dialogue between secular and religious traditions. It is crucial that these traditions recognize that they have to live together in the same society, and that an emphasis on their differences does not serve anybody (Deneulin & Bano 2009:161). Inspired by inter-faith dialogue they propose some guidelines for this dialogue, and stress that no dominant leaders should be allowed the power of definition (Denuelin and Bano 2009: 10). The aim is not agreement, but to find commonalities on which to build, as well as mutual understanding and mutual enrichment between religious and secular traditions (Deneulin & Bano 2009:165).

3.4.5 Integral development

In 2011, edited by Gerrie Ter Haar, the study *Religion & Development: Ways of Transforming the World*, was published. Much like many other studies, it presents a broad range of examples of religious organizations' involvement in development work, as well as theoretical perspectives concerning such involvement. The developmental approach of the different authors in this book is called *integral*, contrasting what Ter Haar identifies as *additive* approaches which are more concerned with the instrumental potential of religion (Ter Haar 2011:19). [53] Several authors in Ter Haar's book suggests that development is best understood as an organic process which is dependent on various factors. Louke van Wensveen compares the integral process to an ecosystem (van Wensveen 2011:90). She asserts that local visions, practices as well as virtues are crucial elements in development, and that religion is a factor in all of the above (van Wensveen 2011:100). This comprehension suggest that the relationship between religion and development is organic,

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[53] Additive approaches would largely correspond with my presentation of some instrumentalist approaches to the relationship between religion and development, see 3.4.3.2

different and ever changing from case to case. Development is a process with so many unknowns that it cannot be manipulated with reliable results. Thus one should attempt to adopt an approach where one regards each process closely, take several factors into regard and nurture the each process individually (van Wensveen 2011:90). To be able to bring about sustainable change, such an approach must value local immaterial values (van der Wel 2011:355) and be based on local capabilities- resources that are already present *in situ.* This is why it is referred to as an asset-based approach (Cochrane 2011:234;240). These resources include both spiritual and religious resources (Ter Haar 2011: 19-20), which are generally referred to as spiritual capital. Spiritual capital is defined as "people's ability to access resources believed to reside in an invisible world, which can be mobilized for the common good through forms of active engagement with them" (Ter Haar 2011:20). In this regard, Ter Haar points to four broad categories of religious resources, namely religious ideas, religious practice, religious organization and religious experience. Religious *ideas* point to the content of the belief at hand, *practice* to how these beliefs translate into practice, *organization* deals with the community aspect of religion and finally, religious *experience* concerns the ways in which religious beliefs may influence individuals (Ter Haar 2011:8-9). She then states that,

> Each of these four types of religious resource may be considered in its own right. Dependent on the type of religion, they may differ in importance, but they are interconnected and form an integral whole. Each of them can be explored for development purposes. (Ter Haar 2011:9).

In the closing essay, Lisette van der Wel calls for an inclusion of spiritual capital into development. Not uncritically, including whichever religious manifestations, but rather through a dialogue between the structural analysis of reality and the "software" of religion. Through a synthesis of these two realities, one is better suited to take actions that can bring about change (van der Wel 2011:357).

3.5 Chapter summary

The foregoing chapter has provided the following.

Firstly, the Christian mission was defined, and identified as one holistic mission with two main tenets, namely diaconia and evangelism.

Then a definition of the term religion was provided. Religion was defined as a dynamic tradition of thought, encompassing four core characteristics, namely religious: 1) truth-claim, 2) practice, 3) community and 4) institution.

Thirdly, a brief history and definition of development has been presented. Development was defined as a value-based process which seeks to enhance people's fundamental freedoms and capabilities. This is known as the human-development approach.

Most importantly, the academic field of religion and development has been presented. Some relevant historical contributions were provided, before three of the most notable contributions on how to consider the relationship between religion and development were presented. The relationship has been understood as instrumental, a notion which goes both ways with both concepts drawing on the other. Also the view that there is no fundamental separation between the two concepts has been presented. Thirdly, the paradigm of integral development has been presented. In this paradigm, development is considered an organic process, which means that religion and development are intertwined but in different ways to different times and in different contexts.

This is the academic discussion into which chapter five and six are launched. Related perspectives and writings will also been drawn upon when the analysis and material calls for it.

Chapter 4: Methods and material

This chapter will present the research- tradition in which the present study situates itself. It provides an overview of the research methods that have been used and the particular circumstances and limitations that apply to these methods ,and the specific context in which the study was conducted.

4.1 General aim and approach

One way to gain a better understanding of the relationship between religion and development, is through seeking to understand this relationship from within, by seeing through the eyes of actual practitioners and experiencing it oneself. It is rewarding to access the real-life stories, observations, thoughts and reflections of practitioners. Therefore, I would argue, an empirical qualitative study is the best suited method for this project.

There is an infinite number of practices that could be the object of study, but due to its timeframe, there are limitations to the scope of this project. Thus a lens through which one seeks to better understand the relationship between religion and development, must be identified. I have chosen an HIV/AIDS- initiative run by the EELC in Cameroun, namely the PLS. To obtain the data needed I will be drawing on the research methods of semi-structured interviewing and participant observation. The data collected through these means will establish my main material. In addition to this comes less formal conversations on the subject at hand that I had when conducting my field-work, as well as project- evaluations and reports.

4.2 Qualitative research

The present study is situated within the tradition of qualitative studies. It should therefore be noted that there is considerable unease as to precisely what the nature of such research is (Bryman 2012:380-381), as well as to the reliability and validity of this type of research (Bryman 2012:389). These debate will be covered in this thesis, but as there are different stances concerning both the what, and the how of qualitative studies, it is necessary to identify the tradition within which this thesis is placed, and the different kinds of research methods that will be applied.

Qualitative research seek to understand social reality rather than to measure it, thus taking an interpretivist epistemological position. In contrast to the understanding of objects in the natural sciences, the objects of the social sciences, being people, attribute meaning to their surroundings. I will therefore attept to see the events through the eyes of the people I study (Bryman 2012:380;399).

Secondly, I adopt a constructionist ontological position, meaning that I do not believe that the social reality that I will study is a result of phenomena or premises outside of this particular reality, but rather the outcome of interaction and events within the reality itself. The social reality, to a large degree, creates itself (Bryman 2012:380). In this respect though, I have to make a reservation. Although I consider my own position as constructionist, I do acknowledge the fact that there are premises outside of the reality which I am going to study, that do play a part in the construction of it. The PLS is funded by NORAD, through Digni and the NMS, and there are premises and demands from some or all of these actors, which contribute to the construction of the properties of this particular social reality.

4.3 Research Methods

Two particular research methods were used, namely semi-structured interviews and participant observation. In the following, I will present these methods and to what extent I made use of them. Subsequently, I will compare the two methods, cite some of their general

strengths and weaknesses, and clarify the relationship between them with regards to their importance and the role they play as material for the analysis.

4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews and participant observation

The semi-structured interview seemed best suited for my purpose and constitutes my main research method. It is fairly flexible in its form. The interviewee may answer the questions as he sees fit, and the interviewer can pose follow up questions, or even un-planned ones. While being flexible on one hand, the semi-structured interview does have a structure on the other hand. This is often a sort of guide, with a set of questions or themes that should be covered during the interview (Bryman 2012:471). In my case the liberty of being able to follow interesting threads when desirable, all the while following a set of predefined themes that enables comparison between informants, gave me a good way of trying to access relevant information. I conducted 14 individual semi-structured interviews. These interviews followed a guide with themes and suggested questions under each theme.[54] All were recorded and later transcribed into the language in which they were conducted.[55]

In addition to the interviews, I made use of participant observation, which arguably is the research method through which we get the closest to actually access social reality at first-hand. In this method, the researcher attempts to fully immerse him/herself in the social reality that he/she is studying, by using a wide-span of methods of data-collection such as behaviour-observation, listening to conversations- both formal and informal, and asking questions (Bryman 2012:432).[56] During my field-work I had two occurrences of participant

[54] The interview-guide is found in appendix 4. As stated, this guide has specific themes, each under which a set of proposed questions are found. This guide was the starting point of all the interviews. As the interviews happened, this guide was obviously changed and during every interview I added and withdrew questions (a process which is common and even advisable in qualitative research, see King & Horrocks 2010:37-38). Thus the guide does not represent how the interviews became, but the starting point of them. As most interviews were in French, so was the guide. I have chosen to attach it in its original form, and not in a translated version.

[55] 13 of the interviews were in French whereas the two remaining were in Norwegian.

[56] I also mention as well that the term participant observation often is somewhat mistaken for ethnography. These two research methods are difficult to distinguish, but still ethnography must be said to refer to something slightly different than participant observation. Ethnography certainly contains participant observation, but it also often contains the notions that the researcher has a specific focus on the culture of the

observation- the first one was a *sortie* (sensitizing trip) of the Mobile Caravan (MC) which lasted from October 25 to 28 The second on December 1 (the international HIV/AIDS-day), where I first joined an ensemble of HIV/AIDS- initiatives for a march through the city, and later the same day was a spectator at the sensitizing-show in one part of the town of Ngaondéré, again by the MC. To document these observations, I made field- notes.

4.3.2 Comparison and clarification

There is no right way of conducting qualitative research, merely different methods that suit different situations in search of different kinds of data (Bryman 2012:496-497). Therefore both semi-structured interviews and participant observation has their strengths and weaknesses.

When trying to see through the eyes of somebody else, the participant observer would normally be better situated than the interviewer. He/she witnesses the social reality as it happens, whereas the qualitative interviewer only listen to reproductions of it. Thus, among other things, it may be difficult for the interviewer to understand contextual language and practices, or discover practices that the interviewees take for granted. Also identifying hidden or deviant activities, and to encounter unexpected phenomena may prove difficult. These things are easier for the participant observer to identify (Bryman 2012:493-494).

However, since the participant observer is immersed in a social setting, it is not always easy or possible to apply meaning to and understand incidents which happen. Some issues may thus be more or less resistant to observation. Furthermore, the observer cannot be several places at one time, which restricts his or her scope. The interviewer is better placed in all the former regards. Furthermore, qualitative studies often have a specific focus, looking for specific phenomena or issues. In that respect it is easier for an interviewer to concern himself with this focus in particular. (Bryman 2012:494-495).

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group he studies. Also, ethnography often points to the accomplished result of the study. Furthermore when using the term participant observation, we often imply that we are using other methods, like interviewing, to obtain additional and different data (Bryman 2012:432)

It is common to say that four hands are better than two. Rephrased we could say that two methods are better than one, which corresponds with my own experience with drawing on both semi-structured interviews and participant observations. Due to some observations, I was able to ask my interviewees questions about certain aspects, practices and incidents of which I would not have known if I had not seen them happen while observing. The in-depths interviews, on the other hand, provided interpretative- tools and reflections around the events that happened, so that I could better understand them. Without some of these interpretations and explanations I could have made interpretative mistakes.

AS the numbers of interviews by far exceeded the occurrences of participant observation, it is clear that the interviews constitute my main material. This is further so because a main objective was to better understand the relationship between religion and development on the terms of the informants. The observations, however, played an important complementary part as confirmations and corrections of issues in the interviews. In addition they revealed some incidents which became issues in the interviews. Thus they were a common point of reference to me and some of the informants.

4.4 Sampling

To discover as much as I could it was natural to seek as broad a sample as possible. Therefore I wanted to interview representatives from all layers of the project. As a result, I sought to interview beneficiaries and grass- roots people (volunteers and workers), as well as the leaders of both the project and the church.

Since taking care of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) is a central undertaking in phase 2, I wanted to interview members of a Support- Group for PLWHA (SG), and people working as home-based care volunteers (HCV's). As both of these groups entails both Christians and Muslims, I wanted to interview representatives from both religious traditions. Furthermore, to be able to consider sensitizing initiatives I chose to interview members of the MC, which is the central sensitizing initiative in phase 2. All members of the MC are Christian. From the PLS administration, I wanted to interview both the daily coordinator of

the project[57], the coordinator of the MC, as well as the administrative leader of the project. Among the leaders of the EELC, I considered the national bishop and the general secretary the most important objects of interview.[58]

The church and the NMS encouraged me to interview whomever I saw fit, including themselves. When I needed help to find samples they assisted me. PLS- coordinator Mr. Remi Kalnimé, helped me find representatives from the HCV's and members of a SG based in Ngaoundéré, whereas MC- coordinator, Mr. Valentin Gbetnkom Ntieche gave suggestions as to whom it would be interesting to interview among the members of the MC. Mr. Kalnimé made the arrangements with informants from the SG and HCV's, whereas I contacted the MC- representatives myself on the basis of the suggestions of Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche. None of the informants I asked myself were negative to participate. Well helped by the mentioned individuals, as well as the leaders of the church and the NMS-workers in Nagoundéré, I was able accomplish to conduct all the interviews I wanted.

One can always argue that a larger and broader sample is better. As much as this is true also to my study, my sample is already a broad one, with representatives from all layers of the project as well as beneficiaries of it. On this basis, I would contend that it constitutes an adequate lens through which I can explore the PLS and the relationship between religion and development in this project.

4.5 Circumstances and limitations

Social reality is not studied in a vacuum. Neither I nor the persons I study are neutral, but have different biases and presuppositions. Furthermore, there are a number of other potentially influencing circumstances that should be mentioned. For that reason, I will in the following section discuss specific circumstances and limitations that applied to my study.

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[57] Remi Kalnimé is the present coordinator. He has however not been that for a long time, as the former coordinator Lambert unfortunately passed away in an accident in the spring of 2012.

[58] The national bishop at the time of my field-study was Rev. Thomas Nyéwé. The EELC- general assembly in July 2013 elected Rev. Dr. Ruben Ngozo as the new EELC- national bishop. As Rev. Nyéwé will nevertheless be credited this title in this thesis, as he was the bishop at the time of my field-study.

4.5.1 Time scope and range of study

The PLS has been running since 2002, been through two phases, has held and hold numerous practices, and has had a vast number of employees and voluntaries. Thus my stay of five weeks is both short and lacking in some respects. To minimize this limitation, I have chosen to focus around the activities of phase 2 (2.3.2).[59] Furthermore, I will only focus on the most central practices, which I on the basis of the information about phase 2, as well as through interviews have identified as the Mobile Caravan (MC), the homes-based care volunteers (HCV), the Support-Groups for PLWHA (SG), as well as the leaders of the project and the heads of the church. These are in focus because each group represent core activities in phase 2, or are important leaders of the PLS and the EELC. My informants have consequently been chosen from these practices.

It is also important to stress the fact that I am an outsider in many ways- ethnically, culturally, language-wise and academically. The outsiders-perspective is interesting in that it may highlight practices, patterns and attitudes that are not considered important or reflected upon by those living in a social reality. However, I also risk not to understand all that happens and interpret some elements in a slightly misguided or even wrong way. These are limitations that I have been aware of both prior to, during and after the process.

4.5.2 Language and translation

The language in which all interviews has been conducted (except with the two Norwegians from the NMS) is French. Whereas French is one of the official languages in Cameroon, it is usually the second language of most Cameroonians- a language they master to different degrees, often depending on their education. Though I myself master it well, it is my third language, which means that I do not speak it with complete fluency. Therefore, potential limitations on the basis language must be mentioned, both for myself and the informants.

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[59] Activities, incidents or practices from phase one may however be commented if my informants make reference to them.

In two of the interviews with SG-members, a translator was present and partially needed, due to that they did not master French well enough. In these interviews, I experienced that sometimes the interviewee did not understand, or care about, the question. This was a challenge to my interviews because it resulted in me not always getting answers to the questions I tried to ask. In such cases I sometimes exemplified what I was interested in. This was positive because the interviewee often better understood what the question was about, but it could also have been interpreted as a sort of pressure to come up with an answer. For these reasons, particularly the role of the SG- representatives has been somewhat downplayed in the analysis. They did not always understand my questions, and other times I insisted too much upon notions so that the answers cannot be considered to reflect the thoughts of the informant. Other than this, I did not experience language to be a noteworthy limitation. [60]

As mentioned, all interviews were transcribed in the language they were conducted. In this thesis, quotations are consequently translated into English from the original language which is either French or Norwegian. This suggests that the translations may have some words with a slightly different meaning than the original ones. For this reason, no particular emphasis will be put upon specific words, but rather the general meaning of what is said. If specific words are commented, the original word will also be noted.

4.5.3 Informant bias

As the informants answers are the main source of material, it is important to be able to rely on these answers. Therefore it is important to consider any specific biases that informants may have had. In that regard it is relevant to mention that my father is a known figure to leaders and former leaders/employees within the EELC, due to the fact that he has worked as a consultant with the church several times during the period 1993-2006. I want to underline that his work was connected to the EELC constitution and not to the project in focus of this study. Furthermore, my father is the General Secretary of Digni- the

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[60] Language was no limitation in the two interviews in Norwegian, as Norwegian is the mother-tongue of both myself and the two informants.

organization through which the PLS get the NORAD- funding. Both of these specifics suggest that I was not just any researcher to some informants. This is exemplified by one incident in particular. There was conducted considerable fundraising during my stay, in order to accomplish the *centre d'écoute* (2.3.2). This building should according to PLS-documents and plans already have been built. I also note that I was granted permission to conduct my research by the NMS in Norway and Mr. Erik Bischler, the NMS representative in Cameroon, which also may have given me a status of importance. Mr. Bischler stated in my interview with him: "Yes, they have too much respect for what we think and say. (…). But that is probably because we represent the organisation and the donor who sits with the keys to the funding (Mr. Erik Bischler, NMS-representative, Cameroon)." These specifics must be remembered in two main respects:

There may have been a wish, from persons in the leadership of the project to display the project in a favourable fashion, in order to please the donor. However, the wish to paint the project in shimmering colours would not likely have been different had it been someone else who came making inquiries. I would expect such agenda almost wherever I came.

The second bias is the one of overdoing the role of religion. I introduced the fact that the potential role of religion within the project was the main reason why I conducted this study. With such a statement as a background of the interviews, it is imaginable that some informants have attempted to give the answers I wanted. Furthermore, as I might have been considered a representative for either Digni or the NMS, two distinct Christian organisations, and myself being a Christian, informants may have been tempted to such exaggerations. However, because of the coherence between the different interviews internally, and the coherence with my own observations, I doubt considerable exaggerations of this kind.

4.5.4 The interviews

Some specifics on the contexts of my interviews, as well as my role performance in them should be mentioned.

The contexts for the interviews were different. They were conducted either in the living-room of my apartment, or at the office or place of work of the interviewee. The former

applies to the HCV's, the SG and MC -members, as well as Remi Kalnimé, Daniel Salpou, and Sandra Bischler. The latter applies to the rest, which are all leaders of some kind. When interviewing people in my apartment the atmosphere was more relaxed, a notion that was underlined by the fact that I offered coffee and biscuit. This offer was accepted by Mr. Kalnimé, Daniel Salpou and the MC- members. While this does not necessarily mean a great deal, it suggests that the others who were interviewed conceived of the situation as relatively formal.

Whereas I think my role performance as an interviewer all over went fairly well, I felt it improved significantly after the first couple of interviews. This, probably because I had gotten more accustomed both to the role as an interviewer and the language. A pitfall for me in all the interviews, however, was that of suggesting a statement for the interviewee. This particularly happened when I meant to have understood what the interviewee tried to say and followed up with a question of the following kinds: « could we say that ... »; « So what you are trying to say is that... », followed by a statement. While these kinds of questions do not need to be examples of wrong interpretation, they may be examples of me searching for the answers that I expected. Statements that derived from such situations have therefore been left out.

Also, there is always the danger of being biased or presuppositional. I had reflected upon this, tried to form an unbiased interview-guide and pose as open questions as possible. In addition I emphasized that I wanted the opinion of the informant, not that of the institution or group. There is also the danger of the interview becoming too informal and become more like a conversation that an interview. Though I tried to always restrain from making qualitative statements, it did happen that I made some brief comments or said things that were not well thought through. This is one of the dangers with flexible semi-structured interviews of which I was and became even more aware. In all, I contend that I managed not to make qualitative statements on the matters at hand.

4.5.5 The observations

Concerning my role as an observer, I quickly identified some apparent weaknesses. The most striking was the tendency to view everything from my own perspective- looking for and

exaggerating particular answers. To interpret social incidents we need interpretative tools and understanding of the social reality at hand. While we may think we known a great deal, we tend to know too little. In other words- first-hand access to the object of study does not mean we will understand what happens correctly. Looking for specific phenomena is nevertheless important, as the observer would have too much material if he/she did not narrow his/her scope.

Whereas I did not actively participate in activities happened, one's presence is rarely more obvious than when being the sole white tall man. This accounts for both the group that I came with (the MC), and the auditors in the different settings. Most places, I became an attraction just by having white coloured skin. I do not rule out the possibility that this may have had some form of influence, but I doubt that it influenced, to a notable degree. This because the manner in which the MC presented themselves and the messages that they share are rehearsed and follow a template.[61] Furthermore, I was regarded as a member of the team, by many in the team. At two occasions, I was asked to come forward during team-performances, and presented as a leader of the team. Even if the team-members knew that I did not have any particular role in the work, this indicates that I was at least not conceived to be hostile to it. Therefore, I have strong doubts that the projects performances was influenced by the fact that I was there. I do think, however, that my presence was at times disturbing. I was an attraction, and attractions claim focus.

Concerning participant observation, the debate often goes along the lines of being an overt or covert observer. I tried to have an overt role in everything I did. However, as Bryman notes, it is difficult in many situations to say that an observer is completely overt because many people do not necessarily know all, or any, of the details concerning the observer's role (Bryman 2012:433-435). This very much applies to my situation as an observer. Although I had explained the details concerning my research to the leaders of the MC, the members, who are the very ones who do the actual work, are not sure to have been informed of it. Those I spoke with did not seem to know much about the reason for my presence other than the fact that I was a student. As stated, I was even regarded as one of the team by some in the team.

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[61] The MC had questionnaires for different audiences.

4.6 Thematic- analysis

Marshall & Rossman state that data-collection and analysis often go hand in hand in qualitative studies (Marshall & Rossman 2011:208). This is the case in this study. It is also *iterative* in the understanding that the analysis only starts after some data has already been collected (Bryman 2012:266). Bryman asserts that there are few widely accepted rules for the analysis of qualitative data, which makes it a difficult task to master (Bryman 2012:565). There are however some general approaches, and this study places itself in a thematic tradition. It does so for two core reasons. As my approach to the fieldwork was thematic, I find it natural that the presentation of the material should reflect this. Secondly, in my opinion, a theme-based presentation gives us a concrete understanding of the main areas of interest, conflict and discussion.

The thematic analysis seeks to identify central themes, which provides a basis for contributing to the larger discussion within the literature and research to which the study is related. Bryman points to a number of ways in which the researcher can identify his themes (Bryman 2012:80). In the present study, two ways were particularly important, namely repetitions of topics in the material, and concepts and topics in related theory and literature. The themes are also the product of what I as a researcher has considered important and not (King & Horrocks 2010:149). After having then identified the themes, they will form an independent case which in turn can provide a relevant contribution to the ongoing discussion of the relationship between religion and development.

A particular difficulty regarding identifying themes was the danger of overlapping. Themes, by definition, implies that there is something distinct about them (King & Horrocks 2010:149). Some of my themes admittedly overlap to a certain extent, and they draw extensively on the others. This, I would argue, is something one should expect, when studying social reality. Different parts of that reality necessarily overlap and are intertwined. I would further argue that each thematic category, though being closely connected and drawing on each other, is qualitatively distinct as they each deal with different phenomena, practices and ideas.

4.7 Ethical considerations and confidentiality

When conducting research on real people in real contexts, there are several ethical considerations to make. Bryman, drawing on Diener and Crandall, cites four ethical principles one should keep in mind, namely avoiding to harm participants, getting informed consent, not to invade the privacy of the participants and lastly avoid deception of participants (Bryman 2012:135)[62].

Some of the information I collected might cause harm to participants. Such information includes their attitudes towards the practices of their employer or governmental practices. It also concerns information they have given me about areas of conflict, attitudes towards contrasting religious groups. Lastly, I would also mention their personal religious beliefs as well as attitudes towards their own religious tradition. These kinds of sensitive information must be handled with caution. It was therefore important for me to keep the principles mentioned above in mind during the whole process. Informed consent have been obtained from each and every participant. I had two sets of introduction-documents, one for the leaders and one for the rest. These are identical, except on whether the interviewee is expected to be anonymous or not.[63] These were presented at the beginning of each interview, before the recorder was switched on. Thus I never conducted any interviews covertly. Both the study, and the nature of the questions they would be asked have been well explained both in writing and orally to all participants prior to the interviews.

All participants were also informed that their participation in the study was voluntary, and that they at all times could refuse to answer a question and/ or withdraw entirely from the interview. I had two groups of informants, anonymous and non-anonymous. The anonymous one were for the grass-roots of the project, that is members of SG, the HCV's, and members of the MC, whereas leaders of both the PLS and the EELC were asked not to be anonymous. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and all material

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[62] For a comprehensive account of ethical considerations in Qualitative interviewing, see King & Horrock 2010:103-122.

[63] See appendixes 2 and 3. These are in French and were presented to all interviewees, including the Norwegian ones. I have therefore attached it in its original form.

has been kept confidential. My study has furthermore been approved and recommended by the Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD).

4.8 Chapter summary

Chapter 4 has provided important insights concerning research tradition and research methods.

The research methods that were applied have been explained and discussed. These entail semi-structured interviews and participant observation. As the study entails a much broader range of interviews, these constitute the main part of the material.

The process of sampling has been explained, before turning to specific circumstances and limitations that apply to this study in particular. The limited scope of the study, language- related issue and informant bias have been mentioned as the most important limitations. Concerning the circumstances, I have mostly focused on my role as a researcher and specific challenges connected.

Thematic analysis has been stated as the method for my data-analysis. This type of qualitative data-analysis has been shortly presented, and the criteria for identifying my own thematic categories have been suggested.

Subsequently, I have commented issues in my study that relate to ethical considerations and confidentiality. Most importantly, I have stated that my informants are in two groups, one of which is anonymised and one which is not.

Chapter 5: Presentation of findings and discussion

The presentation and discussion of the field-work will be thematic, organised in seven theme-based categories.

My aim is initially to reveal potential religious dimensions in the *All- against AIDS*-project (PLS). The six first categories concern religious dimensions that I identify as influencing development. These dimensions were of different character, from being very explicit expressive manifestations of faith, to be concerned with the structure of the religious organization. As the categories are a construct based on my subjective division of the research, they will overlap.

The seventh category is not an influential dimension in the same respect, as it is a way of understanding the Christian mission and development in the PLS. Thus it explains and in some ways builds upon the other categories, which is why it is presented lastly.

Secondly, I aim at discussing the roles that religion plays in PLS, in which ways these roles influence development, and what it tells us about the relationship between religion and development. These discussions will be mainly treated under the "discussions"- heading at the end of each category.

5.1 Evangelism

Article 4 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon (EELC)- constitution state that the church's objective is to "bring Gods salvation to the whole human being; spirit, soul and body" (EELC 2007:7).[64] In order to bring salvation to spirit and soul, it is plausible to expect the EELC to be concerned with evangelism.[65] In other words, the soul is considered the most crucial. Because of this, and due to the instrumentalist discussion I presented in 3.4.1.1, I

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[64] French : L'EELC a pour objectif d'apporter le salut de Dieu à l'Homme tout entier ; esprit, âme et corps.

[65] A notion that is confirmed by the emphasis on evangelism in one of the EELC's three departments- the department of evangelism and Christian education.

sought to explore a potential role of evangelism in the PLS. For structural reasons, I have chosen to first present findings from the Mobile Caravan (MC), and then the Home based Care Volunteers (HCV) and the Support Group (SG). Subsequently, I will present additional perspectives, attitudes and general notions.

5.1.1 The Mobile Caravan (MC)

By talking to two MC- members, and MC- coordinator, Mr. Valentin Gbetnkom Ntieche, I discovered rather different attitudes towards evangelism. Both representatives from the MC revealed that the MC sometimes evangelized. One of the members explained that even though their main purpose is to sensitize, as they are a group of the EELC, they often seize occasions to evangelize: "Yes we do both, because we are an organism of the EELC. We are obliged to sensitize firstly, actually sensitize first and then evangelize. The MC is in fact an organism who combats the HIV/AIDS and make profit of the occasion to bring along the gospel" (MC- member 2).

Their coordinator, however, claims that they only make emphasize religion when it is of instrumental use to their sensitization, and only in Christian milieus: "So, when we can use religion as a support- we take advantage of that, but we are not founded on religion. We use the scientific principles to communicate to others, but when we situate ourselves in a chapel to speak, we found ourselves well on religion" (Mr. Valentin Gbetnkom Ntieche, MC- coordinator). [66]

Confronted with the fact that members of the team had told me they considered evangelism as a secondary objective, he responded that examples of this would only happen in conversations between individuals, and normally be the result of questions posed by others. Furthermore, it could be remaining attitudes from phase one, when the EELC department of evangelization used the caravan. This discussion suggests that there does not

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[66] Quotes from the interviews will be identified with name or alias, and position the first time the interviewee is quoted. After this, only the surname or alias will be written. To keep tracks, a list of all the informants can be found in appendix 1.

seem to be particular guidelines concerning evangelism, and that at least some of the MC-members, regard their objective as to encompass both sensitizing and evangelization.

As for the content of this evangelism, one member said: "We do not evangelize saying that Jesus Christ will save you and so on, but we say, for example, that if you are infected, entrust yourself to Jesus and he may save you. We cannot go into a neutral place and not speak of the gospel. We will always be evangelizing" (MC- member 1). She stresses that they do not evangelize by saying Jesus Christ will save you, but still show that a proclamation of Jesus Christ occurs. She also emphasized their obligation to evangelize because they belong to the EELC. My other informant presented a slightly more nuanced picture:

> To begin with, we want to be accepted by everybody, which is through the sensitizing. So on neutral territory as in enemy territory or (...) in our own places, we do what is important. Yes. In the diocese it is important to sensitize against HIV and preach the good news, so that is what we do. But on neutral territory, depending on who is present on this territory- that can be Muslims as Catholics and others- we see to which extent to bring Jesus or not. (MC- member 2)

Thus it seems that evangelism does occur, but that the group are sensitive to the context when deciding the extent to which they evangelize. How then, does this evangelization happen? Informant number 1, a member of the theatre troupe, said that they only evangelize "if we go along with the band, those who sing that is. If we go just with the theatre- troupe, it is just sensitization" (MC- member 1). Thus she claims that the only element of evangelism is the songs. However, she later added that though this is normally the case, there are examples of evangelism in conversations as well: "Yes we speak, we can speak. As I told you to begin with, you are free to speak or not to speak. It is not forbidden (...). If you want to sensitize you sensitize, evangelize, sorry. If you do not want to, you are not forced to" (MC-member nr. 1).

Personally, I saw the MC perform in what can be considered as religiously neutral settings two times. The first one was at the Lycée publique in Meiganga, a public elementary, secondary and high school, where the MC held educational courses in each class and also a show. I did not actually hear songs with Christian content, but both of my

informants say that they performed such songs,[67] which is quite interesting as their coordinator claims that they were not supposed to: "In the list I gave there were none" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche). He went on to say that since he was not there he cannot say for certain what happened. This event suggests that it is the team itself who decides what to sing and what not to sing. Even though they were told not to sing Christian songs, they may have felt that the context allowed it and therefore they did. This gives the team itself the power to decide what they can and cannot do.

New Testaments were distributed towards the end of the show, which strengthens their evangelistic profile. It should be emphasized that this is not regular practice on their excursions. It occurred because a PLS- leader is a member of Gideon Bible Society, and had just received a shipment of New Testaments. Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche was asked whether it was ok to distribute these, and allowed it: "He is a member of the Gideon group, and it seemed he had received Bibles. He asked if he could distribute them, and I find myself in a problem of conscience by saying to someone: No you cannot distribute the Bible here, so I said yes" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche). Though this does not happen often, the incident shows us that it *can* happen. Also, it suggests that Christian conscience and developmental agenda sometimes collide, and that Christian conscience may take precedence in such a conflict.[68]

The second time I saw the MC perform was the 1. December, in the centre of Ngaondéré. Earlier that day, several organizations had collaborated to an anti-HIV march in town. After the march, the MC held a show while there was a possibility for free HIV-testing. During this performance I did not notice any communication of religious character.

I also experienced the MC performing in Christian contexts. Here they had a distinct Christian expression, both in mixing Christian songs and songs on HIV/AIDS and also sharing devotions. One performer told me after a concert in Meiganga: "I tried to draw the two of them together and reveal the link between the two." This underscores what all of my informants said, that they found themselves firmly on Christianity in Christian settings.

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[67] There are good reasons to believe them instead of me. I was occupied on several fronts- talking with people, taking notes and taking pictures for them as well as the fact that I did not always catch everything that was being sung. In addition, they distributed New Testaments towards the end of the show, and them singing Christian songs was also confirmed by the PLS- coordinator Remi Kalnimé, who was present.

[68] A notion that will be further discussed in 5.4.4.

In sum, the MC seem to be concerned with both sensitizing and evangelism, which seems natural to them. Whereas their main objective is to sensitize, they evangelize whenever this seems safe and unproblematic. This happens mainly through singing. We note, however, the difference of opinions between the members and the leader.

5.1.2 The Home- based Care Volunteers (HCV) and the Support- Group (SG)

The HCV's, constitute a very significant part of the project, as they have everyday contact with people outside the project and possibly close relations with People living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). There are numerous HCV's, both in Ngaondéré and in other parts of Cameroon, which makes it difficult to map all their doings, as these may differ from place to place and volunteer to volunteer. Thus, in addition to their work, I was interested in their education.

According to the two HCV's whom I interviewed, religion was neither encouraged nor discouraged during their training, except for a prayer at the start and at the end of educational sessions. Their training concerned HIV/AIDS, and how to support and care for PLWHA. Religion was not, however, entirely absent in their work. One informant said that, even though they were not encouraged to speak of religion, it could emerge as a subject in dialogues: "It is for each person to consider religion, if it pleases him. Based on his treatment he can choose. Therefore, we do not force it, but it is in the dialogues where a person can give himself to religion." (HCV- 2, Muslim). As some HCV's are Muslims, this accounts for both Muslims and Christians. Thus, evangelizing may occur in such conversations, but it is not encouraged by the PLS. It would be on the initiative of each volunteer, which could be the case in other projects as well. This was exemplified by another informant, when I asked if she could join a non-Christian project:

> I would do it, and that is where we could benefit to be able to share the Word of God with them as well. Yes, that is a good thing. God has told us "go to every nation and share my words with people and make disciples, so that would be where God had sent me, and so I would have to go in the middle of them to evangelize to them the word of God. (HCV- 1, Christian)

Thus, whenever evangelism occurs it is not because the PLS is Christian, but because the HCV is. Such occurrences of evangelization in the PLS, are manifestations of individual religious

callings rather than the PLS being a project of the church. In sum, evangelism is not a pronounced objective among HCV's. It may however be a personal objective, for Muslims and Christians.

Concerning the Support Groups, there is little reason to discuss evangelism on behalf of the PLS, due to the fact that the groups themselves decide their doings. Evangelism is present only if the group wishes it. The PLS do follow-ups of the groups and assist them if they ask for education on specific themes or even if they require a pastor to speak to them, but such potential activities are decided by the group. [69] The members I interviewed told me that religion was not an issue that was extensively talked about, but that sometimes a pastor was invited to their meetings. Both Christian and Muslim members considered the visit very positive. A Christian woman said that: "the visit of the pastor was really interesting because there was a gospel-part firstly, and secondly there was moral support" (SG- member 1, Christian). A Muslim woman also considered the visits encouraging:

SG- member 2:   They pray sometimes and they also speak a lot about believing in God, and not to think too much or get agitated about the disease. Not to hold grudges and things like that.

Interviewer: So they encourage you too?

SG- member 2:   Yes, a lot. (SG- member nr. 2, Muslim)

The Muslim member later said that she did not consider this as a problem. She did not feel pressured to convert or respond to evangelism. This also accounts for PLS- staff:

SG- member 2:   I understand. So it is more that they seek to help you?

SG- member 2:   Yes that is it. Without judging me, without telling me that you have done this or that. They only seek to help and support me. (SG- member 2)

All of the informants from the SG showed a similar deep gratitude towards the PLS, which is exemplified in the following statement by one of the Muslim women: "I want to say that it is

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[69] Whereas there are seven support-groups that are initiated by the EELC, I only spoke to the members of one group. This was a group only for women that either had children or were pregnant. Shortly after I left Cameroon, the PLS hosted a conference where the groups could meet and exchange ideas. Even though my sample is limited, the groups are all organized the same way, meaning that it is they who define how the group should function. Thus, each group may vary largely from the other groups, and so may the experiences of their members. The strength of my sample then, is that it gives a representative picture of one group, but we still need to keep in mind that the variations may be significant in other groups.

thanks to that organization that I even have the will to live. Before, when I learned that I was sick, I was sure that life would stop for me. But as I encountered this organization and met many others like myself, I found the courage and the will to live" (SG- member 3, Muslim).

5.1.3 The gospel as hope, consolation and a last resort

MC- coordinator Valentin Gbetnkom Ntieche was restrained concerning evangelism within the PLS. He argued that it was important to have a clear focus, and that evangelism could push some listeners away. In the other interviews, however, I never met similar attitudes. All the other interviewees were positively disposed towards evangelism, but in different ways, and on different bases. However when I pressured them, asking if some groups could find an emphasis upon the Christian gospel troubling, most informants admitted that it was conceivable.[70]

Considering the positive potentials, however, it was claimed that the gospel-message was an important part of the project, bringing consolation and hope.

> The gospel comes then to console. The gospel comes to remind that hope is still hope, and especially, HIV may destroy the body but it does not touch our soul. That it would be better to preserve our soul for eternal salvation than to focus on the consequences of HIV on the body, which is mortal. (Remi Kalnimé, PLS- coordinator)

The gospel, it was suggested, can be an asset when used to console, give hope and distract thoughts away from the disease. Bishop Nyéwé confirmed this potential, and added that it was often considered a last resort for PLWHA, if they were terminal.

> We say to ourselves that one who is infected with HIV loses heart, (…) and we have to bring along the gospel which is the last resort for him. In such circumstances we often have many people who accept the gospel- people who have never accepted the gospel before, but in such circumstances may accept it. So we give that possibility, that opening. It has always been like that- since the beginning of the project to today. (Rev. Thomas Nyéwé, National Bishop EELC)

PLS-leader Daniel Salpou agreed to this by saying: "There are some of those of suffer from this sickness who might die. So, to prepare them to meet God is also a very good thing- a

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[70] This will be further treated in 5.4.3

responsibility of the church." (Daniel Salpou, PLS- director). The general attitude was that such a practice was not problematic if hearing or accepting the gospel was not a contingency for help. Mr. Kalnimé said:

> I think it is important, however, to accompany our actions, our care, everything that we do with the gospel on the side for the one who is open and may accept it. But without forcing it and respecting the religion of the other. We present it while respecting his religion. (Mr. Kalnimé)

He confirmed that the gospel was shared with Muslims as well as Christians, and told me that this never caused any problems.

> We speak of the gospel with the Muslims, and sometimes when we share some texts of the gospel, they say that these are texts which exist in our Quran. There are parts of the gospel which are present in the Quran and they feel comfortable listening to it. They even contribute with some ideas. (Mr. Kalnimé)

EELC- General Secretary Djoulde Hamidou also thought a communication of the gospel was unproblematic, if the individual was free to accept or reject it.

> No, that should not be problematic, as it is not forced. If the occasion allows it, we may do it, if the occasion does not allow it, we leave it be, but it should not be problematic. (…) It is not a problem, neither for the one who gives nor for the one who receives that help, (…) because he is free to accept or decline. (Djoulde Hamidou, EELC- General Secretary)

He added that he did not consider the receiver as in any way submitted, even if he was infected with HIV: "No, it does not render him more submitted, even if he is weak, (…) we do not force him" (Mr. Hamidou).

Unsurprisingly, one outcome of evangelism was converts, which we saw the bishop state, and so did others like Mr. Kalnimé and Mr. Hamidou. The informants underlined that when, and if, such conversions happened, though a joyful event for the church, it was not something that was expected. Conversion, or listening to the gospel-message at all, was not a condition for receiving help, neither was it necessarily a consequence of proclamation.

Concerning converts, it is also important to emphasize that potential conversions are not bound to stem from evangelism. General Secretary Hamidou told me that several persons had converted as a result of the care with which they had been met at the hospital.

> Because there are examples like that, where people (…) who were convinced Muslims, and close to death. They have been taken to the Norwegian hospital, where

they have been operated and treated and their health has recovered and afterwards they have become Christians. Just because they have encountered a care which changed them. But this has not been expected or a condition. (Mr. Hamidou)

The notion that either the hospital or those working with the project gave a different and better care than many other places was widely acknowledged by those with whom I spoke. Such a care would in turn convince the receivers that there was something special about the Christians.

When I asked EELC- national bishop Thomas Nyéwé whether he thought it was problematic or good that the church mixed evangelism with HIV-information, his answer was clear:

Here, we always experience that is good (…). If it had been an NGO that did it, they might find other ethical elements to enrich the sensitization, but as it is the church that does it, the church adds the gospel which is important to it, and that makes a good combination. And I believe in that which I know- they have never been rebuked or critiqued because they do it. Everywhere where they go, even when they encounter Muslims, that is what they do. (Rev. Thomas Nyéwé, EELC- national bishop)

Thus, he claims that every organization has its identity which provides ethical elements. The fact that the church draws upon elements from the Christian faith, should not be surprising or something to fear, but self-evident due to their identity. It should rather be considered a strength than a weakness.

5.1.4 Discussion

My material points to a diverse set of practices and attitudes concerning evangelism.

The HCV's did not seem to have any specific guidelines concerning evangelism, which neither restricts nor encourages such a practice. This opens up for both Muslims and Christians sharing their faith. As for the SG, they decide for themselves which elements that are emphasized during their meetings. Thus evangelism or other religious message is of their own choosing. I was told that they sometimes invited a pastor, and all of the members that I spoke with confirmed his presence and message as positive.

Concerning the MC- members, their objective seemed to be understood dually, encompassing both evangelism and HIV-information. Evangelism was clearly the secondary of these, but still seems to be a part of their objective. For the MC-members then, evangelism seems an integral part of their self-understanding as a group, whereas among the HCV's it is probably more on an individual basis, if at all. It must be emphasized that the MC includes Christian elements only when the context seem to allow it. Their sensitizing-performances are thus considered as potential arenas for evangelism, with caution, due to a fear that it can act as a hindrance for sensitizing. There may be many reasons for which evangelism is more central to the MC than the HCV's. Firstly, the MC is a group consisting of only Christian believers, whereas the HCV contains Muslims as well. Secondly, they were initially a church- group and are still used in Christian settings.

Regardless of the reasons, the MC-members' embrace of evangelism as an objective suggests that evangelism does occur in the PLS. Two other notion support this: Firstly, it does not seem an unwelcome feature. With one notable exception, all informants rejected the notion that evangelization should be kept strictly apart from the PLS, as long as it was not a condition for inclusion. Secondly, there does not seem to be clear guidelines or precepts concerning evangelism. The HCV said that they were neither encouraged nor discouraged to speak of religion, and even though the MC- coordinator claims that he told the team not to evangelize, the team chose to. Also, the coordinator allowed the distribution of NT's during a performance. The distribution of these were furthermore suggested by one of the PLS- leaders. What then do these notions tell us about evangelisms influence on development?

Bishop Nyéwé emphasized that any organization would build on elements natural for it, and therefore the church naturally linked its work to the gospel. This implies what some authors have suggested, that neutrality is a utopic ideal. Development will always be value-based in one way or another (Torm 2012:28). In this thesis the development is defined it as a value-based process (3.3.2). The development- process is intrinsically built on values. In that regard, the Christian gospel can be understood as an integrated part of development processes driven by churches, as this gospel is their constitutive value. As Fretheim argues, however, all values are not positive (Fretheim 2013:94), which calls for a closer exploration of them. This notion is central to this thesis, as we look consider the different ways in which

religion and development are connected. Thus it will be discussed in all the following sections, but from different angles. In the following we consider evangelism in particular.

My informants in general pointed to a positive potential in evangelism. They particularly emphasized its potential of consoling and giving hope to PLWHA. It was furthermore imperative that proclamation of faith was not in any way expected in order to get help. According to the informants then, evangelism influenced development in a positive way, adding dimensions of hope and consolation to the health-work. Thus they identified it as a spiritual resource, which dealt with the spiritual dimension of existence. To some extent, this is confirmed through the experiences of the SG- members that I interviewed, which seemed exclusively positive. These accounts, however, come from people who themselves have invited a pastor. Furthermore, the SG- members seemed to be deeply grateful to the PLS which would make them already inside the project and very positively disposed concerning it. The positive potential in evangelism, however, should not be discarded. Vinay Samuel confirms such a potential in noting that the gospel may bring dignity and hope to the poor, and thus be an asset (Samuel 2001:239-240). The positive potential of evangelism should thus be confirmed. It is probable, however, that this mostly accounts for adherents of that particular faith or tradition, as they identify with the message.

Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche was the only informant pointing to a negative potential of evangelism, in that HIV- education of the population could be hindered by it. It was imperative, he claimed, to keep a clear focus regarding ones objectives. Even though he was the only leader to make his point, several others admitted that insisting upon a Christian identity could be troubling. Furthermore, the claim that PLWHA are not in a vulnerable position is certainly not the general conception. My informants from the SG pronounced their gratitude to the PLS numerous times during the interviews which testifies to a degree of dependency. One of them said that "it is thanks to that organization that I even have the will to live" (SG-member 1). Whereas this is positive, it also exemplifies dependency. Fretheim notes that even though the support given by a donor is offered unconditionally, this may not be the receiver's experience. Among other things, it may be regarded as a last resort or what is experienced as force (Fretheim 2013:92). This may be the case when considering that several people have accepted Christ towards the end of their lives, due to their severe condition. Knut Nustad argues that a receiver of a gift will always be in a diffuse

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debt to its giver (Nustad 2003:20), which arguably makes it suspect to connect messages to the gift. These examples apply particularly to potential evangelism among the HCV.

Both of the former examples indicate that religion draws on development instrumentally for its own growth in a way close to what Terje Tvedt criticise (Tvedt 2009:197-198). Some examples of this type of evangelization could also be criticized for being a form of indirect force (Fretheim 2013:92). Internally, the close relation between the two concepts is a challenge for the PLS- workers themselves in defining the actual mandate of the project, and which elements of religion should, and should not be allowed. The suggested lack of guidelines can potentially turn to a change of focus. As life fades, it seems to be more important for the church to save a patient's soul. Even if this is not intended as an exploitation of trust, it may be criticised of being that. It may seem that the some within the PLS switch focus as someone is getting closer to death- evangelism then, becomes the primary concern. This shift would make it difficult to discern one concern from the other, both for outsiders and insiders, which does call for a clarification of core terms and objectives (Fretheim 2013:92-93). Haynes argue that in any religious world-view, development will always carry a dimension of redemptive hopes and expectations (Haynes 2007:109). Consequently, it becomes difficult for both practitioners and receivers to understand both the mandate of the project, what kind of development one actually tries to realize, as well as the relation between potential numerous objectives.

The practice of evangelism thus influences development in several ways. Given its potential to be a consoling element of hope and confirms the dignity of people, it is arguably a possible resource for psychosocial support to PLWHA. This applies in particular to people from the same confession or tradition. It is also possible, however, that what is intended to be consoling and helpful is experienced as force. This makes it difficult to state the ways in which it concretely influences development, as these may be diverse. Rick James rightly suggests that the definition of what actually happens, often depends on who makes the judgement (James 2012:45). Thus, the implications for development becomes difficult to name. Evangelism's potential in psychosocial work seems difficult to master. It is difficult to know when it functions consoling and preaches hope and dignity, and when it profits from occasions or vulnerabilities. Which potential that is realized often seem to rely on the eye

that sees. The same occurrence of evangelism can thus have both positive and negative consequences.

However, most of the examples of evangelism in my material came from the MC which do not have a particular psychosocial mandate. Evangelism in those situations seem to be meant for the expansion of the gospel. In such examples it seems appropriate to regard the relationship between religion and development as almost entirely instrumental.

5.1.5 Summary

The former presentation and discussion helps us identify several aspects concerning the relationship between religion and development. Firstly, we see several clear elements of instrumentalism. The MC seemed to consider the arenas where they performed as potential arenas for evangelism. The developmental initiative helps them to gather masses of people so that they can, under given circumstances, evangelize along with sensitizing. Secondly, the gospel is sometimes communicated as a last resort to PLWHA.

The latter example can also entail an element of force. Though the offer is meant to be voluntary, the vulnerable situation of PLWHA and their possible dependency upon the project may render the individual's choice less free than intended. Thus, to some extent, developmental aid may be perceived to be conditional upon religious adherence. Also, evangelism can confuse both development receivers and practitioners in that it renders the objectives of the initiative unclear. Evangelism does then become a part of the actual development objectives, and leads to questions of which development one seeks to enhance.

Evangelism can also be considered as spiritual capital, by providing consolation, hope and dignity. In such examples, evangelism adds a spiritual dimension to development. We saw however, that the same situations could be conceived differently by different witnesses, which makes stating the actual influence of evangelism very difficult. Evangelism's psychosocial value thus becomes hard to master, and its impact difficult to decide.

5.2 Prayer

Religious practice is central to the definition of religion (3.2), and a common trait for Christian religious practice is prayer. Religion plays a central part in Cameroonian society (2.1.2), and many of my informants, as we will see, emphasized prayer when talking of religious manifestations in the PLS. For these reasons, prayer emerged as an independent category at an early stage in this thesis.

5.2.1 Prayer as comfort and unity

Psychosocially, prayer seemed to play a very important role for the PLWHA that I interviewed, as a channel for hopes and dreams.

> As for us, everybody thinks it's good. It is still God, and when we pray, we always ask God to give us faith as well, to continue to live and to keep our children, and every one of us believe because it is what we all need in our hearts now. (…) That is what we always ask of God- to guide us, to help us keep our children, to give us good health. In all languages, in all religions, we ask for the same. All of us believe and all of us bow our heads when we pray. (SG-member 2, Muslim)

Prayer thus seems as something which is central to the support of PLWHA. One of the volunteers confirmed this, and noted that they would often make use of prayer as support to the PLWHA: "What we often do is to pray with them. Pray to support them" (HCV- 1). All of the informants from the SG said that to pray was the first activity to happen when they met, and that they would pray again at the end of the meeting.

In the SGs they choose their own practice. Prayer is central to them because they choose it, and it seems to be a uniting element rather than an element of division, even with people of different religious confessions in the group. None of the SG-informants had a problem with someone representing another religion praying. A Christian SG- member stated: "It does not bother me. Prayer does not bother. Muslim or Christian- it is the same!" (SG-member 1, Christian). Another member said: "We pray one time. If a Christian person

has begun the meeting, she prays. If that person is Muslim, we do the Muslim prayer." (SG-member 2, Muslim).

The notion of prayer as a uniting element was expressed by the HCV's as well. A Muslim HCV told me that: *"Also when we are together, the Christians pray, the Muslims pray- everybody accepts prayer. We say that it is the same Allah that we praise"* (HCV- 2). A prayer to God would be acknowledged, and considered a special moment by both Christians and Muslims. The bishop, who had just returned from a ten day tour in the northern parts of the country, explained how he, during this tour, had been requested to pray for local Muslim leaders.

> During the tour that I just did, I had the occasion to pray in a Lamidat (…). Unfortunately the Lamido was not there, but his representative was, and I wanted to leave without praying. I went to greet them and would leave without praying, but the representative said: "The bishop must pray for us" You see? That is a Muslim who asks a Christian bishop to pray. I got the chance to pray in a less important Cheferie as well- the same thing happened. The chief asked if we could pray, and I got the chance to pray. (…) That does not mean that the representative of the Lamido will become a Christian, but he accepts the Christian prayer and believes that Christian prayer can do something for him. (Rev. Nyéwé)

In this situation, which is a formal meeting with both Christian and Muslim leaders, a Christian prayer was actually requested of the bishop. This more than merely suggest that prayer is respected and accepted. It seems as if the different religious groups actually acknowledge and value each other's prayers. Prayer is not just a practice they have in common- the God to whom they pray, is also considered to be the same. Prayer can thus form a religious and cultural common ground.

5.2.2 Prayer as division

Though prayer seemed to be a generally unproblematic feature, some notions pointed to a divisive potential to it. For instance, the Mobile Caravan avoided praying in public to ensure that their prayers would not hinder their main message.

> Yes, in all our rehearsals- at the beginning- we pray and we put our rehearsal into the hands of God. At the end as well. But when we are on neutral territory, we pray

between ourselves- we would not risk a moment of disaccord with the others because we speak of religion. (MC-member 2)

This was surprising, as the MC-team on other occasions, evangelized when the occasion seemed fit (5.1.1). It was unproblematic to sing about Jesus publicly, but not to pray to him. Other informants also indicated that prayer could be an element of division, if too much accent was put on Jesus. Mr. Kalnimé said that they would often avoid to pray in the name of Jesus, not to provoke the Muslims.

> For us in Africa, when we speak of prayer, it is really something special that we are receiving. Either tell or receive something to or from God. It may be through Christ or through another prophet, but it is anyways something special that we receive from God, which does that in that moment, regardless of all the beliefs, we are in relation with God. (…) We pray without making reference to religion. We pray for all the souls who are there- we leave them to God, and ask God to show us how we can help these persons. And, not to hurt any beliefs in the prayers, we will not accentuate Christ, but instead meet the Muslims by saying God. (Mr. Kalnimé)

The divisive potential thus seems to be the name of Jesus, and not prayer in itself. Bishop Nyéwé suggested the same, relating to that the EELC had shown a similar caution when they were to participate in a cross-confessional prayer in Ngaondéré. The Catholics, however, had prayed in Jesus name, which did not seem to provoke.

> Nyéwé: We saw the Catholics who did it all, they prayed in the name of Jesus. (…)
>
> Interviewer: Did that provoke the Muslims?
>
> Nyéwé: No, not at all.
>
> Interviewer : It was ok, they were not troubled by it ?
>
> Nyéwé: Yes, it was an ecumenical prayer. Each person come and pray as is his habit where he comes from. As for us, the Protestants, we thought that to avoid provoking the Muslims, we will only pray in the name of God and not mention Jesus Christ. (Rev. Nyéwé)

Though the Catholics did not seem to provoke anyone by praying in the name of Jesus, the Protestant churches chose not to. This suggests that there are potential divisive elements in the name Jesus, which make the EELC and some other churches avoid praying in his name when praying in non-Cristian contexts.

5.2.3 Prayer as marker of identity

Prayer was not as central to the HCV's as to the SG-members. All of the HCV's said that there were prayers during their HCV-training, but it was not something that they were encouraged to do amongst the patients they met, or expected to join during their training. Nevertheless, all of the volunteers I interviewed prayed from time to time with the persons they met. Sometimes they asked if they could, and other times on requests. The fact that there were prayers during the HCV-education suggests that the Muslim HCV's are not particularly troubled by it[71]. Prayer was also central for the Mobile Caravan (MC), but they avoided praying in public to ensure that their Christian prayers would not block their HIV-message.

Bishop Nyéwé confirmed the centrality of prayer to EELC- initiatives. When I asked whether a spiritual dimension was important to their developmental projects, prayer, as well as devotion, was what he firstly emphasized:

> Yes, it is immensely important. Our approach is "the gospel to everyone", and following this perspective there is always a spiritual aspect to all our projects. The spiritual aspect has to be central. When things functioned well in this church, we had the habit, in all our institutions, to start with a devotion as we did this morning. In all our institutions, whether that is at the construction centre, at the hospital or in our schools, we always started with prayer to show that this is a branch, this is a prolonging of the church. Whatever the definition of the project, there is always this important element which is to have first place. (Rev. Nyéwé)

This notion of prayer and devotion as always present during EELC- gatherings was confirmed on the MC- excursions which I assisted, where they always seemed to play an important part. Mr. Kalnimé told me that they had planned such a practice at the upcoming meeting between all the SG's at Tibati as well, where Muslims obviously would be present.

> We always say that we want to do this, will it be uncomfortable for you? For those who do not feel comfortable- they may stay outside during the 5-10 minutes of devotion, while others say, "it is the word of God, we are ready to hear it". For the majority that is always the case (…). (Mr. Kalnimé)

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[71] It was also one of the aims of the PLS' second phase to include a bigger number of Muslims into the program. It seems unlikely that they would impose Christian prayer on Muslims if they wanted them to join the program. The notion that they nevertheless held Christian prayers suggests that it was not thought of as an element that could cause division or opposition.

Prayer consequently seems to be an element which helps define the projects as EELC-projects. According to bishop Nyéwé, the spiritual aspect is always present in their projects, and prayer, as well as devotions is one way of marking this.

5.2.4 Discussion

Prayer was central in all the practices that I investigated, though not in the same manner or to the same degree. In the SG, prayer was the first thing to happen when they met, and as central for the Muslims as for the Christians. Their prayers were furthermore from both religions, depending on who led the meeting. In this setting, prayer seemed to have two main dimensions. It created unity- Muslims and Christians recognized each other's prayers. In addition, prayer had a dimension of support, comfort and hope. It was a channel for their fears, problems and hopes for the future. "All of us believe, and all of us bow our heads", as one of the members said.

The HCV's also prayed, but not as systematically. For them it was not a part of their *ordre de jour* as it was in the SG. They prayed if they were allowed to by the PLWHA, or if they were requested to. Such prayers were neither encouraged nor discouraged by the PLS. However, the leaders knew of this practice, which makes it plausible to think that prayer was allowed and tolerated. The MC were sceptic of praying outside of Christian arenas, because they felt it could jeopardize their main message. They did pray, but only amongst themselves. This testifies to prayer potentially being a divisive element.

I recognize a dual potential in prayer. Whereas it may be unifying, it may also create gaps, or pinpoint differences between groups, and create what can be called a Christian space (Hovland 2008:183). The MC fears that prayer can be a mark of identity- that if they pray publicly before their performances, it may be understood as a symbol of Christian identity and create a Christian space. Potentially then, prayer can narrow development in making it available to some, but not to all. This is however a potential and not a definitive consequence. My material as a whole almost unanimously point towards positive potentials in prayer.

If prayer encompasses both a potential of unity and of division, we must ask when it realizes these different potentials. A possible reason for the difference between the practice of prayer in the MC and the HCV/SG is the reason to pray. The MC is a sensitizing group, where the education of people is the primary objective, while the HCV's are working mostly psychosocially. Thus, for the HCV's, the contact is either counselling or supporting, and HIV-infection is either a reality or a possibility. It seems reasonable to assume that prayers in such settings often are comforting prayers in desperate situations. Such prayers could be considered a part of the psychosocial work, and an example of spiritual capital (van der Wel 2011:356). In that respect, we remember that prayer was considered as central among the members of the SG, not just supportive.

In contrast, prayers from a stage in a MC- performance would carry a larger potential to be distinct identity-markers or even evangelistic prayers, which could make some listeners turn away. To create division was admittedly the reason for which the MC chose not to pray publicly. Thus, the context for prayer seems crucial to which influences prayer can have upon development processes.

Rick James argue that it is often the one who makes the judgement who defines the motivation for an action. To exemplify he suggests that a nun praying for a dying patient may be considered both comfort and proselytizing, depending on who watches (James 2012:45). Adherents to a religious tradition could recognize the positive effects of prayer, whereas outsiders might conceive of such an action either as divisive, or even conversion. Thus, one occurrence of prayer may be conceived differently depending on who watches, realizing several potentials simultaneously.

My material suggests that the positive traits of prayer are realized for both religious groups involved, because prayer is common ground that both acknowledge. Though the dual potential of prayer needs to be recognized, the practice inside PLS seem unproblematic. A reason for this could lie in the importance and centrality of religion in the Cameroonian society, as well as the particular relationship between Muslims and Christians in this area (2.1.2). Mr. Kalnimé said that prayer is a very central and special practice for Africans in general, because to pray is to be in relation with God. He made no difference between competing religions. While the statement is generalising, it still contributes to the notion

that the population have religion as a common ground. Consequently, prayer is a potential element of spiritual capital, not only as adding support, but also unity. Muslims and Christians prayed together within the frames of the PLS, seemingly without problems. In general it seems that prayer is considered a non-threatening religious practice. Moreover, it seems plausible to claim that the notion of worshipping the same God is a widely held conception. Prayers in Jesus name, however, seem to entail a larger divisive potential.

Prayer, as we have seen, does play a role as an element of consolation and hope, and can thus be regarded as a positive form of spiritual capital (van der Wel 2011:356). No examples of prayer from my material suggest a negative influence, except that a possibility for it to be divisive in some situations and if emphasis is added to Christ. Otherwise it relates to a spiritual reality which is central to Cameroonians (2.1.2). It may thus be regarded as instrumental to their primary development goals of taking care of PLWHA, but it is also a way of placing development within the Christian mission.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that the SG considers prayer as a central practice during their meetings, because faith and hope is one of the things they need. Narayan has commented the notion that religion is a part of many people's definition of wellbeing (Narayan 2000:38), which I would argue is confirmed through my material. This suggests that prayer can be more than merely instrumental to development, it can be imperative.

5.2.5 Summary

I would like to summarize my observations concerning prayer and the relationship to development. Prayer is a marker of identity, which influences development in two ways, it may both exclude and include people. If a Christian organization puts an emphasis on Christ in its prayers, there are at least hypothetical reasons to believe that some people would feel uncomfortable or strange in the setting. If emphasis on Christ is not added, the religious climate in Cameroon seems to suggest that both Muslims and Christians feel comfortable and acknowledge the prayer. This is, at least partially, because the idea of worshipping the

same God seems common. Thus, though confirming a divisive potential to prayer, my material points to the opposite being the case.

Furthermore, the practice of prayer relates to a spiritual reality, which is central to Cameroonian society. Prayer helps to put development inside a religious context. My material does not suggest this as unnatural, or an example of religion invading space it should not. Allowing, or even actively drawing on prayer, does not seems to be conceived as evangelism or favouring religion, but meeting the needs of PLWHA. Prayer seems to be a religious element that emerges as a common ground between Christians and Muslims. Whereas evangelism has a deeper potential for division and provocation, prayer seems to be generally conceived of as uniting and comforting, at least when Christ remains unmentioned. From my empirical data, there is no doubt that prayer plays a comforting and uniting role much more than the opposite. Prayer could thus be considered as an instrumental resource for development practice due to its added value. Moreover it may be considered imperative, as PLWHA express a need for faith and hope to deal with their condition. Thus it may be both means and ends of development

5.3 Motivations

Deneulin & Bano argues that religion is the very reason for which religious people do development (Deneulin & Bano 2009:4-5). For this reason, I focused on the informants potential religious motivations for being engaged, as well as their thoughts on the fact that it was a church-run project. Due to the emphasis put on religious motivation by both Deneulin and Bano and the informants, this particular category emerged. Lode argues that the monthly salary is probably the most important reason for many to work in the church (Lode 1993:258)[72], and there are probably additional important reasons. However, it is the

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[72] Concerning this, bishop Nyéwé told me that work in Cameroon "is a question of life or death" (Rev. Nyéwé). Whereas many people in the west may choose what they want to do, and if they are not satisfied they have the possibility to change work, this is not so in Cameroon. "Many come to the church because it is a way out of poverty" were the words of NMS-representative Erik Bischler, and confirm the same notion.

relation between religion and development that is of interest and therefore only religious motivations are explored in this section.

5.3.1 Evangelism

Several informants stated that as they worked in a church, proclaiming Jesus Christ was their motivational foundation. The national bishop himself, emphasized that the very reason for the church to do anything was to make Jesus known: "Well, for us as a church, one sole preoccupation is in our heads, one preoccupation: We have to make known the name of Jesus Christ to everybody." (Rev. Nyéwé). He continued by commenting that as a church, this was also something that was expected of them. The population know what the church is and stand for, and will therefore expect the church to proclaim the gospel, also in situations when it is not the primary objective.

> Only ignorant people think it is not a church- that it is like any other organization. The others though, they know that the main role of the church is to preach the gospel. So even when you, as a church, come without an objective of preaching the gospel, it is always there. It is always expected that you preach it. Shortly, that is the situation that we are in. (Rev. Nyéwé)

The gospel as the motivational foundation was a notion that I met with most of my Christian informants. I asked Mr. Salpou if it was good, or problematic to mix in the gospel with the health-work, to which he answered: "to me, it is good, because the reason to be a church, is firstly the gospel" (Mr. Salpou). Mr. Kalnimé also confirmed the notion of the gospel being very central to the PLS, and claimed that they should always present words beside their actions, but with caution.

> I think it is important, however, to accompany our actions, our care, everything that we do with the gospel on the side for the one who is open and may accept it. But without forcing it and respecting the religion of the other. We present it while respecting his religion. (Mr. Kalnimé)

Later, I asked whether the Muslims were bothered by the proclamation of Christian faith, to which he answered negatively, and continued to show that this gospel was central to every part of the work that the EELC did.

Yes (*it is no problem* ed.), because they know that always in our activities, we present the gospel. We want to present the gospel. Why do you nurse? We nurse to present the gospel. Why do you educate and establish schools? We create schools, because during our education of the young Cameroonians, we want to give them the fear of God so that they become responsible adults tomorrow, with the fear of God, and that they work as they have learned from the passages. Why do you create projects of development? We create such projects of development, because we want our faithfuls and the whole of the population to benefit, with the support of the church, to create good fields, so that we will get very good harvests. (…) We do the project of development to enhance potable water to limit the rates of sick people in the community. (…) Through this, we are showing the love of Christ. It is Christ who has recommended us to witness the love. (Mr. Kalnimé)

NMS- representative, Erik Bischler, contended that the gospel in terms of converting souls, theoretically, could be the fundamental goal of the church. This however, did not mean that winning converts was the only goal of the church.

If you are to live as a church and to follow Jesus, then you cannot divide between what you say and what you do. Then one might say, if you draw the line very far, that the fundamental goal nevertheless is to make people Christians. Yes, that might be, but it is not the goal of the hospital. It aim is to help the poor and sick. But if you draw the line further, then it is an aim that it is noticed that the work is done in a diaconal context. If one wanted to be completely neutral and not flag one's position, then we could just have sold the hospital and left it for the state to run. (Mr. Erik Bischler, NMS- representative, Cameroon)

Based on these statements, we see that some see it as natural to proclaim the gospel orally inside the PLS- frames. This is both because they are a church, and because they are expected to be a church. Some however, claimed they would be thinking and acting the same way if they were involved in a project without a Christian profile. One of the volunteers said this: "God has said: "go to all nations, share my word with the people and make disciples". If I was there then, it would be God who had sent me and I would have to go in the middle to evangelize the word of God to them" (HCV- 1). Personal religious motivation is therefore an element which may exist in several contexts, regardless of the project's religious or ideological profile. Most informants though, placed an emphasis on sharing the gospel through acts rather than words within such a frame, which was also considered as a part of the gospel, and that is the perspective to which we turn.

5.3.2 Diaconia

Though present, oral proclamation of the gospel was not everyday practice according to the majority of my informants. This, they say, is due to a fundamental respect for other's beliefs and reasons for approaching the initiatives of church. As we saw in the former paragraph, Mr. Kalnimé stated such a fundamental respect as very important when sharing one's own faith. Bishop Nyéwé confirmed this.

> We respect their faith and we leave the possibility to the Holy Spirit to do his work, because our work is limited to proclamation- we are not the ones who convert the hearts. So we do this silent indirect proclamation to put the reality of the gospel before them, without pushing. The sick comes to the hospital to get well, he does not come to the hospital to hear the gospel. The child who enrols into the College comes to get educated, he does not come to be transformed into a Christian. We are conscient of this, and therefore we use the voice of a silent indirect proclamation to, if possible, reach them with the gospel. (Rev. Nyéwé)

The church do not want to impose faith on anyone, because they acknowledge peoples different reasons for approaching their services. The gospel is consequently best shared through wordless witness. MC-coordinator Gbetnkom Ntieche, said that was how he viewed the work of the MC, and he considered it a more effective way of evangelism than oral proclamation: "At a time, if we do things very well, someone will say "this one is different, of which religion is he?" When finding out he is Christian, they say "Oh, those are the people of Jesus". I think we do better evangelization this way, than by saying "believe in Jesus Christ!"" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche).

The actions of people engaged in the project were influenced by a will to give witness to the gospel. Mr. Kalnimé told me that such acts in themselves were supposed to be witness enough for a person to consider the religion behind them.

> From the love that they have discovered through this Christian service and through the disinterested acts- we never do something because we expect something- they are touched and they asks themselves questions. In time that becomes a starting point, it starts to shine a little light of the gospel in their hearts and they start to follow this light in the dark to see from where it comes- where does it origin? Sometimes this gives the fruit of a conversation. (Mr. Kalnimé)

We notice his emphasis on disinterested acts, [73] which suggests that diaconia is a goal in itself. The church do not require anything in return. General Secretary Hamidou summed this way of seeing it when he stated that to treat people and do diaconal work was not just preparing for the gospel or testifying to the gospel, it *was* the gospel itself.

> Hamidou: The projects of the church do not make this difference- to say that development is a part, and the gospel is a part. No no, to them all that is the gospel- that is what it is
>
> Interviewer: To nurse people?
>
> Hamidou: Yes! To them, that is the gospel. That difference do not exist- to say that this is a developmental work apart from the gospel- no, that is the gospel for them. (Mr. Hamidou)

We see that the development work of the church is considered as diaconia. This diaconia is dual in nature, both considered to be a silent witness to the gospel, but also in itself a part of the gospel.

5.3.3 Discussion

The presentation above shows us that the Christianity acts as a motivational factor for the Christian PLS workers. The PLS was regarded as a diaconal project. Diaconia seemed to have a dual understanding. Firstly as a silent witness to the gospel, meant to show Christian love and compassion and thus be a testimony to Christ. Secondly, care was considered a goal in itself. A part of the gospel is to show love and compassion, regardless of whether people are converted through it, and by doing so one literally lives the gospel.

There is also another duality, namely the one of diaconia and evangelism. We saw in 5.1 that evangelism does occur, and in 5.3.1, we saw that several informants regard proclamation of the gospel as natural because the EELC' primary objective is to testify to Christ. This was also argued on the basis that people would expect a Christian expression from the EELC. Thus, hiding their evangelistic core would be strange both for workers in the project and to people surrounding it.

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[73] French: Des actions desinteressées

At this point, Christian motivations seems to be multiple. Diaconia, in its two meanings, is the main motivation, but there is also the complementary motivation of evangelism. Thus, religion influences development by motivating religious adherents through loading an initiative with religious meaning and purpose. Religion consequently seem to encompass a particular potential of mobilizing resources (Haynes 2007:155; Deneulin & Bano 2009:15)

I also found that several of these motivations coexist within individuals. Mr. Kalnimé speaks about showing the love of Christ without a hidden agenda, but also about the importance of proclamation of faith along with the care. The PLS was defined and understood in diaconal terms, but the majority still considered proclamation of the gospel as legitimate. Daniel Salpou stated that this was because everything was a part of one reality. "They are in need of health, they are in need of the gospel, they need social assistance, and all that is one reality." (Mr. Salpou). The first important observation is therefore that these motivations seem deeply intertwined. No real division seems to exist because the work is conceived of as holistic. This suggests that Deneulin and Bano rightly propose that developmental practices are the consequences of people living their religion (Deneulin & Bano 2009:6), but it adds that different practices and aims all live side by side in religious individuals. Both proclaiming the gospel and providing care for the sick may be deep manifestations of faith in one person, and then possibly in one initiative.

Consequently, a division of religion and development concerning motivation seems to be difficult, or even impossible. Rick James seems to be right when arguing that faith is the very reason many people do what they do- it is the fuel for their actions (James 2012:45). Dividing faith and development, Hovland states, may indeed become merely an "exceptionally theoretical exercise" (Hovland in James 2012:45). My material supports this statement. Religion influences development heavily in loading it with spiritual meaning. Seen from a believers' point of view, or that of the church, dividing the two concepts indeed seems nothing but a theoretical manoeuvre.

Another aspect is the distinction between personal calling and institutional calling. For people who believe that God has called, this will be an obligation no matter where one is. If evangelism is a motivational factor for some workers, it will be the same wherever they

work. A religious obligation is not something that is turned off. This certainly accounts for a religious institution as well. PLS is a product of the church's diaconal calling, which confirms Deneulin and Bano's statement that development activities arise out of religious' attempts to live according to the core of their religions (Deneulin & Bano 2009:74). In addition to filling the work with meaning, religion not only influence development, it initiates it. This strengthens the notion that attempts to divide between a spiritual and a non-spiritual side are merely theoretical.

Hypothetically, it would appear logical that a believer with a personal calling working in a project with an institutional calling, if the callings are related or believed to be identical, finds himself within a frame where the personal calling can be lived out more easily. Thus it is probable that evangelism, other forms of proselytizing, and other manifestations of faith, are more visible and present in a church-run project. The notion that most of the informants considered evangelism within the PLS as natural, seems to confirm this.

I would further suggest that given the difficulties of dividing between religious motivations, and the manifestations of religion that were witnessed, it is reasonable to believe that manifestations of faith, such as evangelism and prayer, may flourish in religiously run projects. In this regard, Mr. Bischler argues that the church do not wish to be neutral. It is a church doing developmental work because it is a church. If neutrality was the point, the church could have sold the hospital and let someone else run it. It is because the church wants to do it, and that for different religious reasons.

In all it seems plausible to say that both evangelism and diaconia play important parts as motivational factors for the PLS. Diaconia or Christian care is conceived, both as a silent witness to Jesus Christ, and a response to a calling separate from the call to evangelism. For the informants with whom I spoke, however, this duality as well as the complementary motivation of proclaiming the gospel orally, seem to be difficult to divide practically. This suggests an holistic understanding of the gospel, which corresponds to the definition given in 3.1.

5.3.4 Summary

Both evangelism and diaconia are important motivations in the PLS. The nature of the project is diaconal, understood both as a silent witness to the gospel, and as a concrete response to that gospel. Some also express a complementary motivation to orally proclaim faith in Christ. These motivations seemingly coexist within many believers, as parts of one holistic mission. They furthermore seem so deeply intertwined that a division between them often is nothing more than a theoretical exercise.

Furthermore, religious motivation is the reason that the project exists. It is a response to the diaconal mission and calling of the church, which makes it difficult or impossible to separate religion from the project. Consequently, for the religious believers as well as the religious institution, spirituality is an integrated part of the development project and concept. Thus we learn that religious motivation influences development through being the reason for which religious institutions initiate projects, through providing the work which is done with religious meaning, and by making religion a part of the development that the project seeks to enhance. The latter is a consequence of the fact that religious and non-religious objectives, in practice, are not easily divided neither for individual believers nor for religious institutions.

In sum, these motivations largely corresponds to the definition of the Christian mission that was given in 3.1, defining the Christian mission holistically.

5.4 Institution

Whereas being an institution is not something that is religious by definition, it is a common for religion to have some level of institution (3.2.1). The institution, networks and structures of the EELC, was highlighted by several of the informants when commenting on the strengths of EELC- development. Structures and networks of religious institutions have furthermore been strongly emphasized in recent literature on religion and development (Fretheim 2013:89; Cochrane 2011:247), and the institutional (along with the charismatic)

power of religion has been stressed in writings on religion and power (Ellis & Ter Haar 2004:100-101). It was thus relevant to include a category on the institution of the EELC.

5.4.1 Institution- far reach and authority

Daniel Salpou made the point that the structure of the church was an important dimension to the reach of the work: "So, there is the radio, the health-centres, the health- education, the Women For Christ (FpC), the youth. Practically all these structures are a bit everywhere and I think that is the advantage of being in a church" (Mr. Salpou). In other words, the church- institution helps development because it has several structures on which it can draw, and because it reaches out to the whole population in terms of age and gender. NMS-worker Sandra Bischler also stressed the structure of the church, commenting particularly on its reach.

> That is often the advantage of churches in Africa- that they have structures that function all the way to the most remote village, right?! And it works- the structures, so when there is a piece of information that one wishes to distribute or something else, and one uses the structures of the church, one reaches the entire social society to the most remote corner, because there is a church present. (Mrs. Sandra Bischler, NMS, Cameroon)

The wide structure was particularly effective linked to the notion of having a faithful audience and popularity. One of the members of the MC emphasized this as one of the clear advantages of being a church: "It has already got an audience. People are already very attentive. So to make profit of its popularity to convey a message is much easier than if it had been an establishment of the town or the government who were to speak of AIDS" (MC-member 2). This point of the church being hierarchical was made by the PLS-director as well. According to him, the hierarchical structure could make processes more effective: "And there is an authority who can give an order so that it gets done- for example like the National Bishop. If he involves himself, the other pastors get involved without posing too many questions. That is an advantage as well" (Mr. Salpou). Thus, the EELC has got attentive adherents, and it has a hierarchical structure. These features gives it religious power and a frame in which this power can be wielded. In addition to the institution providing a far reach,

it also provides a frame which wields religious power and is thus in a particular situation to influence the Christian population.

5.4.2 Institution- credibility and social capital

Erik Bischler argued that the structure was trustworthy, not only to its own adherents, but also to others: "It is a known structure, that people- not just people, but also the civil society- consider safe and know what stands for." (Mr. Bischler). This was also argued by Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche.

> Well, when an organization like this one, which is historic, it has several advantages. This is because, in reality, we are considered by the authorities, both traditional and governmental, we are well considered. This consideration is based, not only on the gospel, because we know that the gospel will always find its opponent Islam or animism, but it is based on that which the church has done through the years. The church has supported orphans, both Christian and Muslim. The church has educated a significant number of intellectuals and even functionaries of the Muslim region recognize being educated at the Collège Protestant. (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche)

The EELC has been active in the Adamaoua region for a long time, and the church organization is well known. Other institutions, the government and individuals associate the church with something, which naturally influences the church's room of action and perception in different contexts. Thus, successful developmental projects, humanitarian or social initiatives that the church has run in the course of time paint a positive picture among many. Furthermore, the social capital of particular individuals working in the church may ease the way of the church in other matters. An example of this is the close relationship between the director of the protestant hospital of Ngaoundéré and the Lamido of Ngaoundéré, which was highlighted by Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche: "Often, for example, here in Ngaoundéré, if we want to organize a rally at the lamidos- that would be easily organized because of the relations that Dr. Aroga as director of the hospital has got with the Lamido" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche).

In this case, the church may benefit from an existing relationship between one of its leaders and the local traditional king. But, when I pointed out to Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche that this, after all, was a personal relationship and not a benefit that came from the fact of being

a church, he disagreed by stating that the relation was personal, but "personal on the basis of the good work that he has done there. It is by being the director of the hospital that he has been able to nourish the relations" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche). This point was further strengthened by the fact that Dr. Salpou Daniel confirmed that he had been the doctor of the previous Lamido. The leaders of the Muslim community have long been having close ties with the protestant hospital of Ngaoundéré and appreciated their work. This goes, not only for the Muslim leaders, but also for large parts of the Muslim community. When I asked about the relationship between Muslims and Christians, almost all my informants emphasized that the hospital showed relations were very good. "The protestant hospital of Ngaoundéré receives 80% Muslims into consultation (…), the hospital of Ngaoubéla has the same experience and the hospital of Garouaboulai almost the same experience, so we welcome everybody" (Rev. Nyéwé).[74] The area of which we speak is predominately Muslim, which explains the high percentage. However, the fact that both leaders and ordinary Muslim citizens considers the hospital their hospital, suggests a trust in the church, at least when it comes to health-related issues.

Other aspects that were highlighted when explaining the claim that the EELC was positively conceived of by most, encompassed other developmental undertakings such as the Collège Protestant which used to be a very highly esteemed school in Ngaoundéré, as well as the many developmental projects that are or have been run by the church. Given all these features, together with the fact that the EELC for a long time was the second biggest employer in the region, Mr. Kalnimé said that: "the inhabitants of Adamaoua consider the church as an unmistakable partner for development. They say that no matter their religious affiliation" (Mr. Kalnimé). On the basis of its size and its good relations with the Muslims, this seems true.

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[74] Some informants said the percentage is 80%, some 70% and some 90%. The specific percentage is not the point, but that the hospitals have a majority of Muslim patients.

5.4.3 Discussion

An emphasis on institutions is common in development thought (Haynes 2007:155), and the notion that religious organizations has large institutions, structures and networks is often stressed as added value. A pillar in the integral development approach is *asset-based thinking*, which probes that planned development work must build on local capabilities in order to enhance these (Cochrane 2011:240). James Cochrane further argues that networks, partnerships, skills and goods are vital for development (Cochrane 2011:247). Institutions, their structures and networks are thus central to the process of development. Sometimes they may even be an aim in themselves.[75]

Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche and Mr. Bischler emphasized the relevance of the church-institution having been around for long. Mr. Bischler said that it was an institution known to people and civil society. This is obviously relevant, as it shows a long-term presence in the area. The church, as Vinay Samuel states, "is where the poor are" (Samuel 2001:239). It brings local relevance as it represents people who live in the area and are affected by its developments. This contrasts what Samuel calls "briefcase people"- development practitioners who are present for a period of time only to leave when the project is over (Samuel 2001:240).

The notion of spiritual capital has been repeatedly commented in this assignment. Concerning the religious institution it also seems relevant to comment its potential social capital, which is related to its long-term presence. Cochrane argues that "one's ability to act upon one's assets (…) is more often than not closely related to the depth, extent, durability and trustworthiness of one's relationship to others" (Cochrane 2011:247). Social capital can thus be an imperative factor to initiate and run development activities. Whereas social capital is not a distinctly religious asset, the size, long-term presence, tight bonds and relationships of the EELC suggest that this organization has richer social capital than many other organizations.

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[75] An example of this in the case of the EELC, is the NORAD- funded project "*Renforcement des capacities*" , which is a capacity building project internal to the church, aiming to enhance organizational leadership and management, economic planning and use, as well as the communication between the departments. For a short introduction see http://www.nms.no/bygg-lederskap-kamerun/category2286.html (Accessed 18/8- 2013).

Petersen and Jones claim that religious structures is a part of the local power-structures. This power-position is what makes them relevant for development issues, but also dangerous because of their authority and impact (Petersen & Jones 2012:157). Thus, the collective power of religion through institution, authority and credibility, is a potential both for good and bad. Ellis & Ter Haar confirm the latent religious power in institution (Ellis & Ter Haar 2004:100-101). In 5.4.1, we saw two informants identifying the hierarchical structure of the church a positive feature because of its potential for real impact. In that respect, the religious institution is a vehicle of power.

Ellis & Ter Haar state that authority in the spiritual world historically has translated into power over individuals and thus made religion an outstanding means of instrumentalizing power (Ellis & Ter Haar 2004:24). Little suggests that this is not still the case. Drønen & Skjortnes assert that religious organizations often encompass a spiritual legitimacy which is necessary to bring about changes (Drønen & Skjortnes 2012:35). This seems to correspond to accounts of my informants. Power is necessary both to be able to make things happen, but dangerous as it may be abusive, contributing to exclusion, dominance or discrimination. This is probably why Deneulin & Bano stress that no strong leader should be allowed (Deneulin & Bano 2009:10). Ter Haar and van der Wel also point to the notion that good leadership is a key to make religion act constructively in development (Ter Haar 2011:23; van der Wel 2011:350).

The categories of religious dimensions that I chose are deeply connected. So when commenting on the notion of religious authority and power, this obviously has its reasons not just in the institution of the EELC. By slightly encroaching 5.6., we can state that Christian identity can contribute to increased (or lack of) credibility and trust, which influences the power and room of action of an institution (5.6.2; 5.6.3). In addition to institutional power, Ellis & Ter Haar adds that there is charismatic power. This seems suitable to comment in this regard- together, the two of them can create quite an influential discourse. An emphasis on religious ideals or morals coming from a religious leader- in this context a bishop, priest, deacon or catechist- may be expected to weigh a lot heavier, and wield more influence, than a similar emphasis pronounced by a government-worker or aid-worker. It was stated in

Voices of the poor that religious leaders often had high ratings (Narayan 2000:190-191)[76], which seems to be confirmed by my informants. This authority is a mixture of several factors, and a most important feature to note when considering the role religion plays in health-related development work. This notion underscores the particular instrumental relation which Haynes ascribes religion when commenting on it as a resource in HIV/AIDS-work (Haynes 2007:154).

5.4.4 Summary

This section has identified the religious institution as very influential to development. The EELC- institution can provide far reach, religious authority, as well as credibility and social capital. The institution may facilitate development through structures and networks, and thus provides added value.

Furthermore, the institution provides long-term presence in the region. This brings local relevance to its work. It also means that the institution has a place in civil society as a known structure both to people, other organizations and the state.

Then we saw that the religious institution can be considered a form of institutionalized religious power, which can be used both constructively and destructively in furthering developmental goals. Which potential that is realized and thus which influences it has on development is often decided by the leaders, which suggests that good leadership is imperative. The many resources embedded within the religious institution contribute to its potential to be an important instrumental resource to development.

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[76] Narayan notes that this trust does not necessarily reflect a possibility to help in material terms (Narayan 2000:190-191)

5.5 Morals

In chapter two, we noted that many conflicts between religion and development have either obvious or underlying moral reasons (2.4). Religious traditions provide moral norms (Deneulin & Bano 2009:88). As other groups have other norms based on their fundamentals, religious or not, clashes are inevitable. Some of the most striking areas of conflict between religion and development are moral conflicts in the area of health. HIV/AIDS is a problem that is deeply connected to moral issues. It was therefore crucial to aboard this particular religious dimension.

5.5.1 Contraceptives

Contraception is a difficult area for many faith-based development- initiatives (2.4). The PLS-motto *Abstinence, Fidelity, Contraceptive*, includes condoms. Sandra Bischler told me that the PLS had actually defied the church by including condoms in their propaganda. However, the issue was still touchy.

> Yes, it probably has not been so easy. They probably talk more of it in small-groups. For example among the HIV-positives, they are very clear, they demonstrate and show. There, they get trained in its usage. Then again, they have to. As HIV-positive you really have to use a condom either way. Even though you have received the virus from your husband and both of you are infected- every time you add more virus, your immune-defence is destroyed some more. (Mrs. Bischler)

Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche confirmed that condoms had been difficult, but asserted that it no longer was. The church, however, still emphasized abstinence and fidelity: "We speak openly about contraceptives, but we speak of it and say that our preference is abstinence and fidelity" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche). Furthermore, he revealed that it was a difficult issue internally, leading to differing practices: "We discuss. One time, we wrote "abstinence, fidelity, condom" on our t-shirts, another time we wrote "abstinence, fidelity". It depends on what we thought at that moment" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche).

The times I saw the MC perform, though inferior to abstinence and fidelity, condoms was on the agenda. At the Lycée Publique in Meiganga, they sang of condoms during sensitizing, and mentioned it in their educational sessions. These sessions included information about to whom one should recommend different types of contraceptives. Condoms were recommended firstly to PLWHA, but also to people having sexual relations outside of marriage, and the usage was elaborately explained. When educating in the church, condoms were less in focus, mentioned as a possible contraceptive in the beginning, but ignored in the rest of the performance, as abstinence and fidelity were emphasized. It thus seemed that the team chose to which degree they would include contraceptives based on the context. Thus, contraceptives are a central part of the PLS campaign. Abstinence and fidelity, however, are emphasized particularly in Christian contexts.

The PLS' attitudes towards contraceptives are not in a vacuum. Traditional and Muslim environments have a rather hostile attitude. In Meiganga, I was told that the MC were given two conditions by the Muslims, if they wanted to perform in the city-centre. The first one was not to speak of Jesus and the second was not to speak of condoms, an attitude that may stem from both religious and cultural reasons. Mrs. Bischler explained:

> The men have this idea- it is like drinking water without pouring it out of the bottle, or eat a banana with its shell still on. It is these things, these prejudices that makes it- "no- then it is not real". So they have a strong resistance against the usage of condoms- they just will not. It is probably everywhere- the difficulties with condoms- not just for religious reasons, but also for traditional, cultural reasons. (Mrs. Bischler)

The condom- issue is in other words a complex one. Even though the PLS rather emphasize abstinence and fidelity, they do include condoms into their work. This in spite of it being an internally and externally difficult issue.

5.5.2 Moral discourse?

The PLS, being an EELC- project, made it relevant to look for a possible emphasis on Christian morals. When considering the educational sessions, even though condoms were less emphasized, the session I witnessed in the church was identical to the ones at the Lycée Publique. It followed the same questionnaire, and gave the same answers, including the

question "At what time do you think that one should begin sexual activity?" to which the answer was "there is no age for it, but what matters is to have a responsible behaviour." This responsible behaviour was founded in the attitudes Abstinence, Fidelity and Contraceptive.

A responsible behaviour was the core message concerning sexual behaviour, and when communicating this, some of the educators could make use of religious argumentation. One of my informants told me that she often involved biblical elements during educational sessions.

> Yes. In Meiganga for example we said that, if you are a student and you want to progress in your studies and you are a Christian or even a Muslim- even in the Quran it is spoken of abstinence and there are many things that it is said we cannot do. For example not to set aside infected people. (MC-member 1)

Firstly, both biblical elements and elements from the Quran could be emphasized during her sessions, and were used instrumentally to emphasize a responsible behaviour. Secondly, we notice the importance of fighting discrimination, to which religious arguments were also applied.

The work done by the HCV's is different from that of the MC, as they mostly talk with and counsel both HIV-positives and negatives. A moral discourse seems to be little or non-existent. It is important to keep in mind that the HCV- group is religiously mixed. The training that they have received did not entail any religious elements (5.1.2). When I asked the Christian HCV whether she spoke of Christian morality with her patients, she said the focus was mainly on the use of condoms. "We often tell them to protect themselves. Yes, we often tell them to protect themselves. That they should not go out as they do, and that they have to protect themselves before having sexual relations" (HCV- 1). After this, responding to whether she quotes from the Bible etc, she said "no, we merely give them advice", and later she said "What we often do is to pray with them. Pray to support them" (HCV- 1).

Though it is impossible to rule out the possibility that some of the volunteers do communicate religious morals, my material suggests that most do not. The role of the HCV's in the PLS seems to be strictly a counselling one, where a moral discourse seems absent.

5.5.3 Morals, diversity and dialogue

The Muslim volunteer with whom I spoke claimed that the church was a venue where sexuality could be discussed in the open, opposed to her conception of what was possible in Islam: "In the Muslim religion we do not talk a lot about sex, but the project helps us to speak of it anyways" (HCV 2). She affirmed this as very good. The notion that sexuality was a subject that could be discussed was confirmed through the MC-sessions, as they were interactional where questions were asked the audience. Admittedly, the educator did have a "right answer" in the end, but firstly the audience were asked their opinions, and a discussion was initiated. This was also the case within the MC itself. When I was present in the team-bus on the way to Meiganga, the coordinator posed the same questions to the members, who discussed them. Responding to whether Christian morals were important to convey through their work, the coordinator said: "A bit, but it is also the case that such moral precepts are not entirely shared by the members of the Christian community itself." (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche). This testifies to that the EELC is not a static dogmatic tradition, but rather dynamic and diverse.

A fact that underscores this space inside the EELC is the condom issue on which we have already commented. I will emphasize in this context that the choice of the PLS to contend the EELC on such a touchy moral-issue testifies to a courage among the PLS-workers which again could have its reason in an openness to discuss and disagree within the church, also on moral issues.

5.5.4 Discussion

Religious morals is a visible dimension in the PLS. As a church-run project it is imperative for the PLS to communicate the moral ideals of abstinence and fidelity. Contraceptives also play an important but lesser role in the project, which is probably due to the disagreement concerning its usage, both internally to the PLS, and within the EELC. On this issue in particular, the project has defied the advice of the EELC leadership, and included condoms as a part of their sensitizing campaign. In addition to these notions, the informants testify to a

diversity concerning moral issues within the church, and an open space where such issues can be discussed.

Even though researchers historically have ascribed religions tendency to uphold the *status quo* (Lewis 1956:103), many recent publishing's thoroughly emphasize religions diversity, and inherent potential for change (Deneulin & Bano 2009:63). Also within the evangelical tradition, people with different views are called evangelicals (Deneulin & Bano 2009:79-80). As we will see, both religions role of upholding and challenging moral norms was confirmed.

The Muslim HCV emphasized the openness within the church concerning sexuality-issues, a notion that was confirmed by examples from the MC- educational sessions. Also, the MC- coordinator made the point that moral precepts were not entirely shared by the members of the Christian community itself. This testifies to the EELC not being a static dogmatic tradition. NMS- representative Sandra Bischler made a similar point, by stressing that the PLS had defied the advice of the church- leadership by deciding to distribute information about condoms. Church leaders were restrictive to distribute information about condoms. Thus, religion acted as a brake for information about contraceptives. Even though religion in this particular example acted as a brake for contraceptives, forces within the church challenged existing norms. The fact that the PLS has actually included condoms, shows that the church-leadership accepted this practice, even if they disagree with it.[77] The opposition to contraceptives, furthermore, is not just internal to the church. In the community surrounding it, condoms are considered problematic both from other religious confessions and within traditional culture. The PLS thus challenge not only forces and leadership internally, but also societal values and norms. These examples emphasize the internal diversity within the EELC, its potential for change, as well as its challenging discourse to community.[78] Deneulin & Bano calls such phenomena a redefinition of its embodiment in

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[77] It is important to mention that most EELC- leaders are not against condoms per se, but suggest that the church encourages immoral behaviour by distributing and advertising for condoms.

[78] Though they are not part of the PLS, it is relevant in this context to name some other areas where the EELC has challenged existing social norms. One in particular is that of the position of women. Women are traditionally very subordinated in Cameroonian society, and do not enjoy the same possibilities or freedoms as men do. This is probably a problem within the EELC as well, but the central position of the Femmes Pour Christ

new social contexts (Deneulin & Bano 2009:63-64; 3.3.4). Based on what we have seen (and will see) in other sections, it is plausible to suggest that the church, because of the credibility of its organization (5.4.2; 5.6.2), and through the religious and cultural authority wielded by its leaders (5.4.3), can be more effective and successful in changing attitudes than non-religious organizations would be (Drønen & Skjortnes 2012:35).

We see two very concrete and prominent examples of religion and development mutually influencing one another. Whereas the leadership of the church was initially opposed to the distribution of condoms within the PLS, the project itself was inspired to include it. Here development-agenda and the severity of HIV/AIDS was considered more important than the moral- precepts of the religious leadership. Consequently, it would be plausible to claim that development to some point influences religion in this regard. Reversely, though including contraceptives, the focus of the church is abstinence and fidelity. Thus religion influences development by defining the way HIV/AIDS should be fought. Even though contraceptives are relevant, the primary message is the responsible behaviour which is suggested as abstinence and fidelity. There is in other words an indirect moral discourse in that the initiative focuses on inspiring behavioural attitudes rather than distributing means of sexual contraception.

These two examples, exemplify how the two concepts can challenge, shape and redefine the other. This, leads us to acknowledge that both religious and developmental discourse may influence the other with ideas and objectives, which leads to a circle of influence between the concepts. They mutually influence, and shape the content of the other. This can be expected to have various expressions and outcomes in different contexts, which again calls us to closely regard context. Based on the situations in each context, development processes must be analysed and nurtured individually (van Wensveen 2011:90).

Furthermore, I found elements of religious argumentation. One of the MC-members said that she used arguments from the Bible and from the Quran to underscore the need to keep a responsible behaviour as well as not to discriminate and stigmatize. Birthe Juel

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testifies to women having a central position in the EELC. In 2012, the church also ordinated their first female pastors, which is a remarkable event.

Christensen & Signe Asbirk, writing from a Danish context, comments on the importance that churches have had in the fight against such stigma (Christensen & Asbirk 2012:54-55). Fighting stigma has also been a focus of the PLS from the very beginning. Thus, though religion has a potential to be a source of stigma (van der Wel 2011:351), the direct opposite was the case in the PLS. Religious argumentation was used instrumentally to champion anti-discrimination.

This leads us to Marshall and van Saanen asking whose morals should count (Marshall & Van Saanen 2007:43). Another question, which may be more pertinent in this context, is whose morals actually do count? To whom do people listen? Who defines what is morally problematic and vice versa? If a society is fundamentally religious, it would not be strange to expect that people listen to religious leaders rather than aid-workers. The most effective way to convey a message could be through religious traditions (Drønen and Skjortnes 2012:35), as it is development in the language and on the terms of local people- not the alienated development against which Wilber & Jameson warn (Wilber & Jameson 1981:476).

5.5.5 Summary

Christian morals is arguably the reason for the focus upon a responsible behaviour defined as abstinence and fidelity. Religious morals are thus arguably constitutive to development-agenda, indirectly defining its objectives. Contraceptives are also a part of the initiative, but not equally emphasized both due to internal disagreement and external opposition. It thus seemed that religion and development mutually influenced each other. Religion choses the focus of their campaigns, and thus the developmental focus to be behaviour instead of contraceptives. At the same time, development agenda has influenced the church into progressing towards the inclusion of condoms in their propaganda.

In 3.4.7, religious morals was identified as an issue which could be laying under disagreements and tensions between secular and religious development practices and aims. HIV/AIDS is deeply connected to sexuality, which entails many potential difficulties for religious organizations. Such dangers could be a potential for defining sickness as divinely inflicted, upholding resistance to contraceptives, and for promoting stigma and

discrimination. Most of this was not the case in the PLS. The EELC leadership had advised against the inclusion of contraceptives, which suggests the notion of religion upholding the status quo. The PLS, however, included contraceptives, and thus advanced condoms as the EELC, which suggests that the church-leaders accepted it. Furthermore, religious argumentation was used to combat stigmatization. Thus the most common potential difficulties are not manifested in the PLS. The opposite, seems to be the case.

The PLS uses their moral authority instrumentally to inspire responsible behaviour among the population and combat social consequences for PLWHA, which points to an instrumental relationship between the two, where religious argumentation and virtues are used in tune with developmental agenda. However, in the case of PLS, religion has joined in defining and weighing that agenda. The mutual influence which was indicated rather points to an integral relationship.

5.6 Identity

The PLS is an EELC- project, presents itself as an EELC- project and uses the structures of the EELC. Also the PLS- workers and volunteers are mainly Christians, predominately from within the EELC. Several informants highlighted the importance of having a Christian identity. These notions suggest that the PLS is closely connected to its Christian identity. This connection becomes even more apparent on the basis of the connection between the PLS and the Christian mission as an initiating force (5.3.4). Consequently, it is interesting to this study to investigate the ways in which this Christian identity influences the developmental work of the PLS.[79] As the Christian identity is made up by Christian practices and motivations, the former categories will play a considerable part in this category.

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[79] One could write whole theses on the subject and influences of identity. As this thesis is about religion and development, and not particularly about identity, it will not provide an exhaustive overview of all possible identities within and outside of the EELC and their influences, but restrain itself to the influence of the explicit Christian identity and its relation to development.

5.6.1 Christian Identity

The NMS-representative claimed that being a church, a clear identity is important and not something to be hidden. "I mean that one should hold one's flag up high, accentuate one's Christian affiliation and found one's work, both the diacona and the mission, in the mission of Jesus" (Erik Bischler). Bishop Nyéwé confirmed this, and argued further that they would always need to identify themselves as a church, regardless of the initiative:

> You never wash the eyes of a blind man without telling him your name. So, when we go in the name of the church, we always have at least one word of orientation- we never hold secular ceremonies- all our ceremonies are religious. (…) It is our way of saying who we are. (Rev. Nyéwé)

Christian identity was imperative, both for the PLS- workers and the leaders of the EELC. Everything was done in the name of Jesus, according to the national bishop.

> Here in Africa, we put everything together- we do not divide. When something has a religious connotation, it really has a religious connotation- we do not divide. If it is the church, it really is the church. When the church gives the bread, it is really the church who gives the bread in the name of Jesus Christ. So no division- everything is one whole and that is the way it has been. That is the way the church has developed and it has never practiced the principle of division. The church has never thought of the European issue of the individual. As for the Africans, we say "I am because the community is. The community is, therefore I am too. As I am integrated in the community, my individual life do not count for much, that which the community does, counts. The community is a Christian one, which means it is really Christian and everything that happens, happens in the light of the church, of the Christian community! When we bury, we bury in the name of Jesus, when we celebrate a new-born, we celebrate in the name of Jesus. Everything, everything, everything is done like that. (Rev. Nyéwé)

In this quote, two aspects of the identity are highlighted. Firstly, the bishop emphasizes the notion of a holistic mission. The EELC is a church in everything it does, which obviously includes the doings of the PLS. It will always be a church he states, and behind all its actions, the name of Jesus will always cling. Secondly, he makes the more general claim that in Africa, the community plays a much more important role than in the west. Through this, he underscores the importance of collective identity.

Mr. Kalnimé said: "The ideal for me is that the project has got a religious profile" (Mr. Kalnimé). He argued this because the additional spiritual side of the project. All of the

Christian informants said that the fact of the PLS being a church-project was important to them, though most of them said they could have worked in a non-religious project.

Though Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche was restrained concerning PLS- evangelism, he did not want the church to compromise its Christian identity. "We are not ashamed to recognize who we are", he said, and added that by identifying their social initiatives as church-run, they also contributed to the public image of the church. To convey a message in the public was a notion that other informants emphasized as well, but there were different reasons for it. Thus, engaging in social and developmental initiatives and emphasizing a Christian identity contributed favourably to the public image of the church.

5.6.2 Christian identity as credibility

All of my Christian informants claimed a Christian identity as positive. Firstly, this is true within their own structures. Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche stated that a clear Christian identity, is an advantage in such circumstances: "When we can use religion as a support, we take advantage of that, but we are not founded on religion. We use the scientific principles to communicate to others, but when we situate ourselves in a chapel to speak, we found ourselves well on religion" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche). A Christian identity is thus believed to inspire trust and give credibility to the EELC initiatives.

This was considered valid also when relating to people outside their religious tradition. Mr. Bischler said: "In opposition to Europe, where you close many doors by flagging a religious affiliation, the case here is different- doors are opened". Daniel Salpou claimed this was because of the seriousness of the church.

> I think that the role (*of religion* ed.), firstly, is the seriousness that we put into it. As I told you, most of the projects of HIV/AIDS have been stopped. Sometimes because of bad management or corruption etc. (…). In the church, there is this fear of God that makes the management better. (Mr. Salpou)

He draws direct links between credibility and the church, saying: "The advantage is firstly the credibility of the message that we convey. Because people know that it comes from a church, so it is something real, not lies!" (Mr. Salpou). Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche agreed, and

said that this was due to their ethical core. "The advantage is that the church, or other confessional groups, are considered as groups where ethics are at the basis of things. Values are at the base of things" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche). Mr. Bischler suggested that the holistic approach to the human being could be a reason.

> Maybe because you take the human being seriously, that that dimension is a part of everyday life. It might be that it is not because it represents an institution or organization, but because people feel that this is something that concerns themselves because God and the spiritual are a part of themselves. (Mr. Bischler)

He continued by suggesting that the broad range of services the church had offered, including several diaconal services, had contributed to the positive image of the church.

> It is a result of the fact that the church is not just a church. It is not just gospel and church, but it has a broad diaconal work, where school and health through the school and hospitals, have meant a lot to most people. In many ways, that is what the Muslim population associate with the church- the school and the hospitals. It might have made the church less dangerous to them. (Mr. Bischler)

Thus, the church is perceived to enjoy credibility both because of traits in its religious profile and because of its history of rendering services to the community. The general secretary claimed that other organizations, despite the good work that they undoubtedly would do, would not enjoy benefits similar to the church, and linked it directly to their lack of religious faith: "If you believe in nothing- if you are seculars- if that is stated, it is difficult to convince our people here in Africa!" (Mr. Hamidou). Consequently, he claimed that the church would be a privileged party in Cameroonian society. Having said as much, I asked him whether a Muslim project would enjoy much of the same benefits, to which he gave his consent: "That which is linked to religion is quite well respected, quite followed." (Mr. Hamidou).

According to these informants, being a church is a positive notion which will entails legitimacy in the local community. They claim this is due to the religious and ethical core of the church, which suggests that being based on religious foundations gives an organization benefits in approaching people and structures in Cameroon. A similar legitimacy would also apply to other religious groups where values and faith are central. One of my Muslim informants, a member of the SG, suggested that shared morals was a reason Christians Muslims should be able to cooperate.

It is only the religion which is different. Everything else is the same, so they can work together. If you find something the church has forbidden, you will find that Islam has forbidden the same thing. If it's not good, it's not good! For a good believer, it is the same for, Muslim or Christian. (SG-member 3)

In other words, she suggests that the value- core of the two religions are relative similar, which renders them similar rather than different in many contexts. The PLS, particularly in phase one, did many testing- campaigns, of which many were in Muslim villages. I was told that they had never encountered any problems on such campaigns. Instead, cooperation was rather normal.[80]

We had a lot of cooperation with traditional authorities, such as the traditional chiefs which are Muslims. And, in at least 3 of the campaigns that I have joined, we have had testing- campaigns in the home- the private house that is, of the Lamido. He opened his home. One time we used the living room as the laboratory, and then one bed-room for one councellor and another bedroom for another one. And, obviously, when he is the one mobilizing his people, that means the Muslims, and the Muslims were mostly the ones coming. (Mrs. Bischler).

A Christian identity was therefore conceived to be a very positive characteristic also in cooperating with the Muslims.

5.6.3 Christian identity as obstacle

All of my informants initially claimed that being a church never brought about any problems. Mr. Hamidou said that the worst reaction they got was indifference: "Even the Muslims. No, they may be indifferent but not in the way that it can be interpreted as a refusal" (Mr. Hamidou). He claimed that difficulties due to Christian identity was a matter of the past: "Maybe it was a problem in the times of the first missionaries, in the years around 36, when there was forced islamization, but now? No. That does no longer exist." (Mr. Hamidou).

When confronted however, most of my informants admitted that some groups could possibly feel threatened by the Christian identity of the church.

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[80] One example, however, of a potential religious conflict during a campaign was provided during my stay. It will be commented in the following section (5.6.3), but is important to note also in this context.

Nyéwé: There are some villages here, who have resisted any penetration of the church, because they have understood that the church means the gospel, and they do not need the gospel, so they do not need the presence of the church

Interviewer: So when they see the church, they see only the gospel?

Nyéwé: Yes, the gospel. No matter what you do, they think that you use it as an instrument to share the gospel with them. (Rev. Nyéwé)

A Christian identity could thus work as an obstacle in trying to reach out to certain milieus. PLS- leader Daniel Salpou said that some would probably not come to a PLS- meeting because the EELC is a church. He, however identified the group that would not come as fundamentalist Muslims. Concerning this, Mrs. Bischler raised the question of whether anyone at all would gain access to the milieus in question.

Yes, you have an identity, and they know who we are, so that matter is sort of closed. Maybe in some Muslim, very Muslim, areas we would not get in because we are a church. But then again, I do not know if one would get in as a neutral organization either. I think that if you want to get into those circles, you need to be from those circles. (Mrs. Bischler)

In saying this, she proposes the notion that the Christian identity is actually not the problem, but rather the circles and milieus they are trying to reach.

Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche was restraint to emphasize Christianity due to a fear of religion being a brake for the message of HIV (5.1.1). He therefore suggested to avoid what he called religious propaganda.

In a class there may be 5-10 children who are fundamentalist Muslims, and if you associate HIV to a precept given by Jesus, they will say "we will not listen anymore". Being in this class, my point of view is that the message is for the 60 other children, but also for the ten who are fundamentalist Muslim. That is why I think that we are better off adapting ourselves. (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche)

Three of my informants were Muslim themselves, one HCV and two of the SG-members. The HCV told me that not all Muslims would accept a Christian project with a clear Christian identity: "No, all the Muslims cannot accept it, only certain ones" (HCV- 2).

The Muslim SG- members told nothing but positive stories about the church and the PLS-projects workers and volunteers. For them, the Christian identity of the project and the hospital was not a problem at all, and had never been. One of them said: "It does not hinder. I have never even posed myself that question" (SG-member 3). She also said that she did not

think it was a problem for the Muslim community as a whole. Had it been a problem, she asserted, the Muslim leaders would have reacted by creating their own structures:

> It does not hinder. I have never heard that it does, and I do not think so. If it had bothered, then they (*the Muslims* ed.) would have done everything to create a hospital and have said: "Over there it is not good, you will have to come here". They have said nothing, they have done nothing. They accept it and come to this hospital. Everybody does that. (SG- member 3)

However, these informants admitted that this positive attitude was their own, and that other Muslims possibly had different opinions. Again the radical fundamentalists were the ones that were emphasized: "I do not know about the radical Muslims, I do not know what the others think, but me, in my head, I believe in the God of everybody" (SG-member 2).

Christian identity as a source of tension was unexpectedly manifested during my short stay in Cameroon. I had joined the MC-team for the annual *sortie*, which was a 4-day trip from Thursday through Sunday to Meiganga.[81] On the Friday, the team was supposed to do an open-air performance in the city-centre. However, when everything was ready, the whole performance was stopped. The landlord where the show was to be held, had changed his opinion. The reasons for his turn, according to those present, were multiple, but religion was one of them. MC-coordinator Gbetnkom Ntieche suggested this and called for more cooperation with the Muslim authorities in the future.

G. Ntieche: Some think that the vehicle that we brought, which has a sign that says "Church", was the basis of the conflict. But we really need to study. We have to turn our noses to know what the truth is

Interviewer: You do not know exactly?

G. Ntieche: My point of view is that there is a Muslim opposition to everything that is Christian. (…) Between ourselves we did an auto critic of the sortie. We always do that- what has worked, what has not, and in the sortie to Meiganga, what did not particularly work was this event. We have reflected on what to do so that this does not happen next time, and we have concluded that we should consider to involve the Muslims leaders next time. The Lamido's if possible. (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche)

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[81] City in the west of Cameroon, which houses the theological faculty of the EELC. There is currently an internal crisis within the EELC, which is centred around this city (see later this paragraph).

One of the team-members considered the possibility of religion being the reason for the turn of events, but named other potential reasons as well:

> We probably had two problems In Meiganga. The first one being that we came from the church, but that could have been easily dealt with- we could simply say that we come from the church, but no, we will not be talking about the church- we will only speak of AIDS. That is the other problem- people regard AIDS as just sex (…), and it was a religious holiday. (…). I would not know from where the real problem came- it could be the church as it could be AIDS. (MC -member 2)

Mr. Kalnimé told me they had made sure that they were only going to speak about HIV/AIDS, so the Muslims knew that. He listed the internal conflict of the EELC in this area as a potential reason for the problem that arose.

> I did not see much opposition in the sense that it was due to the fact that it was a church, because we had already given them all the guaranties concerning that we did not come to say that we are the church. We do not come to say halleluia, we do not come to say Jesus has said this. We come to, through songs and sketches, wake up their conscience concerning HIV, which remains relevant and makes a lot of destruction. So personally, I think that it is not the position of the church who makes the problems, but it could be certain fears linked to certain incidents. (Mr. Kalnimé)

When the event actually happened, everyone I spoke to considered it as a religious conflict, but as we see, other circumstances may have played a part as well. In retrospect, most agree that religion played some part in what happened, but not the importance of that part. Everyone insisted that this was the first incidence of this kind. Mrs. Bischler said: "I think that the experience that you had down there- it is the first time they have experienced that Muslims felt provoked and that is probably why it touched them to that extent. Because they did not expect it and therefore it was sort of a "wow."" (Mrs. Bischler).

Two circumstances are important to emphasize in order to nuance this conflict. Firstly, this particular day was the Muslim holiday of Tabaski.[82] It is fair to expect that a Muslim opposition to a Christian project has been strengthened by it happening during their feast. Secondly, there is an internal crisis in the EELC, which is centred in the Meiganga- area. A number of church- members have rebelled against the leaders, which probably renders the public image of the church weaker than elsewhere. Sandra Bischler emphasized the

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[82] Also known as Eid-al-Adha. It is a feast where Muslim celebrate that Abraham was willing to sacrifice his first-born son, Ishmael and thus show his submission to God. In Cameroon it is also known as the sheep-festival, because they slaughter a sheep in remembrance of this happening.

internal crisis as a potential reason for the failure in Meiganga, and elaborated on the extent to which this conflict had risen.

> But the thing that is a bit special about Meiganga is that the church has had an internal conflict in Meiganga, so that there is already tensions among the Christian and among the church- members. It has been very difficult in Meiganga- there has been riots with stone-throwing and destruction of the bishops house- he even had to flee. Even the military had to get involved. So I expect that there are feelings in Meiganga and that many probably frown upon the church. (Mrs. Bishcler)

The internal crisis of the EELC is thus also a potential reason for the Meiganga-incident, which makes us note that even though this incident was initially conceived of as a religious conflict, and most probably do encompass religious components, other factors may have played a part.

5.6.4 Discussion

It was important for the Christian PLS-workers to emphasize their Christian identity. They gave different reasons for this. It was who they were and why they did what they did, and it contributed to a favourable public image for the church. In addition the Christian identity, much because of its linkages to religion and values would give them more credibility and benefits. Most accounts suggested that this also concerned relations with the Muslims. We also saw, however, that Christian identity could act as an obstacle, particularly in relation to radical Muslim environments.

Uffe Torm claims that there is no value-neutral development, and therefore initiatives that are not open about values and attitudes are the first ones to fail (Torm 2012:28). The PLS is based on Christian motivation (5.3.4) and we have seen that a Christian identity is imperative for its workers. In the PLS, religion consequently influences development, as the development initiative cannot be separated from the Christian values of the organization and individuals who run it. Again, this suggests that Deneulin and Bano's are right in stating that one cannot truly divide the spiritual and the material dimension of religiously based development work (Deneulin & Bano 2009:4-5). This is not the same as suggesting that such influence is always to the better. Fretheim, as mentioned states that

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recognizing development as value-based, does not mean that all values are equally good (Fretheim 2013:94). However, religious value- based development work seem to be preferred in the Cameroonian context, due to the importance of religious values in Cameroon, and the seemingly harmonious relationship between Christians and Muslims (2.1.2).[83] In sum, this testifies to the claims of the PLS/EELC- leaders being true rather than false. This again underlines context as a crucial factor in development processes. Religious values cannot be said to be as important everywhere else, and the inter-religious relationship is completely different just across the Nigerian boarder. This calls for a focus on the context of each situation (van Wensveen 2011:90).

Christian identity was claimed to be as a positive trait in development work, because it is built on religious values. Other contributing factors were the seriousness of the workers as well as the historic credibility and positive public image that the church had gained. These are factors which contribute to Christian identity opening doors in society and thus facilitating development. Also, several informants claimed that Christian expressions are what the surroundings expect. This is an interesting notion, suggesting that the Christian identity of the church already is a given, both for insiders and outsiders. Petersen and Jones comment on this particular notion, and note that to be religious may be exactly what is expected of religious actors (Petersen & Jones 2012:158). In addition to this perspective, James, drawing on Ingie Hovland, argues that to split up the initiatives from their religious value-base, removes much of the added value which FBO's have to offer (James 2012:45; Hovland 2008:184). Considering the credibility and benefits a Christian affiliation seems to have, this seems correct. In the case of the EELC in general, respect, a positive public image, historic and religious credibility seem to provide room of action and trust in many circles. Ter Haar suggests the inclusion of spiritual capital in development thought (Ter Haar 2011: 19-20). The suggested advantages of a religious connotation in Cameroon does indeed confirm this.

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[83] My material, being mostly from within the PLS, does not reveal outsider- attitudes concerning this, However, the seemingly good cooperation with Muslims and the fact that several Muslims are engaged in the project both as beneficiaries and volunteers, correspond with the notion of a quite harmonious relationship between Christians and Muslims in Cameroon (2.1.2).

Most informants, however, also admitted that a too clear Christian identity could be problematic, particularly in fundamentalist Muslim environments. I also commented a concrete example of a partially religious conflict in Meiganga. My informants gave different reasons as to why this happened, but religion was admittedly a central reason. The internal EELC- crisis may also have played a part in causing this incident, by worsening the public image of the church in this region, which suggests that added value may sometimes be added difficulty and close doors instead of opening them. The examples of Christian identity as an obstacle suggests that the notion of the church always being welcomed and enjoying credibility needs to be nuanced. Being involved in several processes on several fronts, often both developmental, theological, inter-religious, ideological, political and so on, there are more potential fronts of disagreement and tension. We could rather expect the organization to enjoy credibility and authority in some milieus, whereas others are sceptic or even rejecting, which again calls for an integral approach analysing and nurturing each development process individually (van Wensveen 2011:90). Religion's potential to be an obstacle, cannot be considered a reason to ignore it in development. It does suggest, however, that religion should be assessed critically with regards to its destructive potentials in addition to confirming its spiritual capital and added value. These notions confirms the instrumental exploration of religions potential in development work. However, criticizing and challenging religion is not the same as not taking it seriously or engaging with the entirety of it, but it suggests that dialogue may be necessary in order for fruitful engagement to take place (Deneulin & Bano 2009:6)

We have seen that Christian identity is not just expressing Christian faith or affiliation in, it is the very basis upon which the initiative is built (5.6.1). When considering that the project is funded by a secular government, this raises an interesting question regarding identity. What if the Christian identity is colliding with the objectives or rules of conduct of the project- donor? We saw an example of this in 5.1.1, where Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche chose to allow the distribution of New Testaments at a school even though admitting it was a problem of conscience. He did not expand on why this was a problem of conscience, but considering his admitted fear that religion could be a brake for the message, it seems plausible that the problem was such a fear. Yet another example is the pressure that the EELC put on the PLS not to include propaganda for condoms. Mrs. Bischler stated that the

project chose to do so anyway (see 5.5.1). Such incidents are examples of situations where religious individuals and organizations find themselves in situations where religion suggests something, and developmental agenda, aims or responsibilities favours the opposite. We then end up with what I would call colliding identities. Situations like this are not unique to religious organizations, as organizations with ideological, political or ethnical affiliations may experience similar dilemmas. A religious person could also experience similar dilemmas working for a non-religious organization. The question, however, is what individuals or organizations do in such situations, as the outcome may greatly influence either development or religion. Our two examples show that this influence can go both ways. Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche let his Christian conscience take precedence and allowed the distribution of New Testaments, whereas the PLS has chosen to involve condoms instead of ignoring them.

Three core notions seem to emerge. 1) Dividing the Christian identity from the PLS seems impossible, as these are deeply intertwined. Christian churches must be able to keep their religious identity, as it is the basis for their work and because aspects of this identity provide added value. 2) Emphasizing Christian identity may influence development initiatives in many ways. It may hinder and facilitate it through both added value and added difficulty depending on several factors. Added value, however, clearly emerges in the case of EELC, in spite of examples of both. There is also the possibility of Christian conscience and developmental agenda to collide. In such situations, we have seen examples that both can influence the other. 3) The perspectives of added value and added difficulty suggests that context is an important variable in the relationship between religion and development. This calls for an integral approach to development processes and also in the analysis of the relationship between religion and development.

5.6.5 Summary

This section has shown that Christian identity is vital to the Christian informants from the PLS for a number of reasons. Indeed it seems to be inseparable from the PLS, which underscores the notion that one cannot divide the spiritual and the material side of such initiatives. On this basis it seems inevitable that religion influences development. We have seen examples of it influencing through adding value in opening doors, providing church-run initiatives with credibility and trust both inside and outside of its tradition. It can also, however, add difficulty in closing doors to certain milieus or if the Christian identity is perceived as threatening the identity of certain groups. Between the two, however, the former emerges in this particular case study. Furthermore, I have identified the possibility for identities to collide, if precepts that are closely connected to Christian conscience and identity are in opposition to developmental agenda or the aims of a donor. The outcome of such colliding identities can go both ways- both influencing development and religion, depending on what the outcome was.

The affirmation of the deep connections between religion and development does not translate into all parts of religion being fruitful in the process of development. This calls for an integral analysis of the process and the role of religion in each individual situation.

5.7 Holistic Mission

As my understanding of the EELC and the PLS grew, a strict division between religion and development was difficult to maintain. Both in practice and in theory, the notion of division was challenged by a holistic way of thinking. Many of the leaders spoke openly about a holistic approach. Thus in this final section of the analysis, I wish to present their thoughts on this concept which seems to create the basis for their own comprehension of the relationship between religion and development. This religious dimension is not influential in the same ways as the previous sections, as it is more of a way of thinking about, and relating to, the work of the church. In that sense it rather belongs to the concluding chapter.

However, the very term was extensively brought up and discussed during the interviews, and so I chose to present it along with the other religious dimensions, and thus also encroach chapter six.

5.7.1 Holistic Mission- connected concepts

When I asked the leaders of both the EELC and the PLS itself whether they had a focus on keeping diaconia and evangelization separate, or how they related to this, everybody made reference to holistic development, or holistic mission. Bishop Nyéwé, explained what was meant by it.

> Holistic development is a whole development, (…) which considers all dimensions of the human being or the institution. Thus, being a church, we are expected to be here to only preach the word of God, but we say that the word of God is accompanied by development of other aspects in life- like health, like education, like training. All of these things put together constitute that which we call holistic development. A development of the whole human being in all of its dimensions. (Rev. Nyéwé)

In other words, the mission they have as a church is not only to proclaim the gospel of salvation, but also to bring along factors of physical and material wellbeing. When talking to the general secretary, I learned that there was, at the present time, a particular emphasis on holistic development in the EELC, to attempt to bridge the different doings of the church.

> The gospel is belief and faith, development is the good things which accompany in everyday life- wellbeing and so on. At the heart of the church, these two structures have always existed together in peace, even if in the end, we have sensed a crossing- that is a small difference between those who work with development and those who do pure evangelization. At a time, they seemed to be a bit disconnected, but with the latest developments on the organizational level of the church, we have wanted to integrate the two together (…) to respect one of the objectives of the church, which is to bring salvation, the salvation of Christ to the human being, but also assure of his wellbeing. So the challenge now is to bring these two structures together. (Mr. Hamidou)

The understanding that physical and spiritual wellbeing were equally important, and that measures should be taken to provide for both of them, were not just present at the leadership level of the EELC, but also in the PLS. I asked the leader of the project whether

one should divide the work that was done, into evangelical work and developmental work. He did not think this separation was fruitful.

> I think it is a holistic work, a whole work. Particularly in this project (…), because it is a project where the problem first and foremost is social. Yes, it is true that there is a large part of health, but most of the sick people have many social problems. They cannot eat, they cannot get treatment, they cannot… We have orphans who suffer, who cannot go to school and we have to take care of them. They have the need to hear the gospel as well, because some of them are really dying. We need to take care of them, nurse them and all that. It is really a social problem, so I do not think we need to make that division, because they are in need of health, they are in need of the gospel, they are in social need and all that is one reality. (Mr. Salpou)

Whereas most of the other leaders also ascribed to the notion that the gospel and their work with HIV/AIDS were complementary aspects (5.3.1-2), their thoughts on how this was to be done in practice were somewhat different. MC- coordinator, Mr Gbetnkom Ntieche, claimed that a clear division between the two aspects was good, because it would give a clearer focus: "Well, I think it is a good division because in the world of today, we always need to specialize in something. Everybody specializes in something and I think it is difficult to do everything at a time and do it well" (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche). With this, however, he did not mean that the religious dimension of the church needed to be kept entirely apart from the project, but that one had to be clear on which of the dimensions that should be in focus. This would define the way one decided one's strategy.

> Every time our objective is evangelization, the dose of evangelization will be stronger than when our objective is HIV. This is because the objective defines the strategy: how to convey the message? If our message is the gospel, we will start looking for tools in the Bible. We will search for strengths in educational science and Bible-studies to arrive at a deeper understanding of the texts, and this would not be the same thing if our objective was HIV- related. (Mr. Gbetnkom Ntieche)

PLS- coordinator Kalnimé saw the religious dimension as playing a more subtle part, influencing the way people worked. He gave an example by telling of a patient coming to have an injection from two different nurses. Both of these nurses did a satisfactory job considering the injection in itself. But where the first nurse did it automatically, not paying any attention to his patient, the second was tender and humane, asking whether everything was ok, and saying when it would hurt. Mr. Kalnimé said one could give a treatment with or without heart, and claimed that the religious reality of the project influenced the workers to do their work with heart. This was the main way that the religious dimension complemented

the health-dimension: "This is why I say: There is the religious entity and there is the medical entity. We do the caretaking medically, but by presenting a love and compassion that flows from religion" (Mr. Kalnimé). Though he emphasized this subtle spiritual dimension, he also stated that their social initiatives always had to be accompanied by the gospel (5.3.1).

Even though my informants had somewhat differing understandings of how the religious dimension played a part in such a holistic development, they all agreed that it did. Their work was seen as a whole. Dividing into separate dimensions neither reflected their thoughts, nor their practice. NMS representative, Erik Bischler, harshly criticised the division.

> It is an artificial division that has been made in the west to satisfy our ideological and political heads. Then the organizations out here tries to satisfy. We have to construct our systems and our organizations to satisfy the political system in Norway, which is a total mistake. (Mr. Bischler)

Later he added that such a division in the Cameroonian context was not practically possible: "The leadership (…) will understand what we say, and try to abide by what we say. But those on the ground- the priests and the grass root of the project, they will neither understand it, nor live by it." (Mr. Bischler). As seen in 5.3.2, this notion was confirmed by the general secretary:

Thus, according to my informants, the division between spiritual and material dimensions, evangelism and diaconia and religion and development, does not seem to reflect reality in Cameroon. Neither the theological norms among the EELC and PLS leaders, nor the lived reality in PLS- practices. Instead, they suggest the notion of holistic mission as a pertinent way of understanding the mission of the church, and therefore also the relationship between religion and development in the EELC.

5.7.2 Holistic mission- contingent concepts

If the church considers its objective as holistic, a possible consequence would be to find religious manifestations in the project. Several such manifestations have been presented already (5.1 through 5.6). However, these are religious dimensions which I identified on the basis of my own partially preconceived categories, which are made to capture local reality

but also fit western- academic reality. Therefore, in search of how local people viewed these matter, I asked the informants whether or not they thought it was obvious that the PLS was a church-run project.

Interestingly, many responded negatively to this question. Elements that I considered as clear manifestations of religion were not considered as such by many Cameroonians. I discovered that the reason for this was because the PLS treated everybody, not just Christians. That was where many informants drew the lines between religion and development. If religion was somehow set as a contingency to get involved or included in the PLS, then it should be considered religious: "If it had been religious, we would only have treated the Christians. We would have refused the Muslims" (HCV- 1). Who the project sought to help determined whether the project was religious or not. Consequently, as being Christian was not a contingency to get involved, the project was not conceived to be religious. The Muslims HCV said: "Everyone has confidence in the church, because the church does not make difference between people- the church accepts everybody" (HCV- 2). It thus seemed as if the Christian identity of the church was unimportant as long as everyone was treated the same. Bishop Nyéwé said this was because religious positions had already been taken.

> Positions are already taken. The Muslims are there, and they know that whatever the church does, it will not easily convert them. The Christians are also there, knowing that whatever the Muslims do, they will not change our way of being. So with these positions being present, we have the possibility to dialogue. (Rev. Nyéwé)

Nyéwé continued by stating that religious epressions were more common in Cameroon: "People are not ashamed of expressing their religious convictions- but they are to take or leave" (Rev. Nyéwé). This notion was confirmed in several other interviews. Mrs. Bischler claimed that instead of pretending religion did not exist, Cameroonians expressed it, and thereby rendered it less dangerous:

> Instead of, as in Norway, pretend that religion does not exist and not talk about it (…), we recognize each other and express that you are a Christian, I respect you. And you are Muslim, I respect you. Now, we are together to discuss this matter. For them, this is completely normal, and I think it is this way not only on this school. It is more the way it is, in society. That you respect that you have a faith, it is not something private to be hidden. (Mrs. Bischler)

Thus, by expressing religion, it is no longer an unsaid reality which everyone knows is there but do not speak of. Though he argued the same notion, Mr. Bischler admitted that it went too far if the gospel at some point was set as a condition for help. This was a pitfall for Christian organizations.

> Obviously one is down the wrong road if one sets it as a condition to get the help that, for example, the PLS offers, that you have to come to church on Sunday. That would be a serious stray-off. Or if you start relating the healing-elements from the sickness to the religious context from which one comes, like "If you become a Christian you will get well. If you become a Christian you will get admission to our groups." Then, you would be walking on the wrong roads! (Mr. Bischler)

He admitted that this was a challenge also for the EELC, and continued to say that another aspect they needed to be aware of was that it could be a way out of poverty.

> Mr. Bischler: One danger here, as everywhere else, is that one uses religion as an argument to sell new ideas (…), that it becomes a contingency to get help. That you have to belong to the church or the context from which help comes. No one probably pronounces it, but there is nevertheless a possibility that it can be real.
>
> Interviewer: Inside this church as well?
>
> Mr. Bischler: Yes, that may be. I cannot point to examples of this kind of abuse, but what is clear is that many seek, and have sought, to the churches because it is a possibility to get out of a life which seems quite hopeless. It gives the possibility to work, to education, to health. So it can be an opening to get out of something, and obviously, that dependency should be used with caution, and one should be aware that it probably is this way. (Mr. Bischler)

Thus, some people do not approach the church merely for religious reasons, as inclusion in the church for some may be a way out from poverty.

Locally then, religious colour in a project was judged on whether religion was a contingency for involvement in a project. Such contingencies does not seem to be present in the PLS, even though it admittedly may be a challenge. A related and more difficult issue is when people approach the church for other reasons. In such cases, some may experience inclusion in the church as a factor on which the help depends, or at least that it strengthens their chances of getting help.

5.7.3 Discussion

In many ways, we may view the previous categories of religious dimensions (5.1- 5.6) as bricks in painting the picture of holistic mission. This section will consequently draw extensively on the former ones, and suggest insights on the basis of these seen through the notion of holistic mission. I choose to call it holistic mission instead of holistic development, because the work seems clearly religiously motivated (5.3), and because it corresponds to the definition of Christian mission in 3.1.

The categories of diaconia/ evangelism, and religion/ development were questioned from the very beginning, as the categorization did not match the reality in the PLS and the EELC. Diaconia and evangelism were considered as entities in one whole, mutually enforcing and dependent upon each other. Lode argued that development had been a goal in itself, as well as a part of the missionary strategy all along (Lode 1993:257). This seems confirmed through my studies. According to my informants, they also wanted to pull the two together and further integrate them. This process, and the mission of the church was defined holistically, where spiritual and material concerns, though being separate in some ways, were parts of the same whole reality and mission (5.7.1). On the basis of my material, it seems that this holistic nature of the mission of the church work is somewhat inevitable. From a religious perspective, one cannot truly separate religion and development, since development is a part of religious calling, both individually and organizationally (5.3.3) and thus the constitutive reason for many development initiatives. Seen from an insider perspective, Deneulin & Bano's suggestion of a separation being wrong seems to be confirmed through my study (Deneulin & Bano 2009:4-5).

It seems difficult to remove religious motivation, mobilization or the ethical and moral elements of religion as these initiate the project in the first place. Religious organizations are built on religious principals, and their entire set of objectives are religious *per se*, even when they are not conceived to be so from the outside. As bishop Nyéwé said: "We do everything we do in the name of Jesus" (Rev. Nyéwé). Religion is the reason for development initiation and much of its everyday motivational drive. A strength in this, is that

it takes seriously the spiritual dimension of life, which is very real too many people in general (van der Wel 2011:356-357), and Cameroonians in particular (2.1.2).

In 5.7.2 local perspectives concerning being a religious project were explored. Many informants claimed that the project was not particularly religious. This was argued on the basis that it did not choose who to treat based on religious affiliation. In other words, the fact that religious expressions occurred the project, did not render it a religious project as long as everyone had the same possibilities for help and would receive the same quality of help. It was admitted, however, that to connect Christian identity too closely to the help that was offered, could turn the holistic relationship into a contingent relationship where one is dependent on the other, which easily could be criticised of being experienced conditional development (Fretheim 2013:92-93). This, as we have seen, could happen through a conscious act, but also unconsciously. If the church is seen as a way out of desperate situations, an emphasis on Christianity could make people think that they are expected to join in order to get included. This shows us that development work where religion is given free access to express itself, may end up connecting religious concepts, or even conversion, to development and thus to a smaller or larger degree make the two dependent on each other.

Lastly, regarding this theme, the material suggests that holistic mission is two things. Through the statements of the EELC/PLS leaders, we see that it is an academic concept marking a preferred way of working. They state that their mission is holistic, and that the division which has come about does not reflect how a church should work. Secondly, holistic mission is also the way most adherents of the EELC view their work. Mr. Bischler stated that the leaders of the church would understand a division and try to adapt to it, whereas the foot-folk would neither understand it nor live by it. This is not in any way meant to degrade the religious adherents cognitive abilities, but rather state that this division is not a part of Cameroonian culture and way of thinking, which is much more holistic. The many examples of religious manifestations which have been provided in this thesis in many ways emphasize their holistic comprehension of the objectives for their work. Thus holistic mission seems to be both a theoretical concept, but also a lived reality.

5.7.4 Summary

This section has presented the notion of holistic mission, which in many ways provides a way to understand the appearance of religious dimensions in the PLS. This concept firstly seems to be an elite word, used by the leaders of the EELC and PLS, to suggest that development has material, immaterial and spiritual dimensions. Also it points to the process of uniting the two main dimensions of their work, namely evangelism and diaconia. Secondly, holistic mission seems to be the lived reality for many grass-root workers in the project.

This indicates that in spite of there being a theoretical separation, there is no practical separation between religion and development in the EELC and PLS. Religion is the very reason for which the project exists, it is the fuel that motivates the adherents and workers to do what they do. For the religious believer, religion and development seem to be inseparable.

We also saw that the PLS was not conceived of as a religious project in spite of apparent expressions of religion within it. This was because everybody was helped. Some informants, however, identified a danger with connecting religious expressions and development to close. This can lead to a contingent relationship between the two, where help can be at least conceived of as dependent on inclusion in the church.

Chapter 6: Religion and development revisited

The aim of this study was to gain a better understanding of the relationship between religion and development. I started by asking how religion influences development in a concrete faith-based development initiative, namely the Programme de Lutte contre le Sida (PLS) in Cameroon. Through interviewing representatives from the project itself, as well as through participant observation, I identified seven dimensions of religion- six dimensions through which religion influenced development, and one dimension which identified the way the relationship between religion and developement was understood and lived locally.[84] In identifying these dimensions, I would be able to present several roles religion played in the project, and consequently point to a number ways in which religion influenced development. This in turn gave clues to how the relationship between religion and development was understood in this particular initiative.

In discussion with relevant literature this has provided an interesting contribution to the ongoing discussion of religion and development. The main traits, findings and conclusions of this study will now be presented. Firstly, I will present the six influential dimensions and the ways in which they influences development, thus answering research questions 1 and 2. Secondly conclusions and comments regarding the nature of the relationship between these two concepts will be given, followed by a section which suggests a way forward for the treatment of religion in development thought and practice. These two sections, answers research question 3, and the fundamental research question. Lastly, some suggestions for further research will be given.

6.1 Religion's influence on development

I have introduced six dimensions in and through which religion influences development. The following section will present the insights concerning the ways these categories, as different expressions of a religion, influence development.

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[84] As this dimension does not try to present ways in which religion influence development, but rather is a way of defining the relationship between the two, it will not play a large part in 6.1, but a bigger one in 6.2.

This happens firstly through concrete or visible expressions of religion, which was suggested in the categories evangelism (5.1) and prayer (5.2). Concerning evangelism, the PLS sometimes provided a frame through which arenas for evangelism were made available. The Mobil Caravan's (MC) performances (5.1.1) as well as the suggested (and potential) change of objectives when a person was terminal, shows this (5.1.4). In such examples, religion may draw on development, sometimes to the extent that saving souls becomes a secondary or even primary objective. Furthermore, evangelism could potentially encourage, console and bring dignity to People living with HIV/AIDS (5.1.3-4), thus providing added psychosocial value to the project. This, however, was suggested to be a difficult dimension to master, as it also encompasses the potential of being perceived of as proselytism or conditional development/aid. Prayer influenced development by relating it to a spiritual reality. It arguably played an important unifying, and psychosocial role (5.2.2), but also encompassed a divisional potential (5.2.3). However, the former seemed to emerge, which makes it added value more than added difficulty. Prayers in the name of Christ seemed to encompass a larger divisional potential.

In sum, these dimensions of religion relates development to a spiritual reality. This seems to influence development by providing spiritual capital, and relating the development to a spiritual reality which is central to Cameroonian society (2.1.2). Secondly it sometimes mixes in proselytizing-objectives, either to the extent that these become the primary ones, or in a way that can make people perceive of development or aid as conditional. It was furthermore suggested that which potential that is realized often depend on the eye that sees (5.1.4; 5.2.4).

Religion also influences development through less visible dimensions. In 5.3, it was shown that religious motivations are important to the workers of the PLS. The religious nature of the EELC influences development by providing activities with religious meaning. Thus it both motivates workers and mobilizes resources. The project is diaconal in nature, where development is both a goal in itself and a silent form of evangelism (5.3.2). Some also consider oral proclamation as natural and legitimate (5.3.1).

The religious institution's influence on development is in particular its potential to facilitate development through structural far reach and diverse channels which have a large

and attentive audience (5.4.1-2). Furthermore, religious institution has been shown to be a tool for instrumentalizing religious power, which may be used constructively and destructively, thus potentially influencing development by rendering it easier and more effective through powerful channels, but also opposing it or making it conditional 5.4.3).

Religious morals, most notably, seem to inspire the PLS- focus on a responsible behaviour through abstinence and fidelity, but are communicated orally at some occasions (5.5.2). I also pointed to how development agenda has influenced religion on this area, in pushing towards the inclusion of contraceptives in the PLS (5.5.1; 5.5.4).

Considering religious identity, 5.6 provided insights suggesting a religious dimension is inseparable to development, which may add both value and difficulty to developmental projects. A Christian identity may open doors for a developmental initiative through inspiring trust and credibility (5.4.2; 5.6.2). It may also cause difficulties due to opposite perceptions within that religious tradition, or due to colliding religious and developmental identities and agendas (5.6.3). In the PLS, the former seems to dominate.

In general, religion influences development by loading development with religious meaning, which acts as fuel for developmental actions and initiatives, and mobilizes resources. This motivation gives Christian workers a Christian identity, which can entail added value through various form for spiritual capital. Spiritual capital of various kind has been shown to be important religious resources and represent religion's added value.[85] Religion may also add difficulty through internal religious opposition or external opposition

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[85] Ter Haar identified four categories of religious resources that could be explored for developmental purposes (Ter Haar 2011:8-9). These have not been systematically or thoroughly discussed in this assignment, as my intent was not to discuss different kinds of religious resources. In the course of the analysis, I have however pointed to a number of religious resources, and stated that they do play an important role. At this point it seems relevant to point out that the religious resources that were identified in my own categories are compatible with Ter Haar's. To exemplify, evangelism and prayer were in themselves considered religious resources, and both point to forms of religious *practice*, which has their base in Christian *ideas*, and were considered having important *experiential* influence on individuals, as religious duties and as consoling and uplifting practices. Also, the religious *institution* was shown to be a most effective and important tool. A larger study could have done a more thorough categorization and investigation of these connections and explored their different potentials for influence. I contempt myself with suggesting that Ter Haars categories seem fruitful for exploration of religious resources, and urge future studies to apply this framework and make it better if necessary.

to the religious tradition at hand. However, it can also entail added difficulty and collide with developmental agenda.

Religion further influences development in relating it to a spiritual reality that is central in Cameroon (2.1.2). This happens both through visible concrete manifestations of religion and underlying religious motivations or ideas. We have also seen that different ideas and precepts within both religion and development mutually influence each other, most striking was the religious moral influence on PLS' focus, and the inclusion of contraceptives opposing reigning attitudes among EELC leaders.

6.2 The relationship between religion and development

My material has shown that religion shapes development, is shaped by it, and loads it with religious meaning. The six identified dimensions of religion in this study have shown that religion influences development considerably in faith-based development, both in visible and subtle ways. On this basis, various approaches to understanding the relationship between religion and development have been suggested, confirmed and criticised. This section aims to provide an overview of these thoughts, as well as add some new on the basis of viewing the material as a whole.

Religion offers tools and benefits through its institution, different kinds of spiritual capital and religious resources which may be of instrumental use to the development project or agenda (5.1.3; 5.2.1; 5.4.2), and relates it to a spiritual conception of reality which is central in Cameroon (2.1.2). Furthermore, it has a unique potential to establish initiatives and motivate its adherents, but can also make development more difficult through different kinds of religious exclusion (5.2.2-3), and opposition to an agenda or objectives (5.6.3). We have also witnessed how religion may grow on the basis of development by making profit of HIV/AIDS information- rallies to evangelize (5.1.1), as well as the admitted conscious and subconscious danger of religion being set as a condition for development and that way potentially forcing converts (5.1.4). On this basis, an instrumental relationship between the religion and development must be confirmed. Religion may function constructively or

destructively to development (Haynes 2007:5), and development may at least facilitate religious conversions.

I would argue that people who have clear definitions of the concepts, are used to a division, and have clear development objectives are the ones who are prone to having an instrumentalist approach. Western development practitioners fall into this category, probably because of the history of development as a political project, its defined objectives as economic growth, the Human- Rights or the Millennium Development Goals (3.3.1-2), and the marks of secularization upon the western mind, forcing it to compartmentalize concepts and keep religion out of the public sphere (3.2.2). An instrumentalist approach is thus understandable, and may even be fruitful and effective (Ter Haar 2011:20).

My study has tried, however, to view things through the eyes of the informants. Among them, a quite different perspective emerged. Religion and development was not considered to be contrasting concepts. Rather, development was considered a part of the holistic mission of the church both among leaders and grass-root people, encompassing both evangelism and diaconia (5.7.1). In that respect, development is just another name for practices they already consider vital to the Christian mission. These insights correspond largely to the proposition of Deneulin & Bano, that there is no fundamental separation between religion and development, and indeed (Deneulin & Bano 2009:4-5). Both the reasons to initiate development work and its everyday motivation is often due to religion itself (5.3.2). In addition, the PLS objectives are inspired by religious morals (5.5.2). This shows that religion not only plays a central part in development, but is inseparable to it. One cannot remove the religious core of such work, as it is constitutive to it. This is not something that only accounts for religious organizations. I defined development as a value-based process (Sen 2000:8-9; Deneulin & Bano 2009:45-46), which has been confirmed in the case of the PLS (5.3; 5.5.2). Different values will always be defining, motivating and challenging development, whether these are religious, political, ideological or ethnical. This also accounts for secular development organizations (Clarke & Jennings 2008:269).

The way Christian mission has been defined in this study (3.1) entails other elements than merely evangelism. Such an understanding is arguably both the intellectual understanding and the lived reality in the EELC/PLS. The holistic nature of this mission again

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suggests that dividing religion and development would be difficult, and merely a theoretical exercise (James 2012:45). By nevertheless dividing them, religious believers could arguably end up in somewhat schizophrenic modes (James 2012:45; Hovland 2008:184), which may result either in doing one thing and saying something else which Tvedt criticises (Tvedt 2009:80), or it can take away the added value that religious organization has to offer (James 2012:45). To end up with religion having to compromise its religious identity does consequently not seem to be neither possible nor desirable.

Thus far we have seen that even though an instrumental approach to religion is understandable from an outsider perspective, the insiders cannot be expected to separate developmental work from religion. A second conclusion in this account has been that context seems to be of utmost importance when judging religion's influence upon development, and in analysing the relationship between the two concepts (5.2.4; 5.6.4) Religious practice is understood differently depending on who makes the judgement (James 2012:45), and (as we seen above) arguably the same applies to the relationship between religion and development. It has also been stated that specifics of the surrounding context, such as the relationship between Christians Muslims are important variables (2.1.2; 5.6.2-3). My informants, when claiming that religion was normal and unproblematic (5.7.2), or that religion was an asset (5.1.3; 5.4.2; 5.6.2), made those arguments on the basis of the Cameroonian context. This implies that religion's position in culture and society, as well as inter-religious relationships are vital in understanding the relationship between religion and development. Religion will not possess the same position in every place. The MC considered context when deciding which elements to emphasize and involve (5.1.1), and whereas my informants often highlighted the beneficial position of the church in society (5.4.2; 5.6.2), they admitted that some places it could be an obstacle (5.6.3).

Neither will religion be the same everywhere. Religion is not a constant. This is a notion which academics stress (Deneulin & Bano 2009:156). Also internally, religious traditions vary a great deal. This study has confirmed an internal diversity within the EELC with regards to condoms (5.5.1) and evangelism (5.1.1). It has also pointed to diversity between religions with regards to condoms (5.5.4). Deneulin and Bano suggested that religious people had different ways of expressing their religion (Deneulin & Bano 2009:6).

My study has confirmed this, and added that such different expressions may well co-exist in individuals as well (5.3.3).

These notions suggest that religious tradition, as well as religious and societal context is crucial to understanding the relationship between religion and development. It is not a constant relationship, but changing with regards to context and religious tradition. This suggests that an integral or organic understanding of religion and development is fruitful both for understanding and analysing the relationship (van Wensveen 2011:90). The integral approach is also very fruitful in promoting an asset-based approach which emphasize the capabilities which are found *in situ* (Cochrane 2011:234; 240), and in that it takes local immaterial values into account (van der Wel 2011:355). In religious societies such as the Cameroonian, development processes needs to acknowledge and include the religious dimension of reality, because religious values are important to the Cameroonian society (2.1.2), and because religious organizations enjoys an important and beneficial position in this society (5.4.1-2; 5.6.2). Van der Wel points out that much development is already integral without having been defined as such (van der Wel 2011:356). The PLS make a good example of this, as it builds on the capabilities and resources that are available to it (5.1.3; 5.2.1; 5.4.1-2). As it is a church-run project, these resources are often of religious character.

The attempt of this thesis has not been to provide a new method or conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between religion and development, but to nuance, and contribute to, the ongoing discussion. The relationship is a most complex one, and my study has arguably shown that all of the perspectives that were presented in 3.4 make important contributions to the understanding of it. An instrumental relationship undoubtedly exists, and is inevitable for development actors with pronounced developmental goals. However, for the religious actors themselves, development is a part of their religious calling and mandate, which means that one cannot expect them to separate religion from development. Development is religion for them. Moreover, it has been stated that the relationship vary depending on religious tradition and societal context. Religion, instrumentally, seemed to be an asset in Cameroon, but much due to the particular Cameroonian context and the specific religious tradition. This suggests that an integral analysis of each context is necessary. The relationship between religion and development will differ depending on these factors, which calls for individual treatment in each situation.

In addition to this, it was suggested that the relationship will be understood differently depending on the eye that sees.

6.3 Heading forward

It seems the keys to understand the relationship between religion and development are many. Judgements are posed upon it from several individuals and institutions in different contexts who consequently view it from different perspectives, work with different definitions and have different agendas. Western developmental donors naturally do not have the same perspectives as the local church or mosque that they support. Different religions, contexts and points of view urges us not to apply a single perspective, but rather recognize the complexity of this relationship and treat it accordingly. Neither religion nor development are constants, but differ, as do their objectives, concepts and contexts.

This thesis has shown, however, that religion undoubtedly is a factor in faith-based development work. This is because religion is the very basis for development, and is thus inseparable to it (Deneulin & Bano 2009:4-5). Due to this holistic approach to reality and mission, development actors must seek to engage with religion in its entirety if a constructive and honest relationship is the goal. A partial recognition of religion could, as I argued in the previous section, lead to internal problems for religious organizations (Hovland 2008:184) and would probably (and possibly rightly) end up criticising religion for mixing practices (Tvedt 2009:80). Given its holistic nature, this would not be surprising for the church to do. In EELC- national bishop Thomas Nyéwé's wording "the church is the church in everything it does" (Rev. Nyéwé). My suggestion in this account is that development actors should let it!

However, that the religious perspective of FBO's should be included in its entirety, does not imply that all religious practice should be allowed or celebrated. My material, though pointing to religion being an asset more than the opposite, also confirms a destructive potential in religion. It can render development difficult (5.2.2; 5.6.3) and have dangerous potentials of creating contingencies (5.1.4; 5.7.2). We have also seen that religion wields significant power, which could be used for good, but also in abuse (5.4.3). This

compels us to also regard religion critically (Fretheim 2013:94). As religious motivations neither are desirable nor possible to separable, this would mostly account for visible expressions of religion. According to Deneulin & Bano a religious community should not separate their worshipping identity and all it entails, thus encompassing concrete religious practices, from their work (Deneulin & Bano 2009:156). I would claim that whereas Christian identity and practice was shown to be important in the PLS (5.6.1) and some religious practices could even be considered vital (5.2.1), the question of whether religious expressions should be included must be defined contextually considering religion, concrete expression, as well as local culture. Much of the added value that religion provides, seems to be effective and valuable because the Cameroonian society is a more or less harmonious religious one (2.1.2), and religious expressions are neither rare nor feared (5.7.2). In such a context, religion arguably has a greater potential of becoming an asset, and is not considered an intrusive element.

This does not mean that FBO's should compromise their religious identity, but that they need to asses the potential destructive influences of their religious tradition critically. Ter Haar, among other things, challenges religion to scrutinize their own traditions particularly concerning possible culturally additions which may hinder (Ter Haar 2011:228), which would seem to be a good point to start.

Developmental actors on their side, are already critical, perhaps in a too big fashion. Their challenge, as several authors call for, would be to further include religion in its entirety into developmental strategies and definitions, acknowledging religion as both a means and a potential ends of development (Wilber & Jameson 1981:475; Narayan et al 2000: 264; van der Wel 2011:356-357). Indeed, as Marshall and Van Saanen claim, better understanding is needed between secular and religious practitioners. Increased dialogue, particularly on the tough issues (2.4) is therefore imperative (Marshall & Van Saanen 2007:307; Deneulin & Bano 2009:135; van der Wel 2011:357).

A "one-size fits all" approach to religion for development practitioners cannot be sustained. Religion must be integrated fully into development theory and practice in all its complexity, ambivalence and possibility. There is a need for contextual clarification of both religious tradition as well as societal context in order to create constructive, honest and

fruitful relationships between initiatives who hopefully and probably seek largely overlapping objectives.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

Studying religion is a fascinating undertaking in that one deals with the deep expressions of love, compassion, fear and duty that are engrained in the human being. In Africa, one meets this reality in a much more expressive and open form. There are several perspectives and issues that I identified during my work on this thesis, which would be both intriguing and important to explore.

One thing is the seemingly harmonious relationship between Christians and Muslims. Only few hours away, the situation is completely different. What constitutes this oasis of calm and respect in Cameroon? Whereas some of my informants gave some clues (2.1.2), it would probably prove interesting and relevant to explore this.

In 5.1.4, I concluded that it was difficult to master the psychosocial potential of evangelism, and decide which way it influenced. Whereas it would seem an astonishingly difficult task to try and gain a better understanding of the impacts and different functions of evangelism, the insights could prove to be of equal reward.

Lastly, animism, for different reasons, has not played any significant part in this thesis. I hope that future accounts try to include or even focus entirely on the role and influence of indigenous beliefs on developmental processes. Insights gained from this could prove imperative in relating, translating and adjusting developmental objectives into the "local language."

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Appendix 1: List of interviews

EELC- leaders

1   Hamidou, Djoulde (General Secretary- EELC)

2   Nyéwé, Thomas (National Bishop- EELC)

PLS- leaders

1   Kalnimé, Remi (Coordinator- PLS)

2   Salpou, Daniel (Administrative Leader- PLS)

3   Gbetnkom Ntieche, Valentin, (Coordinator- the MC)

Volunteers (HCV)

1   HCV nr. 1- Woman

2   HCV nr. 2- Woman

Mobile- Caravan- members (MC)

1   MC- member nr. 1- Young Christian woman

2   MC- member nr. 2- Young Christian man

Support-Group- members (SG)

1   SG- member nr. 1- Christian Woman

2   SG- member nr. 2- Muslim Woman

3   SG-member nr 3- Muslim Woman

NMS- workers

1   Bischler, Erik (NMS- representative in Cameroon)

2   Bischler, Sandra (NMS Cameroon)

Appendix 2: Informational document for leaders

Demande de participation dans un interview à l'occasion d'une étude de master

Je suis un étudiant de master dans la domaine de religion et société (Master in Religion, Society and Global Issues) à la faculté théologie à Oslo (Norwegian School of Theology (MF)). Comme c'est ma dernière année de master, il faut que je fasse un travail de recherche personnel, et c'est avec cela que je travaille actuellement. Le thème de mon étude est « la religion et le develloppement ». Le but de l'étude est de faire des recherches sur le rôle de la religion dans quelques initiatives religieuses concrètes pour pouvoir souligner les possibilités et les potentiels problèmes avec ce genre de travail.

Pour arriver à cela, je voudrais interviewer environ 20 personnes qui sont liés aux projets que j'ai choisi (les leaders de l'organisation, les employés et les volontaires des initiatives, et ceux en profitent). Les questions que je poserai seront sur le projet dans auquel vous êtes lié(e), sur votre pensées et votre attitude du projet, ainsi que votre attitude personelle au aspect religieux du projet et votre jugement de cet aspect.

L'interview durera environ une heure, et j'aimerais l'enregistrer ainsi que prendre des notes.

Votre participation est volontaire et vous avez l'occasion de vous en retirer quand vous voulez. Je vous demanderai de votre nom et votre position professionnel. Ces informations pourront figurer dans le mémoire qui sera le produit achevé de cette étude. Les enregistrements et les notes seront traités confidentiellement et seront supprimés quand le mémoire sera achevé, avant la fin de 2013. Si vous vous retirez de l'interview toutes les informations que vous avez données seront supprimées tout de suite. Le mémoire achevé sera publié.

Je commencerai l'interview par vous demander de votre consentement.

Au cas où vous avez une question vous pouvez me rappeler (numéro camerounais 00237 72767245 et norvégien 0047 40830529) ou m'envoyer un courrier à b_lemvik@hotmail.com. Vous pouvez aussi contacter mon conseiller d'orientation, M. Kjetil Fretheim qui travaille à la MF, son numéro est 0047 22590625.

L'étude est notifié à, et recommendé par, le fonction officiel norvégien de protection de la vie privée (Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste, NSD)

Cordialement,

Bjørnar Lemvik

Furuset Allé 22b

1053 Oslo

Norvège

Appendix 3: Informational- document for non-leaders

Demande de participation dans un interview à l'occasion d'une étude de master

Je suis un étudiant de master dans la domaine de religion et société (Master in Religion, Society and Global Issues) à la faculté théologie à Oslo (Norwegian School of Theology (MF)). Comme c'est ma dernière année de master, il faut que je fasse un travail de recherche personnel, et c'est avec cela que je travaille actuellement. Le thème de mon étude est « la religion et le développement ». Le but de l'étude est de faire des recherches sur le rôle de la religion dans quelques initiatives religieuses concrètes pour pouvoir souligner les possibilités et les potentiels problèmes avec ce genre de travail.

Pour arriver à cela, je voudrais interviewer environ 20 personnes qui sont liés aux projets que j'ai choisi (les leaders de l'organisation, les employés et les volontaires des initiatives, et ceux en profitent). Les questions que je poserai seront sur le projet dans auquel vous êtes lié(e), sur votre pensées et votre attitude du projet, ainsi que votre attitude personnelle au aspect religieux du projet et votre jugement de cet aspect.

L'interview durera entre 30 min et une heure, et j'aimerais l'enregistrer ainsi que prendre des notes.

Votre participation est volontaire et vous avez l'occasion de vous en retirer quand vous voulez sans devoir vous expliquer. Je vous demanderai de votre relation par rapport au PLS et votre lieu d'engagement. Comme je ne vous demanderai pas d'informations qui pourront vous identifier vous seriez complètement anonyme. Les enregistrements et les notes seront traités confidentiellement et seront supprimés quand le mémoire sera achevé, avant la fin de 2013. Si vous vous retirez de l'interview toutes les informations que vous avez données seront supprimées tout de suite. Le mémoire achevé sera publié.

Je commencerai l'interview par vous demander de votre consentement.

Au cas où vous avez une question vous pouvez me rappeler (numéro camerounais 00237 72767245 et norvégien 0047 40830529) ou m'envoyer un courrier à b_lemvik@hotmail.com. Vous pouvez aussi contacter mon conseiller d'orientation, M. Kjetil Fretheim qui travaille à la MF, son numéro est 0047 22590625.

L'étude est notifié à, et recommendé par, le fonction officiel norvégien de protection de la vie privée (Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste, NSD)

Cordialement,

Bjørnar Lemvik

Furuset Allé 22b

1053 Oslo

Norvège

Appendix 4 : Interview-guide

Guide d'interview- PLS

(Nom) :

Position :

Projet:

1. Racontez un peu du projet…

2. Le but du projet ? Maintenant ? Avant ? Vous y arrivez ?

3. Comment est-ce que le projet a changé ? (Changement de pondération/ activités)

4. Qui sont ceux qui en profitent? (les jeunes/ les Vieux/ les Chrétiens/ les Musulmans etc.)

5. Pourquoi ceux-ci ?

Le projet et l'organisation/ l'église

1. Comment, l'église, est-elle perçue dans la communauté locale?

2. Est-ce que les gens ont beaucoup de confiance en elle?

3. Les gens d'une autre conviction religieuse?

4. Qui a beaucoup de confiance et qui ne l'a pas ?

5. Pourquoi/ Pourquoi pas ?

6. Quel rôle est-ce que ca joue pour le projet que c'est une organisation religieuse/une église qui le mène ?

7. De quelles manières est-ce qu'on peut voir que le projet soit mèné par une organisation chrétienne ? Quelles expressions est-ce que la religion a dans le projet ?

8. Qu'est-ce que vous en pensez de ces expressions? (Bon/Mauvais/plein de possibilités/ problématique) Pourquoi ?

9. Est-ce qu'il se trouve des préceptes, des règles de conduite ? (concernant ce que vous pouvez faire ou ne pas faire/ dire ou ne pas dire)

Religion et développement/ Religion dans la société camerounaise

1. Quels sont les avantages, selon vous, qui a une organisation religieuse dans le travail dévélopmental ?

2. Quels sont les avantages d'être une église dans ce projet particulier ?

3. Quels sont les problèmes ? (en général/dans ce projet particulier) ?

4. D quelles manières la religion est-elle une alliée dans ce genre de travail ?

5. De quelles manières la religion est-elle un obstacle dans ce genre de travail ?

Les attitudes personnelles de l'interviewé(e)

1. Religieux ? Comment?

2. Qu'est-ce que vous pensez du profile chrétien du projet ?

3. Est-ce que le fait que le projet soit « chrétien » entraîne des obstacles ?

4. Pour vous-même, est-ce que le fait que le projet ait un profile religieux/ se déroule dans une église est important ?

5. Si il y avait un projet pareil dans une organisation non- religieuse, voudriez-vous en faire parti/ y être mêlé ?

6. Est-ce qu'il est important pour vous, personnellement, que l'évangile soit communiquée à travers votre travail (directement ou indirectement) ?

7. Est-ce qu'il est important pour vous personellement que l'évangile soit communiqué à coté du travail (par ex. dans les sorties du projet)

8. Si cela n'est pas le cas, est-ce que vous voudriez que ca soit comme ca ? Pourquoi ?

9. Dans la théologie chrétienne il y a beaucoup de préceptes morales. Est-ce que l'aspect moral joue un rôle important/ est pondéré dans le projet ?

10. Est-ce que ce devrait être encore plus pondéré ? Pourquoi ?

11. Voudriez-vous que l'aspect chrétien soit plus focalisé/pondéré moins focalisé/pondéré dans le projet

12. Selon vous, qu'est- ce qui est le plus important dans le projet ? Pourquoi ?

13. Selon vous, qu'est- ce qui est le moins important dans le projet ? (plus/moins…) Pourquoi ?