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"It Is Our Own Thing": The Expression of and Limits to Enculturation at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish

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**“It Is Our Own Thing”: The Expression of and Limits to Enculturation at St. Joseph’s
Anglophone Parish**

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Anthropology

Abstract

Down a small side street in the heart of Yaoundé, Cameroon, St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish houses worshippers from the Northwest and Southwest regions of the country. Its members bring their cultural traditions to the church in the process of enculturation, and mass is filled with clergy-sanctioned elements of traditional culture, but beyond its walls, people still carry out the traditional practices that are deemed as "non-Christian" by the Church. This study seeks to examine the ways that traditional culture manifests itself both inside and outside St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish, exploring the ways in which tradition is translated in the church and reframed outside of it in order to blend tradition and religion, make them compatible, and preserve culture in the face of modernity.

Résumé

Au bout d'une petite rue au cœur de Yaoundé, au Cameroun, la paroisse anglophone St. Joseph's accueille des fidèles du nord-ouest et du sud-ouest du pays. Ses membres apportent leurs traditions culturelles à l'église en train de s'enculturer, et la masse est remplie d'éléments de la culture anglophone sanctionnés par le clergé, mais au-delà de ses murs, les gens continuent à pratiquer les pratiques traditionnelles qui sont considérées comme «non chrétiennes». Cette étude cherche à examiner la manière dont la culture traditionnelle se manifeste à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de la paroisse St. Joseph, en explorant la manière dont la tradition est traduite dans l'église et recadrée en dehors de celle-ci afin de mêler tradition et religion, de les rendre compatibles et préserver la culture anglophone face à la modernité.

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My Cameroonian family, thank you for sharing your home with me, and for all the delicious food, flashlight puppet shows, and dance-offs during homework time.

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Introduction

There are very few taxi rides in Yaoundé, Cameroon that I know better than the drive from my home to St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish. Situated down a small side street in the heart of the city, the church operates as a community of paradoxes; it is both jubilant and solemn, rejoicing and mourning, and it acts as a family for the marginalized and a home for the displaced. It is built on European beliefs and structures but is so completely Cameroonian in every way, and it is rooted in tradition while being shaken by both the current realities of Anglophone Cameroonians and the Vatican.

During my short time at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish, I was introduced to these complex elements of the faith and culture, but in no way did I become familiar with them. My understanding of the congregation, much like their traditions themselves, was constantly changing, moving and being reframed with each new piece of information or story I heard, but I came to understand that for the members of the church, tradition was more than just a way of expressing the homes and cultures that are under fire mere hours away from them; it is their identity, and they cannot be easily separated from it. Through all the struggle and hardship, tradition continues to be practiced, carried on in the lives of its caretakers and embedding itself in their homes, minds, and faith, and in spite of all external efforts to snuff it out, this tradition survives.

Scope of Research: Objectives, Delimitations of Study, Research Questions, and Hypotheses

This study aims to explore the ways in which Cameroonian tradition and culture are both translated and reconciled within the Catholic Church and the means by which people mitigate the differences in practice and belief between these two structures in their lives using St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish in Yaoundé, Cameroon as a case study. Because of the short amount of time I

have to conduct my research, I am unable to focus on all aspects of Catholic practice in Cameroon, so I have chosen to limit myself to looking at the traditional customs that have been infused within the service and individual's relationships to them at one particular parish: St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish in Yaoundé. I intend for this research to be understood as such; it can only be applied to the community with whom I was working in the particular temporal context in which these interviews and observations were taking place, and it is an exploration of the ways that these individuals understand, translate, and practice their culture at this very moment. To facilitate this research, I formulated a central research question and hypothesis.

Research Question:How are traditional cultural practices translated at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish?

Hypothesis: Traditional cultural practices are unable to manifest in church in the same way they are carried out in other social settings, but they are still done and, even though the meanings are different, have significance for the community.

Two sub research questions and hypotheses also guided my work.

Sub Research Question 1: Is there conflict between the practice of tradition and the practice of Catholicism?

Sub Hypothesis 1: Because of differences in belief and practice, there is conflict between Catholicism and tradition, but this does not stop people from participating in both structures.

Sub Research Question 2: What strategies do people use to mitigate conflict between their tradition and their Christianity?

Sub Hypothesis 2: Individuals and entire communities find strategies to reconcile the differences in their belief systems, including compartmentalizing physical spaces and reframing both tradition and religion.

In my exploration of these questions, I came to learn that the realities of the Anglophone community is much more complicated than both my research and the church gives space for, and

that the coexistence of tradition and Christianity is not only complex, but also essential to the preservation of culture and identity. In order to make a space of their own within the Catholic Church, people have brought in and translated elements of their own culture, but they have not ceased the practice of their tradition, and in order to reconcile these differences in belief systems, they have also translated and reframed elements of Catholicism to aid the practice of their own tradition. Because of this, I argue that it is not only this former practice that should be understood as enculturation; the practice of tradition alongside Catholicism is crucial to the St. Joseph community's concept of Christianity, and it is one of the primary ways to preserve their culture in the midst of modernity.

Definition of Key Terms

In order to facilitate my research, I identified key words that were integral to my questions and hypotheses, and throughout the research process, the definitions of these terms served not only to guide my ideas, interviews, and observations, but they also became the foundation for the coding and analysis of my data. Tradition and spiritual belief are nuanced and complex concepts that carry different meanings to different people and cultures, and because of this, I have provided the definitions this study is using to identify and explore this topic.¹

- *Tradition*—the customs, beliefs, objects, activities, and ideas that are historically rooted and practiced within a particular group of people. It is transmitted from generation from generation. This is not to say that this historical element of tradition makes it a stagnant, unchanging entity; rather, traditions are alive, active agents in culture, and they are reactive to the realities of the individuals who practice them.
- *Practice*—An activity carried out by an individual or group of individuals, often on a regular basis. “The practice” (i.e. of Catholicism, of traditional culture, etc.) refers to individuals carrying out many practices that are part of these larger institutions.

¹ Key terms inspired by definitions from www.merriam-webster.com and Spradley, McCurdy 2006.

- *Ethnicity*—A group of people tied together through a traceable link to the same culture, often partaking in elements of this culture.
- *Custom*—A practice that is directly tied to an ethnic group or culture and has been practiced by many people within that group
- *Culture*—The features of everyday existence—material, ideological, environmental, or otherwise—that is shared by a people in a particular place and time; or, a group of people who are linked by such characteristics
- *Enculturation*—The process by which people internalize the elements of their cultures and incorporate these elements into different contexts. This process is closely tied to religious syncretism, and a further explanation and examination of these two terms is included later on in this paper.

Background: My Scientific Interest and a Hole in Scholarship

The subject of enculturation and Christianity in Cameroon is one that has not been widely researched and explored in the academic world. Anthropologists have studied the practices and beliefs of tradition in villages and communities throughout Cameroon, sociologists and economists have looked at the ways that Church doctrines have correlated to birth rates or STIs in the country, and missionaries and scholars of religion have discussed the conversion and spiritual shifts in individual communities, but there is little to be found on the ways that tradition and Christianity not only live alongside one another, but are integrated and inform one another in West and Central Africa. There are some scholars whose work touches on this—a study done by Paul Neely in 1996 on the relationship between traditional drumming patterns and calls of worship in the Christian communities of Cameroon villages is particularly interesting²—but because there are limited resources regarding the exact topic I am studying, much of my preliminary research and literature review has been focused on the history of Christianity and Catholicism in Cameroon.

² Paul Neely. *Drummed Transactions: Calling the Church in Cameroon*. 1996

I intend for this expository section to contextualize the community at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish both historically and socially. Later in this paper, I allow members of the community to speak for themselves about their traditions, customs, religious beliefs, and their strategies for integrating all these elements together, and because these are their lived realities on a daily basis, I have chosen to use their words to explore these ideas, rather than using the work of social scientists or religious scholars. Literature that has been particularly helpful in my framing of traditional practices is included in the bibliography.

Background: Christianity in Cameroon

When Christianity washed up on the shores of Cameroon in the early nineteenth century, it didn't come on the boats of French missionaries or German governors or the high-ranking members of the Portuguese military; Christianity came to Cameroon with a group of Jamaican Baptist pastors and bringing the Gospel and, more importantly, the foundations for colonization. These missionaries were not formally attached to any state or colonial power, but they acted as intermediaries "between the colonial authorities and the colonized people," bringing in the linguistic and religious agendas of colonial powers long before these states took control of the area.³ In establishing missions and schools, they not only taught the language and religion of the West, but also communicated the ideological needs of colonial powers—their values, principles, and ways of thinking—and facilitated a "peaceful acceptance" of both the Gospel and colonial states. Christianity in Cameroon has never been purely religious; it is inherently political, working to either support or oppose colonial regimes.⁴

³ Richard A. Joseph. "Church, State, and Society in Colonial Cameroun." 1980.

⁴ Richard A. Joseph.

When German, British, and French colonizers arrived in the country in the following decades, bringing with them their religion, language, government, and systems of supremacy, these ideological agendas became directly connected to colonial powers. Each shift in colonial rulers brought about a subsequent shift in religious missions—the Germans banned British religious organizations, and the French ousted German and Swiss missionaries a few decades later—but regardless of what state was in charge, there was a direct connection between the educational systems, religious institutions, and the erosion of traditional beliefs and practices. Schools became the places of both linguistic and religious learning, and while this process often allowed for the maintenance of traditional language or practices to make it easier for students to assimilate and understand the Gospel, tradition was forced into the background by the arrival of Christianity.

This is not to say that religion did not exist in Cameroon until it was brought in by outside forces; on the contrary, communities within the country have “well-developed political and religious traditions” that, while influenced by the West during colonization, continued to be practiced throughout colonial rule.⁵ Each of the country’s ethnic groups has its own set of beliefs and practices—different dances, different rituals, different gods and supreme beings—and despite attempts by European powers to squelch these traditions, communities held fast to their cultures, to mass on Sunday and praying to their local deities on Monday. One practice was called religion, and the other one was called custom, but they coexisted and informed one another throughout contemporary Cameroonian history.

It was not until the 1960s, however, that these traditional religious and cultural customs began to be integrated into church services. While the reasons for this shift in Cameroonian Catholicism have not fully been explored, it seems that the cause is twofold: this is the time of

⁵ Professor Dze-Gwa, W. “Cameroon: A Synopsis.” 4 February 2019.

both Cameroonian independence and the reforms of the Catholic Church under Vatican II. Prior to this period, masses throughout Cameroon were held in Latin, and priests conducted services with their backs turned to the congregation, both elements of traditional Roman Catholic masses throughout history and throughout the world; however, following the 1959 Vatican II reforms of Pope John XXIII, Catholicism around the globe changed, and Cameroon was no exception. As the door was opened for Catholics to pray with other denominations of Christians and practice mass in their own languages—not Latin—elements of traditional culture began to be incorporated into Cameroonian mass.⁶ These reforms, along with the resurgence of pride in Cameroonian culture and identity following its independence in 1961, brought traditional dance, song, dress, and rituals into the sanctuary for the first time. “The language of praise has changed,” an Anglophone Catholic said while discussing the transformation of the church. “People praise in their native tongue,” rather than being spoken to in Latin—a language so historically linked to both political and religious conquest—and they are allowed to see the faces of the men reading the homilies to them each Sunday.⁷

Now, after nearly sixty years of Cameroonian independence and the reforms of Vatican II, Catholic churches in the country are situated in a delicate position as both agents of culture and agents of peace and resistance in the midst of Cameroon’s political and social conflicts. Tension between ethnic and linguistic groups is on the rise and the political opposition is floundering, and in contemporary Cameroon, like in many states, it seems “that when the state suppresses political opposition groups, churches tend to assume the functions of these organizations... they remain

⁶ Jordan G. Teicher. "Why Is Vatican II So Important?" NPR. October 10, 2012.

⁷ Informant 2. Informal Interview. 8 March 2019.

‘zones of freedom’ in an otherwise oppressive political environment.”⁸ They are agents of peace, justice, and understanding, as well as houses of faith and community, and it is this notion—this idea of church as a zone of freedom for cultural practice and expression—that drew me to the Anglophone Catholic community in Yaoundé.

Background: History and Tradition at St. Joseph’s Parish

Following the reforms of Vatican II and the independence of the country in the early 1960s, Cameroonian Catholic churches became spaces that, rather than limiting the traditional culture of individuals, as it had throughout its colonial past, began adopting characteristics of Cameroonian cultural practices and traditions into mass on a regular basis.⁹ The structures of the service remained unchanged—there was still communion each Sunday, and each service ended with a benediction, as it always had—but the way that people expressed themselves in the space had changed. During an informal interview with a long-time member of the congregation, he spoke of how the practice of Catholicism was different than it had been in his youth. The women came wearing dresses that were brighter and— to his dismay—tighter than they used to, made in traditional styles with traditional fabrics, and people were permitted to sing and dance in the ways they were used to when they were back in their home villages. Perhaps the most important change though, in both Anglophone and Francophone Catholic communities around the city, was the shift from Latin to English, French, and “local” languages during mass. It is important to have a “language of praise,” he told us, and when people are able to express their faith in their own words, they are able to express it in a way that reflects their culture as well.¹⁰

⁸ Piet Konings. "Church-State Relations in Cameroon’s Postcolony: The Case of the Roman Catholic Church." 2009.

⁹ Informant 2.

¹⁰ Informant 2.

Nowhere is this more true than at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish in Yaoundé. As a sociological parish, "it groups people from different social backgrounds, different traditions, different towns, different villages, and different countries. The common denominator is English," a linguistic identity that carries along with it a cultural community as well, and when people come together under this common Anglophone identity, "they bring along with them their culture, their traditions... so the way they worship reflects their culture."¹¹ While these specific cultural practices tend to differ from ethnic group to ethnic group, the St. Joseph's community has been brought together under a common cultural language and tradition, allowing the parish to both foster and preserve traditional practices of the Northwest and Southwest in Yaoundé. This culture is what created the community, so it is this culture that they must work to protect, and in the process of this, they have infused elements of their traditional cultures in the daily practices of Catholicism in the parish. It is this very idea—the infusion of tradition in the church—that my research was both inspired by and conscious of.

Reading Horizontally and Vertically: A Methodological Deep-Dive

Preliminary Research

This project is both inspired by and rooted in a much smaller research project conducted at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish by myself and another SIT student about a month prior to the start of this research. We hoped to explore the ways that traditional practices were expressed within the structures of Christianity and Catholicism, and while we were told about the lectionary procession and offertory celebrations of the church and their roots in traditional customs, we also learned

¹¹ Informant 1. Formal Interview. 8 March 2019.

about the contemporary realities of the parish and its members, and the project became focused on the ways that enculturation contributes to cultural preservation in the face of the Anglophone crisis. This initial project was carried out, from the first interview to the final paper, in a matter of three weeks, and after the short time we had in the field, I was excited and intrigued not only by what information we had managed to learn, but also by everything that I knew I did not know yet.

Before our initial research began, we had a limited understanding of the community with whom we were going to be working, but we knew that this particular parish was the best location to carry out our research. It is the largest and oldest Anglophone Catholic community in Yaoundé, and due to our residency in Yaoundé and our limited French abilities, we decided that it would be best to work with a local Anglophone community. Religion and cultural expression are very personal and sensitive topics that can be difficult for anyone to articulate in their mother tongue, and even more so when having to transcend cultural and linguistic divides, so working with an Anglophone population was not only the easier option, but also the most ethical.

It was for these very same reasons that I chose to carry out this research project at St. Joseph's, building upon the work that my partner and I had begun and exploring the relationship between cultural practice and preservation in the face of the Anglophone crisis. I had already begun creating relationships and rapport with members of the congregation, I already knew how to get there with a taxi, and I already spoke the same language as the informants I knew I was going to meet there. The interviews we had already conducted served as a base for my research, and I hoped to use the informants we had already found to guide me to other individuals who would be willing to talk to me. The ten surveys we had conducted—a mixture of both short answer and multiple-choice questions about the ways that congregants saw tradition manifested at the parish—became the

basis of my observation guide, and the conversations we'd had with survey takers blended with the interviews we had already conducted to inform and create my question guide.

Interviews

Because I had already formed a few small, fledgling connections at the parish during the short period of initial research, coupled with my former experience with ethnographic research, I was not particularly hesitant or worried about entering the field, but there have been very few periods in my life more trying than the first week of fieldwork. I attended mass, trying to talk to congregants and make friends without infringing on their worship, and I contacted all the informants from the initial research project, only to have none of them respond to my texts, emails, or WhatsApp messages. It wasn't until late into the first week of my research period, when I arrived to church earlier than usually and accidentally ended up observing a funeral, that I finally put some interviews on my calendar and began making friends. A woman, now a dear friend of mine, who had seen me at the parish during the week introduced herself to me, and then proceeded to introduce me to her husband, her grandchildren, some friends, and the church music director, and after exchanging pleasantries and phone numbers, I was able to interview multiple people she introduced to me.

This was how I went about finding a majority of my informants. One person would introduce me to another, and that individual would tell me about a friend of theirs, and my small network of informants snowballed into a reasonably sized number of people to talk to and learn from. In total, I conducted 17 interviews—nine formal, eight informal—with various members of the congregation, as well as one with a particularly cheery member of the Commission for Multiculturalism. I spoke to members of the clergy, singers in the choir, ushers, family heads, vendors who sold oranges outside the church and hurried inside so as not to miss the Stations of

the Cross, all in the hopes of sampling as much of the congregation as I could. During all of the interviews, I followed a question guide to ensure that my information could be analyzed vertically as well as horizontally, and individuals with specific roles within the church were interviewed with question guides focused on their position and relationship to enculturation.

During the course of these interviews, however, I began to better understand the realities of the community I was working with, and the focus of my research shifted. The more I talked to people, the more I learned that the relationship between tradition, faith, and Christianity are much more complicated than my initial understanding of enculturation accounted for, and my questions became more fixated around the ways that people practice and make meaning of both their traditions and Catholicism. The lines between faith and disbelief—between tradition and religion—became more and more blurry with each interview, and I have come to find that my research is not just about the Church's expression of enculturation, but about the ways that individuals challenge that idea, take back their customs, and frame them as something that is not counter to their faith, but essential to it.

In total, I conducted 17 interviews with 14 informants-- six women and eight men. Each of these interviews was transcribed and coded, and participants were given a number corresponding to the order in which I interviewed them in lieu of their names to protect their privacy.

Observations

While interviews were the most helpful vessel for exploring these complicated facets of faith and tradition, observations were key to better understanding the ways that culture is translated in the space of St. Joseph's itself. I attended church services every Sunday, as well as daily mass during the week, and I documented all my observations on an observation guide that I created based on our initial survey results, documenting what I witnessed regarding the music, dress,

language, and dancing of congregants, as well as any elements of the service that stood out to me. During interviews with informants—especially early interviews, where my questions were more focused on enculturation within the church—I was able to ask informants about specific elements I observed in order to make meaning of my experience. The timing of my research was particularly important; the majority of my work was conducted during Holy Week, and because of this, I was able to sit in on hours upon hours of church services, and I was fortunate enough to observe a choir practice, two funerals, a small snippet of a wedding, and two village organization meetings alongside the drama and passion of Holy Week services. Each of these observations was recorded and coded, and using these observations alongside the coded interviews, I analyzed the data I had collected, looking for themes bridging across them.

Limitations of Study

Despite the fact that I attended church services, singing with the rest of the congregation and praying alongside them, I hesitate to call anything I did “participant observation.” Religion and spiritual belief are so deeply personal that it is impossible to truly participate in the experience of another individual, even someone from my own social, cultural, and spiritual background, and as much as I participated in mass, my research cannot be directly tied to those experiences. Rather, my observations were limited only to what I could see—what I felt and experienced are not, in my opinion, essential in understanding the religion and spiritual beliefs and practices of someone else—and I relied heavily on my informants to help me make meaning of what I observed and give meaning to the deeper concepts of identity, belief, and belonging that I was unable to truly grasp, experience, or comprehend in that space. This is not to say that my research is solely a representation of my informants—no matter how hard I try to remain impartial during interviews

and observation, I still carry elements of myself and my positionality into my work—but I will explore this in more depth while discussing the ethics of my study.

Throughout the course of my research, my observation was not the only element of my work that was limited. I conducted all my observations and interviews over the course of three weeks, which is not nearly enough time to become acquainted with a single choir at St. Joseph's Parish, let alone the entire congregation, and while I attended and observed over 35 hours of church services, it is impossible to draw any concrete conclusions from such a short period of research. My time frame also meant that I was unable to interview individuals who were unavailable or traveling during my research period, and there are a few key people who I desperately wish I could have had the opportunity to interview.

Time and travel constraints also meant that I was unable to visit the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, the places where the majority of my informants are from and the spaces that informed many of their understandings of culture, tradition, and Christianity. Had I had more time and the Anglophone regions been safe for travel—and, had I known then what I have come to learn about the relationship between tradition and religion—I would have like to conduct this study there, in a place where culture and Christianity are situated more closely and where I could have observed both mass and meetings of secret societies, rather than just the former I was privy to.

It should also be noted that in the Anglophone community, it is impossible to truly separate an individual from their tradition, and because of this, my informants' understanding of both my research questions and the questions I asked them during their interviews was often skewed. Special occasions where traditions were infused in the church service, such as the lectionary procession, were mentioned by nearly all my informants, but other elements of the church service

that individuals identified in surveys were not expressed as frequently. It often took questions specifically targeted at exploring the reasons that people dressed the way that they did and spoke the languages they spoke to get people to tell me about these elements, and while this meant that some of my interview questions might have led my informants to talk about aspects of tradition that they otherwise would not have mentioned, the advantages to me were twofold: it allowed me to verify elements of tradition that had arisen during my observation periods, and it continuously reminded me of my place within the community. This culture and its practices were not mine, and no matter how often I prayed alongside them at mass, the cultural knowledge and understanding that these individuals have. My study was not just deepened by my informants; it was made possible because of them.

Despite the limitations to my research, I made the most of each and every interview and observation I was able to have. Interviews were transcribed, coded, and stored on a password-protected computer, and in a similar fashion, my observations were recorded on my observation guide after each visit. I used this coded data to draw reasonable conclusions about my data and the community, analyzing each interview and observation vertically and comparing the information gleaned from each horizontally to draw upon the themes present both within interviews and patterns found across them.

Positionality and Password Protection: An Exploration of Ethics

Ethical Concerns

It is important to understand that the lives and realities of the members of St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish are currently in limbo, their daily lives and traditions being carried out in Yaoundé while a brutal and bloody conflict ravages their homes in the Northwest and Southwest

region. Virtually every member of the community has been touched by this crisis in some way—some members of the congregation are sending money back to their families each week, others are collecting medicine and clothing to deliver to internally displaced people (IDPs) within the church, and many Anglophone houses and apartments are overflowing with family, friends, and acquaintances who have fled the conflict—and because of this, there is a certain heaviness that comes along with conducting research in such a community. I took care to exclude IDPs from my study, as well as children and any other member of the population that could be considered particularly vulnerable, but the fragility of the Anglophone community has permeated throughout the entire congregation. Discussions about traditions in informants’ villages brought up stories of war and feelings of frustration and hostility. When talking about funerals and death rites, informants told me about corpses of loved ones in the Northwest region that were being held for ransom—“we cannot bury him,” one woman said, “because [the government] will not give us his body even though we are his family”¹²—and another woman explained how in a nearby village, a house was burned while people were still shut inside of it.¹³ “It is a genocide,” an informant told me, his voice quiet, tired, and sad.¹⁴

It was never my intention to rouse these memories of trauma or these feelings of grief, despair, and guilt about the conflict in the Anglophone region, but it is a very real and very major aspect of these people’s lives, and I wanted to give them a space to express both their experiences and their feelings about the crisis. Throughout the community, there is an understanding that the West does not care about the political and humanitarian crisis happening in Cameroon—a sentiment which, unfortunately, I believe is fairly accurate—and it felt insensitive and unethical to

¹² Informant 13. Informal Interview. 23 April 2019.

¹³ Informant 8. Informal Interview. 16 April 2019.

¹⁴ Informant 2.

exclude their struggles. I came to St. Joseph's to learn about their tradition and culture, and when the people and places that help that tradition to thrive are under attack, it becomes part of the research as well. The exact details of the Anglophone crisis are not an explicit element of my research, but the conflict is an essential element of the lives of everyone who informed this work.

Strategies for Mitigating Ethical Concerns

While my research itself presents little risk to the individuals who expressed desperation due to the crisis, I took steps in order to ensure that this community, already rocked by instability, was protected during my project. All my informants have been kept anonymous, their names and all identifying information redacted in order to ensure that both my informants themselves and their families can remain safe. Many people also expressed sentiments or told stories that were quite personal and often traumatic, and while I appreciated that they shared these stories with me, I wanted the privacy of their families and situations to be respected.

These precautions were also taken due to the sensitivity of my research topic itself. The concept of double lives—practicing tradition alongside Christianity—is one that carries social consequences within the church; not only is it frowned upon by clergy and staff of the church, but the leadership at the parish has indicated that those who live these double lives are “not true Christians,” and informants who have discussed these aspects of their faith and culture could be at risk of losing their positions within the church for admitting their practices. In order to further protect individuals, every participant in my study was informed of my role as a researcher and ensured that their names and identifying details would be kept private. After each interview, before parting, I also gave each informant my personal contact information and told them that, should they choose to redact any information they told me or withdraw from the study altogether, they

had the full agency to do so. Participants were also told that they can request a copy of my research when the project is complete.

In order to manage all of my data, informants' initials and first names were included on the transcript of every interview, but both these transcripts and the digital audio files of the interviews are saved on a password-protected computer to which only I have access. Because this work will also be used to write a senior thesis in the future, I intend on keeping both the transcripts and the audio files until that project is complete, and participants are free to contact me at any point throughout that process as well, should they choose to withdraw from the study after I leave Cameroon.

These ethical concerns and strategies for mitigating them have been an active and foundational element of my research from its conception; before entering the field for our preliminary research, my partner and I outlined the ethical guidelines that we used throughout that project and were the basis of the ethics of this project, and prior to entering the field to complete this research, I received clearance from the Human Subject Review board at the School for International Training (SIT), and in receiving this, my study was cleared through Macalester College as well. To be granted this clearance, I outlined the ethical dilemmas I expected to encounter and the ways that planned on both communicating with and protecting informants during the process. My clearance was also granted on the basis of excluding vulnerable populations in my study, particularly children and IDPs, and I worked to follow the guidelines outlined by SIT, Macalester College, and myself.

Positionality and Personal Interest

However, there are some elements of the research experience that cannot be accounted for on any form or project proposal but affect the process nonetheless. Coming into the field to study

the culture of a community that is not my own, I am fully aware that I carry with me my own perceptions of the world—my own ways of communicating, listening, thinking, and understanding—and that, despite my best efforts to remain unbiased throughout my project, it is impossible to completely separate myself from these elements of my own culture. This is particularly true in the case of my research; religion and faith are complicated and messy for any individual, but when carrying out research on these very topics, I came to realize that while the St. Joseph's Anglophone community was not my own, there were elements of it that deeply touched me, both positively and negatively.

Growing up in a Christian household in a predominantly Christian community, I am fairly comfortable being around expressions of faith and spirituality, and while I spent much of my time as a child attending services at a Methodist Church every Sunday and playing with friends during my parents' non-denominational Bible studies on Wednesday evenings, I also went to mass with my grandparents on occasion and watched in envy as my cousins all received their First Holy Communion. Thus was my plight of the daughter of my Protestant German mother and my Polish Catholic father. Since leaving my hometown, I have spent much more time learning about the history and theory of religion rather than practicing and studying the theology of it, but walking into St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish, there were elements that affected me much more than I expected. In the midst of a space and situation that was very much not my own, there were songs and prayers that reminded me of my home and my family, and connected me to the community, and vice versa. There were informants I met and friends I made whose common point of connection with me was the music we shared, but this also meant that I had to keep in mind that, despite these relationships to the people and the service, I was constantly in a place, culture, and community that was not my own.

Other elements of myself were much less personal and nostalgic, but still quite important to address. After all, there is a power dynamic that exists between an anthropologist and their informant—the participant might have the information, but the researcher is the one who asks the questions and controls the final narrative—and while I worked to mitigate these power differences by giving my participants agency in whether or not they participate in the study and including their own words and stories throughout this paper in lieu of my own, we were never on completely equal levels. This was furthered by the fact that I am an international student from the United States who is very blonde and very white, and it is impossible to discount the role that my passport and my race play in my access to this community. Some informants directly addressed my whiteness and foreignness during our conversations, but even in the interviews when they were not mentioned, I know that they impacted the way that I existed within that community.

I present these facets of myself and my identity not to excuse any bias that I might bring to my project, but rather to highlight that, just as in any study in social science, I was an active agent in my research. The words I quote from my informants were not said organically, but were responses to questions that I asked, and just as my participants brought themselves into our conversations, so did I. The goal of this project is to shine a light on the community at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish and highlight the ways that they are keeping their tradition alive, but it is important to acknowledge that there is a researcher who is operating that spotlight, and it is inaccurate and unethical to pretend otherwise.

“The Price of Syncretism”: Defining Enculturation in Theory and in Practice¹⁵

¹⁵ Carsten Colpe, *Syncretism and Secularization*. 1977.

Throughout the course of my interviews and observations at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish, congregants and clergy alike spoke of the blending of their tradition and religion using the term "enculturation." This is a concept that is rooted in the work of sociologist Talcott Parsons and is typically understood as the "the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that enable them to become functioning members of their societies," including both informal "child-training" and formalized education.¹⁶ It is the way in which individuals internalize their culture both consciously and unconsciously, learning the rights, symbols, and obligations of their particular group of people, and while the internalization of these practices and beliefs can lead to people bringing their own cultural practices into new spaces and contexts to create an entirely new entity, "the result of the enculturative process is... the identity of the person within the group."¹⁷

The meaning of enculturation within the St. Joseph's community, however, is more closely tied to the idea of religious syncretism, or the idea "that when any two cultures meet and interact they will exchange religious ideas with the dominant culture prevailing in the exchange."¹⁸ The structure of Catholicism reigned absolute throughout most of the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, but elements of the colonized cultures and communities permeated into the Church regardless. Rather than practicing Catholicism in the model of Europeans and Americans, Cameroonian priests and Christians would "try to bring the Good News to people in their local customs, their local way of doing things" so that the religion is not only easier to understand and embrace, but also easier to make their own.¹⁹ "Religious syncretism at its best is not old truths in

¹⁶ Stephen A. Grunland and Marvin K. Mayers. *A Reading for Cultural Anthropology*. 1988.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ N. F. Gier, *Theology Bluebook*. 1994.

¹⁹ Informant 1. Formal Interview. 12 April 2019.

new guise or just old or new truths confused; rather, through a creative dialectic, new religious insights have been born.”²⁰

Ultimately, the meaning of enculturation is twofold; it is internalized and it is syncretic, and throughout the course of this paper, I will use the term “enculturation” to encompass both of these meanings. This is the way that the people at St. Joseph’s choose to express their own process of cultural adaptation, translation, and preservation, and I hope to honor their understanding while folding both of these theoretical perspectives of enculturation into their practical realities. The first section of this paper is dedicated to the ways that cultural practices are carried out, translated, and given meaning within the church, while the second section discusses the way that tradition continues to be practiced and reframed to work within the confines of the Catholic doctrine, and throughout both of these discussions, the concepts of the creation and preservation of identity and the blending of practices rings true throughout. Enculturation at St. Joseph’s is much more than the dresses and dances I experienced within the walls of the church; it is a reshaping of what it is to be Catholic and what it is to be Cameroonian, and it is a reconciliation of the ways in which people can be fully Christian and fully cultural; in other words, “it is identity.”²¹

“It Is Our Own Thing”: Enculturation on the Walls of St. Joseph’s

Stepping into the sanctuary at St. Joseph’s Anglophone Parish, your eyes can’t help but be drawn to the paintings on the walls. It isn’t a particularly extravagant space—the church is still a fairly new building, and most of their funds are allocated to caring for their internally displaced family and saving up for flooring tiles—but the few likenesses of saints and holy figures scattered about the space seem to have personalities of their own. A stained-glass portrait of Jesus looks

²⁰ Gier 1994.

²¹ Informant 6. Formal Interview. 15 April 2019.

down upon the congregation, flanked on either side by a massive mural of St. Joseph, Baby Jesus resting in his arms, and a painting of a hand holding up a cup for Holy Communion. A wooden statue of Jesus on the cross stands before the rows and rows of pews, His face contorted in pain and passion, and on the wall behind Him, flowers, palm leaves, or silk drapes are hung to mark momentous or holy occasions on the church calendar. If you venture further into the church, you will find statues of St. Joseph watching over doorways and, in the very back of the parish property, Her Lady Fatima stands in the Grotto, her hands outstretched before rows of unlit candles.

The space seems Catholic in each and every way, from the words “St. Joseph, pray for us” that were inscribed above the image of the parish’s patron saint to the whiteness of St. Joseph himself. The statue of Jesus looks nearly identical to the one that stood behind my own cousins during their First Communion in Wisconsin, and while the hand painted on the wall is that of a black man, it is the only artistic representation of blackness in the sanctuary. The bodies of the most holy figures are white and Western both in their physical representation and the style in which they have been created.

In speaking with members of the congregation, however, individuals expressed to me the significance not of these artistic manifestations of holiness, but of the material with which they were created. The entire church was designed and built by members of its community, and the paintings on the wall are the creations of individuals who worship before them every Sunday. The statues are not made of metal or gold like the ones installed by missionaries in the very first Cameroonian parishes; they are made of wood, the way that art would be made for the Fon in the Northwest or Southwest regions of the country. “[Wood is] our own thing,” a member of the congregation expressed.²² “The white men are no longer exploiting us with their gold.” “When

²² Informant 12. Informal Interview. 21 April 2019.

you go to the sanctuary, you see the statue of Mary is carved of wood, not like the one that is imported like this one, so people start to say, ‘Ah, Mary is us.’”²³

This is not to discount the role that white supremacy in the Catholic Church and Christianity plays in the way that African Christians choose to represent their most holy figures, nor is it meant to simplify the ways that colonized people have internalized or recreated colonial structures; rather, this is an illustration of how enculturation works within the walls of St. Joseph’s Anglophone Parish. The structures might be of European origin, but they are made of Cameroonian materials. The mass is Catholic, but the materials of the mass—the dress and language and music and dance—come from the people, and it gives Cameroonian Christians a way to say, “Ah, I am not a foreigner here. It is not theirs. It is our thing.”²⁴

“That Is What They Understand”: Enculturation Through Music

Because St. Joseph’s Parish has fixed itself as a space of enculturation, the church staff has come together to find ways to nurture and encourage the cultural expression of each of its more than sixty ethnic groups. In some cases, church events or celebrations offer space for people to come together, showcase their cultures, and give thanks in a way that closely resembles ceremonies in their villages; other times, special cultural days highlight the food, dress, dance, music, and customs of individual ethnic groups within the congregation. However, these efforts, while often driven and led by members of the church, are usually special events rather than regular means of enculturation, and because of this, both the church staff and congregants have found other ways to bring culture into the church service on a regular basis, primarily through music.

²³ Informant 1. 12 April 2019.

²⁴ Ibid.

During a typical Sunday service at St. Joseph's, it is difficult to grasp exactly what style songs the church uses in its worship. In a single mass, the congregation will sing to tunes from all across the musical spectrum, switching from old, classic Catholic hymns to songs in local dialects, sampling from a musical buffet that spans hundreds of years and the entire globe. Some songs illicit clapping and dancing, others feature no instruments and seem to make small children particularly fidgety, but each song that is used in the service—whether it is Cameroonian in origin or deeply rooted in European Catholic tradition—is chosen to serve a purpose, and they all work together to bring the Gospel to the congregation and infuse the congregants' cultures in the worship of God.

Each of the songs that the choir and congregation sing during Sunday mass come from the Cameroonian Hymnal, a hymnbook that was compiled by Catholic figureheads in both Cameroon and the Vatican and revised in the 1980s. "When we talk of tradition, [the Cameroonian Hymnal] is what has been used from the time of our mothers until today... They are traditional songs that have been sung in a time far before until today," featuring songs for children about the importance of learning and education, songs of repentance and supplication for Lenten season, and songs of praise and celebration.²⁵ The hymnbook guides musical directors through each of the liturgical seasons, offering songs for every element of mass based on the appropriate atmosphere, mood, and subject of the service to "give you a deeper meaning of what you learn in church."²⁶

However, while the choir director at St. Joseph's Parish uses the Cameroonian Hymnal as his guide for selecting songs for each mass, he has found ways of taking even the most foreign of hymns and transforming them to be relevant to the congregation of the parish. Some hymns, especially those composed by Cameroonian musicians and religious figures, feature rhythms or

²⁵ Informant 6.

²⁶ Ibid.

phrases that make sense to the members of the community; they come from the same country and similar cultures, and these composers are able to take theological concepts and present them in a way that is understandable and intrinsic to Cameroonian Christians. These songs often offer praises or sentiments of respect to God and Christ, basing themselves off both the Catholic and Cameroonian cultural values of respect and hierarchy.²⁷ Praises that were given to the Fon are appropriated to apply to Jesus Christ, and even if the songs are closely related to classical music rather than traditional music, the values they express are so closely tied to those deeply rooted in Anglophone culture that there is little need for cultural or linguistic translation.

However, many of the songs in the Cameroonian Hymnal were not composed by Cameroonians, or even musicians from Africa, and these songs require more attention if they are to be embraced by the congregation. Oftentimes the music director will select songs that tie directly to the liturgy, allowing the two messages to reinforce one another, but when the director wants to be sure that a particular point is deeply felt by the congregation, he will often choose to sing the song in the dialect of one of St. Joseph's many ethnic groups. "There are some English songs that they have translated into the vernacular. They sing the same melody, but the words—the difference is now the lyrics. The lyrics now become the traditional" and the song no longer belongs to the French or the English or the Italians;²⁸ it is theirs, and "that is what they understand."²⁹ Each song in dialect is only truly understood by a few individual ethnic groups—"[a single person] cannot sing all the different ethnic dialects"—but members of the congregation often learn words and phrases in other dialects simply through the songs in church, and even if not everyone understands every word, other musical elements work to incorporate the whole congregation.³⁰ Catholic songs

²⁷ Informant 11. Informal Interview. 19 April 2019.

²⁸ Informant 6.

²⁹ Informant 6.

³⁰ Ibid.

sung in English are often set to the rhythm of traditional drumming patterns, and the use of traditional instruments encourages congregants to dance and clap alongside the choir.

Out of the eight choirs at St. Joseph's, three of them—the Lamso choir, the Ibu choir, and the Kom choir—are traditional choirs whose focus is “traditionally inclined. They sing their traditional songs, Gloria in their dialect. They sing in their dialect, in their vernacular,” and they use traditional instruments more often than the five classical choirs, and on the days that these traditional choirs lead worship, there is a kind of energy in the sanctuary that is not found on other Sundays.³¹ During the mass that the Lamso choir led, each of the choir members in a blue polo at the front of the congregation to denote their status, the entire church was enveloped in a joyous celebration. The sounds of xylophones and drums bounced through the space, providing a rhythm for people to dance and clap to, and nearly all the bodies in the church were moving, some lightly bopping up and down, others in the full throws of a dance. People clapped along to the music, and individuals in all the corners of the church would hoot and holler in joy. Whether the celebration was because it was a week after Easter and both Jesus and the stress of the holiday had risen, or whether it was due to the music and mood of the church itself is unknown to me, but it is impossible to say that the traditional music had no effect on the congregation.

In conversations with the music director, I came to understand that music is integral in both building community at St. Joseph's and communicating the Gospel. The latter is quite easy to understand—songs in local dialects quite literally the Word of God into the many languages of the church's members—but the former goal of music is, in terms of enculturation and cultural translation, perhaps even more important. In using traditional languages, instruments, and rhythms during mass, it brings individuals' cultures into a new space and context and allows them to feel

³¹ Ibid.

part of the service and, by extension, “ that you are in your own church. Just one song.”³² Even if individuals are not able to understand the words of all the songs—even if one song touches one person’s heart in a different way than it does their neighbor’s – the impact of this enculturation is essential for bringing together the entire congregation and giving their traditions a community of belonging in Yaoundé. “When your wife has something, you go to her village, and what they do, you do because of your wife. She comes to your own village, and what they do as traditional events, she has to be part of it because two have become one in love, in tradition, and in spiritual... [Enculturation] brings us together as one. It intermarries a whole group of people... There are different musical tempos, different expressions, but all are just one way of praising God in our different voices.”³³

“It Is An Identity”: Individual Expressions of Tradition

The physical space of St. Joseph’s Anglophone Parish is a site that is made not just for enculturation, but *of* enculturation, and because of this, the church has given its members a space for their own acts of traditional and cultural practices. They sing and dance to songs from their villages as a community, encouraged by both the church clergy and their fellow worshippers, but each person expresses themselves individually as well, bringing elements of their cultures to church with them and using them to celebrate and worship God. Because St. Joseph’s is such a large and heterogeneous community, I use the term “individual” not to suggest that these choices are entirely organic in each person and unaffected by social pressure, but rather to denote practices of enculturation that are not deliberately encouraged or infused within the church service. Some people choose to go about these practices in more formal ways, requesting meetings with church

³² Informant 6.

³³ Ibid.

clergy and staff to discuss how certain dances, practices, or celebrations can be incorporated into church services, but for the vast majority of the St. Joseph's community, these expressions of their culture are often played out on a smaller scale, usually through their fashion and language each week.

During weekday services, which are typically much shorter and less attended than weekend services, people often arrive in their everyday clothes, coming to church wearing what they wore to work or school earlier that day, but on Sunday mornings, the congregation at St. Joseph's becomes a rainbow of fabrics, hats, and headdresses. There are some individuals who come wearing suits and ties or dresses that look similar to what I regularly see at church in the Midwest, but the majority of the community arrives wearing clothes that are "pure African."³⁴ "They will not wear their jumpers or their suits... They go to church like they are going to the palace, so they try to dress for church wearing the clothes they would wear to the palace."³⁵ Women wear dresses made of brightly-colored fabric, their clothes often form-fitting and featuring bold patterns, and it is not uncommon to see the African fabric embellished with sequins, beads, or stoning. This is church, after all, and just as they would wear their best to meet with the Fon, they bring nothing but their most fashionable attire to God. Men do the same, coming to church in shirts or tunics made in African styles, sometimes featuring intricate embroidery.

Head covering are also common, particularly with women, either in the form of hats and fascinators or—more frequently—*kabahs*, or headscarves.³⁶ Regardless of what type they choose, women's head coverings usually match or complement their dresses, often being made of the same

³⁴ Informant 4. Formal Interview. 15 April 2019.

³⁵ Informant 1. 12 April 2019.

³⁶ Informant 1. 12 April 2019.

fabric or in a color identical to that of her clothing, and to many in the community, the vision of a woman with her head covered is tied to the image of motherhood and, by extension, Mary.

Veiling is a hot topic of conversation in Catholic congregations around the world, and at St. Joseph's, it is required of women who are presenting in front of the entire church; a woman "cannot climb up the sanctuary to do a reading without something on her head."³⁷ However, unlike in many communities, the dialogue around head covering at St. Joseph's does not center on the scriptural arguments for veiling, such as Corinthians 14, but rather, it rests on tradition. Women are expected to cover their heads when greeting the Fon of their village, and "they translate the same mentality to the church" by wrapping their hair when they go to greet Jesus, the "Fon of Fons."³⁸

In this same kind of cultural translation, some individuals, especially those whose families have leadership roles in their villages, choose to wear clothing traditional to the Northwest or Southwest rather than dressing in brightly colored African fabrics. These traditional clothes are black and feature orange, red, white, and green embroidery, often being considerably less form fitting than clothing made of patterned fabric. Walking through market streets in Yaoundé, it is not uncommon to see shirts, dresses, and tunics in this style hanging in the windows of shops and stalls, but the clothing is brought to life in the walls of St. Joseph's, when men, women, and children will wear them while singing and clapping along to songs sung in Lamso or Ibu.

While the entire congregation comes together to worship with songs sung in dialects from around the Anglophone region, people often speak amongst one another in these dialects as well, and it is this preservation of language that is another significant expression of tradition on an individual level. Families will sit together on Sunday mornings, brothers and sisters and aunties

³⁷ Informant 5. Formal Interview. 15 April 2019.

³⁸ Informant 1. 8 March 2019.

and grandfathers and so many cousins sometimes taking up entire rows of pews, and as they wait for the service to start, they will be conversing with one another in languages that I cannot understand. Grandmothers will bounce babies while cooing to them in their local dialects, and cousins will burst out in laughter while animatedly talking to one another in their mother tongues. Friendships across ethnic groups use English or French as a lingua franca—I was always greeted in one of those two languages, and it is common to find friends laughing together while speaking English—but throughout my short time at St. Joseph’s, I became accustomed to hearing people embracing and saying to one another, “Tut lai ma.”³⁹

After the service, people will go to their village association meetings, where they often speak exclusively in their dialect, but between seven o’clock and noon on Sunday mornings, language seems to be less about community ties and more about one’s own personal connection to God. The prayers and homilies that come over the loudspeakers are always in English, but occasionally, when I stayed quiet rather than reciting the Lord’s Prayer alongside the rest of the congregation, I would hear someone around me saying words that I could not understand, but whose cadence matched that of the prayers we were saying. It happened on a regular basis in the church, and one day, while waiting for an informant to arrive for an interview, I watched a woman pray before the outstretched hands of Our Lady Fatima in the Grotto, crying as she lit a candle and singing prayers in her dialect. In these moments—the deeply personal moments where each member of the congregation is alone with God—language and culture become “an identity.”⁴⁰ It is impossible to untangle any person from their culture, and in those times of such deep connection,

³⁹ Informant 6. Translation: “Good morning” in Mboyo.

⁴⁰ Informant 6.

language allows people to be fully Christian and fully cultural, and they are able to “bring [their] whole selves to God.”⁴¹

These individual expressions of tradition—the ways that people bring their culture to the church without being guided, directed, or encouraged by the clergy and staff—are present every Sunday of the year and, to a much lesser extent, during each of the services during the week, but during special occasions and holy days, individual expressions of tradition are heightened. During a wedding in mid-April, nearly every guest arrived wearing shirts or dresses made of African fabric in African styles, and during a funeral on the same day, individuals came wearing the black, orange, and white costumes of the Northwest region. During both of these ceremonies, not only were songs sung in local dialects, but families congratulated and consoled one another in their languages as well. Palm Sunday was an occasion where people not only donned traditional clothing, but children danced and stomped in the back of the sanctuary while waving their palm leaves, and on Easter, nearly every person I saw was clad in either traditional clothing or African fabric. Perhaps the most poignant example, however, was on Good Friday, where congregants, dressed either in black or in traditional clothing, prayed to themselves in their dialects and women, in translating burial practices from the Anglophone regions, “boil groundnuts and some maize and put it in packets to give to the mourners.”⁴² In this way, holy days become not only a celebration of the love and faithfulness of God, but also of the perseverance and beauty of culture, and St. Joseph’s Anglophone Parish is able to foster both the spiritual and social wellbeing of its members.

“The Fon of Fons”: The Lectionary Procession and the Importance of Enculturation

⁴¹ Quote from the Easter Homily about enculturation at St. Joseph’s Anglophone Parish, 21 April 2019.

⁴² Informant 1. 12 April 2019.

These public and musical aspects of enculturation and more individual-centered practices are constantly interacting with and informing one another both inside and outside the church, but nowhere is the relationship between them more intertwined than during the lectionary procession. Throughout Yaoundé, in both Francophone and Anglophone populations, the lectionary procession at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish is known for being a strictly Anglophone institution, deeply entrenched in traditional practices that go back generations. On special occasions, at the beginning of mass, members of the community bring the Bible up to the altar in a traditional bag, dancing to traditional music and clad in traditional clothing, and "when they will come to the altar... people will give the kind of salute that they will give to the *Fonto* the Word of God."⁴³ Ethnic groups take turns leading the lectionary procession, each one carrying the practice out in the way that most closely aligns to and accommodates traditions from their village.

In the Nso' ethnic group, for instance, "the men wear their caps in the church and they dance the dance that they usually do when they are installing a chief. There are dances to praise the occasion and to make him happy, so when they are taking the lectionary procession, they place the lectionary in the bag where they would carry gifts to the new chief, and they get a woman to carry it because a woman is respected in [their] culture."⁴⁴ The Mkwini community also incorporates a bag into the lectionary procession when it is their turn, but they add a "peace slack" to the procession as well, a plant that is special to their village.⁴⁵ During the ceremony, they carry the peace slack alongside the Bible, "danc[ing] barefooted, not wearing shoes, [and] even dancing to songs with traditional instruments to carry the Bible to the altar. Everybody will be so happy" and the whole church joins in the celebration, singing and clapping while watching members of

⁴³ Informant 1. 8 March 2019.

⁴⁴ Informant 5.

⁴⁵ Informant 4.

their community present the Bible at the altar.⁴⁶ Amongst the groups, the clothing and songs might change, and groups from the Southwest might use baskets where the Northwestern communities use bags, but the central purpose of the lectionary procession is the same throughout all the different ethnic groups: The Bible is given the treatment of the *Fon*, the highest person in a traditional community, “to show that this Bible is raised to the level of the highest dignity in the village” and the community.⁴⁷

The lectionary procession is an essential element in understanding enculturation within the St. Joseph’s community because it is not just a way that individuals practice their culture within the walls of the church; they translate their traditional practices to a new context, using religion as a structure in which they participate in and preserve their culture. The choir director might be translating songs from English into Ibo, and families might be wearing African fabrics and speaking Nso’ in the context of the church, but in the lectionary procession, not only are the groups’ rituals being translated, but the meanings and ideologies of the rituals are being translated as well. “Now, when people see it, it reminds them of the importance and anxiety with which people wait for [the Fon], so they try to translate the same thing into the church... That is the best way to give honor, reverence, so, they do the same thing. They give the same honor to the Word of God that they give to the king [because] Jesus is the King of Kings, the Fon of Fons.”⁴⁸

This translation of meaning alongside the translation of practice is what makes enculturation so essential to the practice of Catholicism in Cameroon. It allows them to “bring [their] whole selves to God,” to present themselves in their fullest form to the Fon of Fons, but it also has allowed Christianity to be more accessible to both the cultural and religious contexts of

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Informant 1. 12 April 2019.

⁴⁸ Informant 1. 12 April 2019.

Cameroonians.⁴⁹ “You don’t need a theological explanation to tell them why they should bow [at church] because they know that if Christ is the King, and they have been bowing when the Fon or the chief passes, this is the greater one, so we need to bow in reverence... They understand, and it is easier for them because it is already a part of their culture that has been translated.”⁵⁰ For some, it helps them understand the nuances of the highly ritualized Catholic service—when to sit and when to stand can occasionally confuse even lifelong Catholics, but when Anglophone Cameroonians hear a series of three claps, they know to bow because the Fon is approaching—and for others, it gives them a purpose and a meaning for coming to church. “Coming to church means you are coming to visit your king, and with us, a king cannot sit alone... we cannot leave Jesus Christ alone on the altar. You cannot push culture away from religion,” and in the process of enculturation, St. Joseph’s Anglophone Parish becomes a place of cultural belonging for customs, traditions, languages, songs, and people.⁵¹

“They Are Confused”: Double Lives and the Limits of Enculturation

There are, however, limits to the ways that tradition can be incorporated righteously in the eyes of the Church. After the reunification of Cameroon and the introduction of Vatican II, churches throughout Africa attempted to install traditional practices in their structures with varying levels of success; wooden chalices and lectionary processions were allowed and even encouraged, but the Vatican directly condemned the practice of polygamy in African countries, and when people proposed that palm wine replace red wine in marriage ceremonies in Cameroon, the

⁴⁹ Easter Homily. 21 April 2019.

⁵⁰ Informant 1. 12 April 2019.

⁵¹ Informant 5.

proposition was turned down “because of the homogeneity of the church and the oneness of the church.”⁵²

The biggest conflict in the process of enculturation, however, is not between the Vatican and Cameroon; it is between Catholicism and tradition. To practice traditional practices within the already-existing structure of the Church is supported and even encouraged, but to practice traditional practices alongside Catholicism is known among church staff and clergy as a “Double Life.” People will practice animism and Christianity, pray to both God and their ancestors, and light candles at the altar of St. Joseph and make offerings at shrines, all in the hope of “as double assurance... If God fails them, they have their own gods.”⁵³ In the eyes of the Church, Christianity is a commitment, and those who continue to believe in and practice traditional customs on the side “are not true believers.”⁵⁴ To practice enculturation is to bring elements of traditional culture into the church to further faith, but to have a double life is to have no faith in God. “They are confused.”⁵⁵

The reality of the situation, however, is more complicated. In speaking with members of the congregation, I learned that the relationship between culture and belief is more nuanced than the Church leaves room for, and even some of the most prominent figures at St. Joseph’s carry out traditions alongside their Catholic practices. Ushers are members of secret societies in their villages, members of the choir have been initiated into cults, and even one of the church leaders refuses to ever point fire in the direction of a cat for fear of falling victim to witchcraft. What the Church recognizes as a Double Life are merely the everyday realities of many individuals at St.

⁵² Informant 1. 12 April 2019.

⁵³ Informant 1. 12 April 2019.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Joseph's, who harbor unwavering belief both in God and their traditions, and it begs the question: who is confused about enculturation, the congregation or the Church?

The Catechist Dances Juju: Setting a Precedent for Tradition and Christianity

From the moment that Christianity washed up on the shores of Cameroon in the nineteenth century, religion and tradition have been intertwined. The complicated history of Christianity in Cameroon is something I have already discussed, but the ways that it interacted with traditional practices and local cultures is something that, while often overlooked in scholarship, is an important part of many Anglophones' perceptions of the how their tradition and religion can coexist. Multiple people told me stories of their villages during the early days of Cameroonian Catholicism, detailing the ways that missionaries came with the Gospel and with medicine and how conversion to Catholicism was condemned in some communities before becoming widely accepted, and some talked of the ways that their ancestors prayed to Jesus on Sunday mornings and danced juju on Sunday evenings.

One of these stories in particular stood out to me: the story of the Kibaranko Juju from the village of Kumbo in Northwest Cameroon. It is as follows:

“You see, the first missionary who came to my village, the priest, he came and opened a parish and later, he was sick and went back to Europe and died. News came back in the village that the priest that used to be here was dead, and the villagers, because that priest was the first missionary that fought chicken pox very well and made the villagers very happy, so when he died, the Fon ordered every home that this compound will bring palm wine, this compound will bring chicken, this compound will bring this, this compound will bring this, so that they can mourn for the priest, but not in the church. They did it in the traditional way... They started celebrating and they cooked the chicken and jujus in masquerade danced around. People came from all over and women brought food and palm wine and they entertained everybody in the palace in the name of the priest who died. But the assistant priest, they invited him to the palace, but when it was four o'clock, the priest went back to the parish and rang the bell so that people would come to the church

for prayers. But his chief catechist was nowhere to be found. Juju were dancing around the parish, saying that this is where our priest was staying, but the priest was annoyed.

“Now, there was one particular juju, and that juju is very dangerous. The tradition believes that if the juju touches you, your arm will become very swollen, and it is true. I saw it. When you are not a member of that juju and any part of him or his cloth touches you, you will be sick. So the parish priest was watching that juju, and everybody was running away so that none of his cloth might touch them, and the juju came to the parish. The parish priest was very angry, and he came out and unmasked that juju and saw that it was his chief catechist under the mask! It was his catechist inside the juju, and the priest faints and then he is dead. I do not know whether he faints because he touched the untouchable juju, or if he faints because he sees his catechist and is in shock. Who knows what happened. Nobody knows what happened. Was he cursed by the juju, or did he faint because he saw his chief catechist inside the mask?”⁵⁶

I tell this story to illustrate not only to illustrate the fact that from the very beginning, tradition and Catholicism were practiced side by side, regardless of the wishes of the clergy, but also to emphasize that this coexistence is a central element of Anglophone Catholicism. This is a story that has been passed down throughout the generations in Kumbo, and each time this story is told, it carries on the sentiment that “there are good Christians who go to church and are God-fearing, but they still go back to their tradition... They were doing nothing wrong on that land. They were crying because they lost somebody. Who is that person? The priest. Now what has been done wrong? It is nothing. It is enculturation.”⁵⁷ What the church considers a double life, the congregation considers their own culture, and they cannot fully bring themselves to the church without also practicing their most sacred and special cultural traditions as well. “You see why I brought up the chief catechist scenario?” my informant said to me a while later in our conversation after talking about ancestor worship, cult initiation, and traditional commandments. “It is so that when I come here, you understand me... We believe in our tradition and we have faith in God.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Informant 14. Formal Interview. 23 April 2019.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

“It Is Just A Symbol”: Strategies for Reconciling Tradition and Religion

Certain elements of traditional customs align quite closely to the Catholic doctrine—life after death, for example, is a belief in both traditions, and “they believe that once you die, you are not finished, so that has a link with religion because in the Catholic religion”—but in instances where these traditional customs are less tied to Christianity, Anglophone Catholics have strategies for mitigating and reconciling these differences in belief systems.⁵⁹ In the past, physical place was particularly important in accomplishing this; many members of St. Joseph’s attended mass every Sunday in Yaoundé, only to return to the villages during vacations and holidays to pray to their ancestors and participate in meetings of secret societies, but now, due to the conflict occurring in the Northwest and Southwest, Anglophones in the capital are unable to return home, and the strategy of creating physical distance between their tradition and religion is unable to reconcile the two in the way it previously could.

While the conflict has made it difficult for Anglophones to practice traditions in their own villages, it has not stopped the practice of tradition altogether; rather, members of the church are foregoing certain warnings from clergy or reframing the way that they understand and describe their traditional practices in order to make them compatible with the Catholic doctrine. Traditional blessings given to children upon their birth can be carried out as long as they also receive Catholic blessings, equating the two as complementary and compatible where the church sees them as contradictory, and people with often choose to have Bible verses read during the same funeral services where juju will dance.⁶⁰ In these instances, practitioners of both Catholicism and tradition choose to equate the tradition, giving them equal respect and weight. This is not enculturation in

⁵⁹ Informant 5.

⁶⁰ Informant 10.

the eyes of the church—these individuals are still carrying out their traditional rites alongside Christianity rather than within it—but because these are ceremonial occasions both within the church and within the tradition, these instances are often overlooked or accepted by the Church. After all, even though these people are choosing to practice their traditional rites, they are also carrying out the practices to which they are obliged by the Catholic doctrine.

There are many practices, however, where people are not able to rectify their tradition with a Christian equivalent, and in these instances, they reframe the ways that they understand and express their customs in order to more closely align to the beliefs of the Catholic Church. Quarter heads and chiefs who attend mass each Sunday without fail can be found making sacrifices to the gods during the week, and while this practice is considered to be non-Christian by the Catholic Church, participants “believe that what they are doing there, it is just a symbol and the real God is the god that they are going to worship in church.”⁶¹ When they do this, “they are talking to God, the god that they believe, but they believe that it is their own gods as well.”⁶² Witchcraft and specific *jujus* are understood as “people who God has gifted or who are using the power of the devil to do things that you cannot do in a normal sense,” rather than people who are working outside the confines of Christianity, and individuals who harness supernatural powers over thunder and lightning are recognized as having talents that can be used to help the church.⁶³ “We Africans, we have talents that the Europeans and Americans do not. An African can create thunder,” an informant said while describing the occurrence of supernatural powers, “we believe that God created people with these talents.”⁶⁴

⁶¹ Informant 5.

⁶² Informant 14. 23 April 2019.

⁶³ Informant 5.

⁶⁴ Informant 14. 26 April 2019.

Nowhere is this reframing more important than in the practice of ancestor worship. In cultural traditions across the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, people “have very high esteem for our traditional fathers, [and they] even take them as gods,” and it is traditional for people to pray to and worship their ancestors.⁶⁵ When members of the family are struggling or sick, the head of the family will appeal to his ancestors, making an incantation at the grave of his father, and he will “pour some palm wine and kill a chicken and make the blood to be there. That blood of the chicken is for him to eat and the palm wine is for him to drink... That is the power.”⁶⁶ In the eyes of the Catholic Church, this is blasphemy, but to the Christian animists who are practicing it, the ancestors merely serve as an intermediary to communicate to God on their behalf. As one of my informants explained it to me, “Can you talk to the Fon directly? You cannot. You need an intermediary. We talk to God through our ancestors, who have already gone, and they go and talk to the supreme God, not us talking directly to the supreme God... so people [have] stayed strong in their tradition.”⁶⁷ Practitioners “believe in [the ancestors] but you know that the power he has comes from somewhere,” and in understanding it in this way, they are able to reframe their ancestors as entities with responsibilities similar to those of saints and allow both their tradition and religion to coexist without conflict.⁶⁸

While practicing these traditions, Christian animists adhere to the Seven Commandments of Tradition rather than the Ten Commandments laid out by God in the Old Testament, and because these traditional laws align so closely to those of the Bible while carrying more severe consequences, practitioners often express that “tradition is more serious than the church.”⁶⁹ No

⁶⁵ Informant 5.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Informant 14. 23 April 2019.

⁶⁸ Informant 5.

⁶⁹ Informant 14. 23 April 2019.

one I spoke with knew all seven laws in the Commandments of Tradition, but laws such as “do not gossip, do not steal, do not sleep with somebody’s wife, do not destroy,” carry the consequence of death should they be broken;⁷⁰ “when you do any of these bad things, you will be struck by the gods of the land,” and when these gods are reframed as elements of the Christian God, these traditional laws are transformed into another version of the Commandments in the Christian faith.⁷¹ The Catholic Church expects that individuals adhere to the doctrine of the faith and the laws established by God, and “the tradition commands it too, [but] the people of that tradition, they are more God-fearing... If you are a Christian and you don’t practice tradition, you are weak, but those who practice tradition and who follow the laws of tradition, they are very, very serious.”⁷² People will practice their tradition their entire lives, using the Traditional Commandments to keep themselves pure in the Catholic perspective as well, and in their final days of life, “when they are about to die or they reach a particular age where they choose to transform [and they] will become only Christians;” however, “they respect the tradition more than the church,” when their day comes, Christian animists will often choose to be buried at their homes rather than in the church cemetery.⁷³ In Cameroon, burials are often individuals’ final connection to their culture, and such is the case with Christian animists in the Anglophone Catholic Community as well. After all, “the juju does not dance in the Christian cemetery.”⁷⁴

“It Wants to Survive”: A Conclusion, Rethinking Enculturation and Moving Forward

As I discussed when exploring the complicated and multifaceted meaning of enculturation, this concept is about much more than bringing traditional drums and dances into the church; it is

⁷⁰ Informant 14. 23 April 2019.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Informant 14. 26 April 2019.

about the internalization of one's own culture, identity, and systems of belief, and because of this "you can't push culture away from religion. Culture is very necessary."⁷⁵ The practices and traditions being carried out in people's villages were an integral part of themselves and their cultures long before the arrival of Catholicism, and it is these traditions that are the "umbilical cord relating [them] to [them] hometowns, which makes [them] continue respecting [their] cultures wherever [they] are."⁷⁶ Members of the church explained that they can leave Yaoundé, they can travel far from their villages and be baptized in the Catholic doctrine, but their homes and traditions always come with them because "tradition is part of culture."⁷⁷ "You cannot separate an African from their culture," one informant told me.⁷⁸ Another laughed as he explained that "old habits die hard, so if it was there before you and you come, it cannot just completely go away. The tradition was there before the church came," he said. "It wants to survive."⁷⁹

This aspect of tradition has often been overlooked when the church attempts to implement enculturative techniques while condemning traditional practices, but it is in the act of participating in both Catholicism and tradition that makes enculturation possible. Despite the fact that the Church disapproves of many of the traditional practices that its congregants hold so dear, individuals have found ways of making this tradition not only compatible with their Catholicism, but supportive of it, and in this way, what the Church perceives as a double life is actually a form of enculturation in its own right; it is a way for Catholic animists to infuse the aspects of their religion into their tradition and preserve the culture that has led to the richness of the parish today. These traditions praised by the Church cannot be implemented and celebrated in the community if

⁷⁵ Informant 5.

⁷⁶ Informant 3. Formal Interview. 19 March 2019.

⁷⁷ Informant 13.

⁷⁸ Informant 14. 26 April 2019.

⁷⁹ Informant 5.

the culture from which they derive is forgotten, and in practicing these traditional customs—even the ones that the Church is not approving of—it connects people to their homes and cultures and carries on these practices to the next generation. Congregants can come to church dressed in their regional clothing and sing in their local dialects, but these elements of culture cannot be separated from the practice of traditional customs. As one informant told me, “A Cameroonian... they can never, ever go without tradition, and I don’t think that something will come to change them totally.”⁸⁰ In order to make Christianity accessible and appealing to Anglophone Cameroonians, the Catholic Church allowed itself to be a space where some tradition was accepted and celebrated, and the only way to maintain those ties to the tradition within the church is to be accepting of the tradition that continues beyond its walls. “It is the price of syncretism.”⁸¹ Enculturation works not only to make religion and tradition compatible with one another; it is also a way to make both fully cultural and reflective of the contemporary realities of the people of St. Joseph’s Anglophone Parish.

These realities of the congregations—the ways that their tradition and religion exist and thrive side-by-side and are each adapted to remain compatible with one another—have been the subject of very little academic research, and much of the work that has been conducted on one facet of this complex topic fails to thoroughly explore other elements. Anthropologists have focused on the traditional practices of these communities, while scholars of religion have fixated on the impact of the Church throughout villages in Cameroon, but in truth, these two subjects are deeply intertwined. Because of the temporal and geographical limitations to my study, I have not been able to delve into this subject with the intensity, scrutiny, and care that it truly deserves, but I hope that my research can be used to facilitate more work within this community on this particular

⁸⁰ Informant 14. 23 April 2019.

⁸¹ Colpe 1977.

subject. There is ample room for research that takes place in the Anglophone regions themselves, rather than in the Center, where this study was carried out, and I suspect that there is still so much to learn about the ways that these communities are making sense of their realities and preserving their tradition. It is, after all, a tradition that “wants to survive,” and its caretakers have strategies to share and stories to tell.⁸² They deserve to dance, pray, sing, and celebrate in the spotlight.

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APPENDICES

Important Contacts

Dominic Morfaw: 677 65 73 41

Kassian Kikishy: 677 70 76 12

Donita Nshani: donitanshani87@gmail.com, 674 39 37 40

Selected Translated Hymns

Included are two hymns in Lamso, the language of the Nso' ethnic group in the Northwest Region of Cameroon.

Sanctus⁸³

A dze ranin

A dze ranen a dze ranen Taata, ngaa vitaavi vidzem

Yuv wun a nsay

Yuv wun a nsay

Run e ghvem yee

Run e ghvem yee

Ho ho ho ee

Hosana, hosanna fe Nyuy Taata du mee yuv ee

Nyaan fe w un

Nyaan fe w un

Wo wu wiy e wo yir

Wo wu wiy e wo yir

Hosana, hosanna, fe Nyuy Taata du mee yuv

Communion Song: Yo' dze m ma'tia wo gheey⁸⁴

Refrain: Yo' dze m ma'tia wo gheey aa Taata

Jesus ee bo yo'dze m ma'tia wo gheey

Verse 1:

M kerf e a ghan e wo bam ke'f e len Taata du mee mo Ndze wiy jo'si (x2)

Verse 2:

Kin a' wiy sov me e shwa

Kin a' wiy gwar mo e nyu'y

Kin a' wiy tem o e ngar ee

Bo yo' dze m ma'tia wo gheey

Verse 3:

⁸³ Translation courtesy of Informant 5. 27 April 2019.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Kong a waa yee le mo, kong a waa yuyri mo

Ji m ma'tia wo Taata, bo yo' dze m ma'tia wo gheey

Verse 4:

M kong a fe a yi wo k fen a no mense me ji vifa ve yi vee kiyoy

Aa nen a dze woso Taata

Verse 5:

Ven a wiy won Nyuy, e vesen cen du se Taata

Rengreng moo won nto' Nyuy vee juv baa

Verse 6:

Wo-oo lo wiy nsay fen,

Yen nge' kpu kintam, Ji a yun mo fe Lusifa,

Bo yo' dze m ma'tia wo gheey

Verse 7:

Wii ji m waa ghan wo bam aa

Waa din mo Taata mo m waa ghan nsay fen

Bo yo'dze m ma'tia wo gheey

Interview Guides

For Clergy Members:

- What is enculturation?
- How are traditional customs enculturated in St. Joseph's Parish?
- What are limits to the ways that traditions can be practiced? How are these reinforced?
- Is there any conflict between Catholic beliefs and traditional beliefs and customs?
- What ethnic groups are represented at St. Joseph's?
- How do people from the same ethnic group connect at St. Joseph's Parish?
- Can someone be a good Catholic while still practicing traditional customs?

For Choir Directors:

- What region and ethnic group are you from?
- How long have you been choir director?
- How do you choose what songs to sing?

- How is traditional music implemented in the church?
- Are there different choirs? Do they ever come together?
- Why is it important to incorporate traditional music?
- How does traditional music change in the church setting?
- Are there aspects of traditional music that you can't incorporate in the church?

For Government Members:

- What is the mission of the Commission for Multiculturalism?
- What is your definition of culture? How has that changed over time?
- How is culture different from culture different from ethnicity?
- What, if anything distinguishes, Anglophone culture from Francophone culture aside from language?
- How is Anglophone culture expressed in Yaounde?
- How have Anglophone cultural practices changed as the crisis has escalated?
- What are the challenges of integrating Anglophone and Francophone cultures in Yaounde?
- What strategies do you use to integrate Anglophone and Francophone cultures?
- What role does culture play in forming communities in Yaounde?
- Does culture work to bring groups of people together or keep different groups of people separate?
- Is there a governmental idea of an ideal Cameroonian culture? What is it?

For Congregation Members:

- What region are you from?
- What ethnic group are you from?
- How often do you return to your home village?
- What are the most important traditions/customs in your home village?
- How do you celebrate weddings/funerals/births in your home village?
- Have these traditions been affected by the conflict in the Northwest and Southwest?
- How are these celebrations different when practiced in Yaoundé?
- What traditions do you practice in Yaoundé? Where/how do you practice them?
- How often do you attend church?

- Do you see elements of your traditional culture at St. Joseph's? What are they?
- How is the St. Joseph's community different from Francophone Catholic communities?
- How do people from the same ethnic group connect at St. Joseph's Anglophone Parish?
- Are you able to practice Catholicism and your traditional practices?
- Is there any conflict between Catholicism and your tradition?

Observation Guides

For Church Services:

- Clothing:
- Music:
- Elements of Service:
- Other:
- Differences from last service:

For Choir Practices:

- Clothing:
- Lyrics of Music:
- Instruments:
- Other:

For Funerals:

- Clothing:
- Music:
- Elements of Service:
- Before and After Service:
- Other:

Preliminary Surveys

We are American students with the SIT (School of International Training) Cameroon program. In our project, we hope to explore the relationship between religion, tradition, and culture in the Anglophone community in Yaoundé through interviews and observations. You have the right option to withdraw your participation at any point.

Nous sommes des étudiants américains inscrits au programme camerounais SIT (School of International Training). Dans notre projet, nous espérons explorer la relation entre religion, tradition et culture dans la communauté anglophone de Yaoundé à travers des interviews et des observations.

Vous avez la bonne option pour retirer votre participation à tout moment.

Email: kkaminsk@macalster.edu

WhatsApp: 655299581

*Check all boxes that apply

1. How old are you? *Quel âge avez-vous?*

- 18-30 years/ans
- 31-45 years/ans
- 45-55 years /ans
- 55-65 years /ans
- 65+ years /ans
- Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

2. What is your gender? *Quel est votre sexe?*

- Female (Une femme)
- Male (Un homme)
- Other (Autre)
- Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

3. What is your religion? *Quelle est votre religion?* _____

4. Are you a Christian? *Êtes-vous chrétien?*

- Yes (Oui)
- No (Non)
- Unsure (Incertain)
- Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

5. How often do you attend church each month? *À quelle fréquence assistez-vous à l'église chaque mois?*

- Less than once a month (Moins d'une fois par mois)
- Once a month (Une fois par mois)

- " Once a week (Une fois par semaine)
- " Twice a week (Deux fois par semaine)
- " Multiple times a week (Plusieurs fois par semaine)
- " Every day (Tous les jours)
- " Other—specify (autre-, spécifier): _____
- " Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

6. What religion does your family practice? *Quelle est la religion de votre famille?*

7. What is your ethnicity? *Quelle est votre origine ethnique?* _____

8. What region is your family from? *De quelle région est votre famille?* _____

9. What region were you born in? *Dans quelle région êtes-vous né?*

10. What do you wear to church? *Que portez-vous à l'église?*

- " Traditional/Cultural Clothing (Vêtements traditionnels / culturels)
- " Clothing related to your ethnic group (Vêtements traditionnels / culturels)
- " Professional clothing (Vêtements professionnels)
- " Form fitting clothes (Des vêtements ajustés)
- " Jeans (Jeans)
- " Casual Clothing (Vêtements décontractés)
- " I do not limit what I wear to church (Je ne limite pas ce que je porte à l'église)

11. Who told you what was appropriate or not appropriate to wear to church? Select all that apply. *Qui vous a parlé de ce qui est approprié ou non comme vêtement dans l'église? Sélectionnez tout ce qui s'applique*

- " Clergy (Le clergé)
- " Family (La famille)
- " Church community members (Membres de la communauté de l'église)
- " Teachers (Les enseignants)
- " Other—Please Specify (Autre): _____
- " Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

12. What behavior is appropriate for church? Select all that apply. *Quel comportement est approprié pour l'église? Sélectionnez tout ce qui s'applique*

- " Singing (Chant)
- " Sleeping (Dormir)
- " Shouting (Crier)
- " Clapping (Applaudissements)
- " Dancing (Danse)
- " Jumping (Saut)
- " Speaking to your neighbor during service (Parler à votre voisin pendant le service)
- " Leaving before service ends (Partir avant la fin du service)
- "Being on your phone (Utiliser votre téléphone)
- " Speaking English (Parler anglais)
- "Speaking French (Parler français)
- "Speaking traditional languages (Parler des langues traditionnelles)
- " Other (Autre): _____

13. What behavior is not appropriate for church? *Quel comportement n'est pas approprié pour l'église?*

- " Singing (Chant)
- " Sleeping (Dormir)
- " Shouting (Crier)
- " Clapping (Applaudissements)
- " Dancing (Danse)
- " Jumping (Saut)
- " Speaking to your neighbor during service (Parler à votre voisin pendant le service)
- " Leaving before service ends (Partir avant la fin du service)
- "Being on your phone (Utiliser votre téléphone)
- " Speaking English (Parler anglaise)
- "Speaking French (Parler français)
- "Speaking traditional languages (Parler des langues traditionnelles)
- " Other (Autre): _____

14. What are the consequences for violating appropriate church behavior? *Quelles sont les conséquences résultant de la violation du comportement approprié de l'église?* _____

15. Do you identify as Catholic? *Vous identifiez-vous comme Catholique?*

- Yes (Oui)
- No (Non)
- Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

16. What makes you a Catholic? Check all that apply. *Qu'est-ce qui faites de vous un Catholique?*
Sélectionnez tout ce qui s'applique.

- I believe in God (Je crois en Dieu.)
- I believe in the Bible (Je crois en la Bible.)
- I follow the teachings the Catholic Church (Je suis l'enseignement de l'église catholique.)
- I attend Catholic Church (Je fréquente une église catholique.)
- My family is Catholic (Ma famille est catholique.)
- Other—Please specify (Autre): _____
- Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

17. Do you practice your traditional customs? *Pratiquez-vous vos coutumes traditionnelles?*

- Yes (Oui)
- No (Non)
- Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

18. Do you see the presence of African/Cameroonian culture in your church? *Observez-vous la présence de la culture Africaine/Camerounaise dans vos église?*

- Yes (Oui)
- No (Non)
- Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

19. Are people in your family's village Catholic? *Les gens du village de votre famille sont-ils pratiqués?*

- Yes (Oui)
- No (Non)
- Prefer not to answer (préfère ne pas répondre)

20. What aspects of Catholicism are most important to you? *Quels aspects du Catholicisme sont les plus importants pour vous?* _____

21. What aspects of your culture are most important to you? *Quels sont le aspects de votre culture qui sont les plus importants pour vous?* _____

22. Are there traditional/cultural elements within your church? If yes, in what part(s) of the service do you see traditional practices used? *Y a-t-il des elements traditionnelles/ culturels dans votre église? Si oui, dans quelle partie du service les pratiques traditionnelles interviennent?*

- "Clothing (Vêtements)
- "Music (Musique)
- "Language (Langue)
- "Dances (Danses)
- "Church art/decoration (Art d'église / décoration)
- "Other (Autre): _____

23. How do you feel when you observe these cultural/traditional elements in your church? *Que ressentez-vous lorsque vous observez ces éléments culturels/traditionnels dans votre église?* _____

24. Have you seen these traditional/cultural practices used outside of your church? *Avez-vous vu ces pratiques traditionnelles / culturelles utilisées en dehors de votre église?* _____

Thank you for completing our survey! We appreciate you taking the time to answer all our questions and would like to ask your permission for a possible follow-up interview. If yes, please provide your contact information below (your answers will remain anonymous throughout this study).

Merci d'avoir terminé notre enquête. Nous apprécions que vous preniez le temps de répondre à toutes nos questions et que nous souhaitez demander à votre permission un possible de suivi. Si oui, veuillez fournir vos coordonnées ci-dessous (vos réponses resteront anonymes tout au long de cette étude).

Name (Prenom): _____

Phone Number (Numero de telephone): _____

Email: _____