

Christian identity and the Fight against Corruption: Reflection on the need of a Diaconal Approach in the eradication of corruption in Cameroon

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ABSTRACT

Corruption creates an unjust society that no longer guarantees equal rights and opportunities for its citizens. It creates a climate of suspicion and distrust between individuals; it condemns them to live in fear and insecurity.

This master thesis has explored, discussed and analyzed the need for the church in Cameroon to address corruption. The majority of Cameroonians suffer directly or indirectly from corruption. They live in poverty and the poverty level is a result of political economic and moral corruption. The church as a central civil society institution stands in a strategic position to address corruption, injustices, and social ills since it is able to work directly with people at the lowest and highest level. This thesis builds a case that such work is better done in practice rather than in merely in words.

The thesis looks specifically at the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church in fighting corruption at the economic political and moral levels by discussing and analyzing the pastoral letters of the Catholic Bishops of Cameroon concerning this chronic phenomenon in the country. It notes that socio-economic injustice is a global issue requiring attention from international institutions. Foreign bodies contribute to the fast growing rate of corruption in Cameroon.

An analysis of the theological (biblical) approach to the issue is provided. When it comes to tackling social issues there is need for strategies to bring the Gospel to all without distinction of race, religion or color. *Diakonia* represents the best tool amongst others to be used in the fight against these issues. An ecumenical voice is suggested as the best road to the ultimate destruction of the roots of this ill. Even though the Church acknowledges in general its needs to be involved in combatting these social ills, disagreements crop up concerning its involvement especially when connected to political issues. One example of this is the bishops' suggestion that police supervise elections in Cameroon as discussed in this thesis. The Church needs to venture above reactive strategies and act more proactively in order to identify and eradicate root causes of social ills as a whole and the alarming corruption in particular.

Central to this thesis is making a case that for a successful transmission from words to action, the church in Cameroon needs to embrace *Diakonia* and make use of its prophetic role to eradicate these ills. Added attention needs to be paid to the marginalized, poor, abandoned, disabled etc. As an opening and remedy for the church in Cameroon, this master thesis suggests a revised version of an ecumenical engagement at local, provincial and national levels to eradicate corruption. Implementing teachings in schools against this issues will do a great deal. There is therefore a need for transformation, empowerment and equality in addressing issues.

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To God almighty who have given me life without any merit of mine but out of his Grace and free will. To you be honor and glory.

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TO GOD BE THE GLORY

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List of Abbreviations (Acronym)

BA- Bank of Africa

CCJP- Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace

CIIP-(ICREP) - International Christian Real Estate Program

CIPCRE- Cercle International pour la Promotion de la Création (Cameroon)

OT- Old Testament

NT- New Testament

JB- Jerusalem Bible

NGO- Non-Governmental Organization

EIA- Eglises Independante de L’Afrique

CIA- African Independent Churches

DDC- Director for Development and Co-operation

NECC- National Episcopal Conference of Conference of Cameroon

FEMEC- Federation of Churches and Evangelical Mission of Cameroon.

ICAC- Islamic Cultural Association of Cameroon

CB- Corruption and Bribery

CECCB- Catholic Episcopal Conference of Cameroonian Bishops

CEC- Conference Episcopal du Cameroun

CE- Council of Europe

EDC- Ecumenical Dialogue of Churches

IMF- International Monetary Fund

LWF- Lutheran World Federation

WOVC- Widows Orphans and Vulnerable Children

SAP- Structural Adjustment Program

UN- United Nations

UNDP- United Nations Development Program

UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund

WTO- World trade organization

WB - World Bank

TI - Transparency International and Institutional Reform

General Introduction

The phenomenon of corruption is today in Cameroon the subject of many complaints. It is more of a suffering situation than just complaining. Many Cameroonians are suffering in and out of Cameroon today as a result of corruption. I am not indifferent to this alarming situation. Born and raised in Cameroon into the Roman Catholic Church I have been a victim of this ill and am concerned about the issue and its total eradication. Little has been written so far about corruption in Cameroon. The few who have written faced difficulties such as lack of reliable information, people unwilling to disclose feelings and situations for fear of torture, loss of gain, loss of job positions and power or exclusion, as a large percentage is involved in corrupt practices and other difficulties. After noticing that very few and almost no individuals have written about this, I have taken on the challenge to bring forward my own contribution which is mainly to involve the Church in a diaconal spirit to fight and eradicate corruption in Cameroonian society. Among the invective against this immoral practice, on which I will base my analysis is the singular and irreducible voice of the church as heard through the Episcopal Conference of the Catholic Bishops of Cameroon.

Indeed, the action of the church against this scourge is part of *Diakonia*, which aims at transforming the Word of God into social structures, promoting justice and peace. In this case I look at *Diakonia* as the fight for justice, for the rights of abandoned individual, against poverty; the empowerment of the individual and society, as a unique representative of the poor; a prophetic guide, and a voice raised for the betterment of the life of the people. By doing so I place the problem of corruption in the socio-theological field and will answer one of the main preoccupations or the objectives assigned to *ecumenical diakonia*¹: to assert a real skill of the church in the social field. This is at least what expresses *Diakonia in context*.²

It should be noted here that *Diakonia* is a Christian duty but perceived in different ways by the different denominations. As a Catholic Christian *Diakonia* is seen differently from the way it is seen in other churches like the Lutheran Church for example. These differences are seen on the dogmatic level and at the implementing level or context. Dogmatically the theory is similar in relation to the Gospels and Word of God but the practice is different reflecting the different contexts. Although mention is made of these differences and acknowledged, they do not form part of this paper. So after doing this course in a Lutheran institution of higher learning I deemed it wise to work on corruption and *Diakonia* from the two perspectives. While the Catholic Church reserves

¹ Objectives defined in the document.

² *Diakonia in Context. Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment. An LWF Contribution to the Understanding and Practice of Diakonia*, published by The Lutheran World Federation, Geneva (Switzerland), 2009. 96 pages.

such services to particular groups it is clear in the Lutheran Church that it should involve all believers including the ordained. This is what my target in this piece of work looks for. The movement from an emphasis on theory and writings to practice and application.

Indeed, the definition of what constitutes the specificity of the diaconal ministry and its recipients (reconciliation, transformation and empowerment) is very important in my target. Although there are a few contemporary theologians who have reduced diaconal actions to pure and simple support of parishioners in difficulties and put the other ills of society on the account of the civil society;³ there are many who place these actions in the fight against social evils and the fight for justice not only at parish and church levels but also on a societal level, not only in words but in actions.

Thus, corruption appears to be a significant target for diaconal work since it undermines the meaning of the rule of law, the foundations of democracy, the respect for human rights and Christian witness. There is therefore a need for socio-theological elements relating to the essential nature of the diaconate to be implemented in the case of corruption in Cameroon. This will help me to discourse much on the essence of the diaconate in the church.

This work has as its objective to seek in the social doctrine of the church which real concepts and means can be used to effectively fight corruption. In other words: what theological vision of man and society can the church implement diaconally in the prevention and eradication of this phenomenon? What diaconal ministry may contribute to positively transform the state of generalized corruption that currently characterizes the Cameroonian society?

My research is based on a heuristic approach to define corruption in its material and formal aspects. This approach is structured around the following statement: Corruption is a moral failure of individual consciousness that interacts with the socio-political environment in which the person lives. This assertion is based on the background of the decision of all my theories, assertions and discussions.

My discussion is organized into three main parts divided in to five chapters.

The first part is directed in a phenomenology of corruption consisting in definition, highlighting the underlying causes of this practice and the deduction of the different consequences that flows from such. These analyses will be added with the steps initiated by some actors of the anti-corruption struggle.

³ Gottfried Hammann, *Love found*, Cerf, Paris, 1994, p. 38.

The second part, strictly theological, is the cornerstone of our research. The definition and expansion of what *Diakonia* is all about and how it is linked to this particular social ill. It intends to pass the phenomenon of corruption through the screening machine of biblical exegesis, to be able to identify the ethical, moral, and social implications. Finally, my target is also to find in the magisterial teaching of the Catholic Church and in the foundation documents of the prophetic *Diakonia* and *Diakonia in context* the tools both to condemn, to curb and to attempt to eradicate the phenomenon of corruption.

Finally, in a third and final part, I will see on a practical level what control mechanisms can help to combat corruption effectively. This implies seeing amongst others, the role of governmental and private organizations, the Catholic Church through the singular voice of the (CECCB) Catholic Episcopal Conferences of Cameroonian Bishops, and the issue of an ecumenical *Diakonia*. At the end a brief look into the possibilities of a strict diaconal fight against corruption.

Chapter 1 DEFINITION, SCOPE AND FORMS OF CORRUPTION

1.1 General presentation

This first part has the objective to account for the complexity of corruption and a theoretical approach of the situation of corruption in Cameroon. J.C Bresson aptly says: *The statement of the scientific discourse on corruption is facing a serious problem of conceptual clarification. This term is in fact remarkably ambiguous, confusing and elusive. This is a difficult reality to grasp*⁴. The situation of Cameroon has not been the best since the mid nineteen eighties. Since then the country has gone through a serious economic crisis that has left few untouched and has retarded a lot of progress, creating other situations difficult to manage like corruption. This crisis took the government by surprise and it has been an instrument of painful disorder in the country. This has resulted in compounding poverty, misery and unemployment while fermenting fear, doubt, and uncertainty, right down to increasing socially insecurity and injustices. The highest social insecurity in Cameroon is injustice caused by corruption. Without specific percentage one has the impression and feeling that the great majority of the population of Cameroon is corrupt and that if they are not actively corrupt they are at least passively involved. Given this context it is very complicated to engage the situation head on or write about it since one can become an object of violence reaction or perceived to be an enemy by many compatriots. Many therefore are not willing to address the situation. Although complicated it is still wise and important to tackle it since it's a growing phenomenon.

1.1.1 Background information

Cameroon is a West Central Africa republic which gained independence from France in 1960. The population of 19.5 million people lives in ten regions. Over two thirds are Christian (70%), the majority Roman Catholics (39%) and followed by mainstream Protestants (26%). Approximately 21% are Muslims. Cameroon has a great number of active Protestant churches and Muslims mosques. I have personally worked with the Catholic Church in 6 regions of the 10 regions in Cameroon. Thus I have observed the phenomenon of corruption across Cameroon and have freely chosen to contribute my experience to the fight against it. My job involved working with people with different kinds of social problems. For example taking care of the spiritual and moral needs of prisoners, counselling widows, motherless children, orphans, abandoned families and the disabled. These people are the most vulnerable victims of corruption and injustices. A great number of the Cameroonian population lives in absolute poverty and is trapped in vicious circles of poverty because of the mismanagement and misdirection of public funds. Hence, my interest in

⁴ J. C Bresson, "Corruption, Democracy and economy.", in *Problems in economic*, n° 2. 432, July 1995, p. 24.

standing up against such social ills. Living standards for the vast majority of Cameroonians have dwindled drastically compounded by fast growth of corruption at all levels. This has created a situation in which it is difficult to fight and eliminate corruption and as such making Christian practices difficult. It should be noted here that corruption is not the only social challenge facing contemporary Cameroon, but I chose to focus on corruption in the political, economic and moral spheres because of my observation that corruption lies at the root of other social ills.

In addition to the background information from Cameroon, comes the background of my diaconal studies in Norway. Studying *Diakonia*, especially the prophetic perspective of *Diakonia*, which emphasizes fighting for justice, speaking for the voiceless and empowering and defending the marginalized and the abandoned in the society, awakened my interest in this subject matter. *Diakonia* is the church's action in promoting justice and serving the people without distinction. I have many affected by corruption in Cameroon: orphans, widows, physically disabled and those lacking an adequate education. I hope to contribute to changing the focus from one of attending to the symptoms of social ills and addressing directly the root causes of them.

1.1.2 The study objective

The main target in this master thesis is to challenge the churches in Cameroon, and the Roman Catholic Church in particular, to be more practical than theoretical in fighting chronic social ills. In other words to argue the case that the churches would be more successful agent of prophetic change if it adopted a diaconal approach rather than relying primarily on theological pronouncements. The depth of the corruption in Cameroon - political, economic and moral - requires actions in addition to mere words. Ultimately an ecumenical diaconal approach may be the best method to successfully proceed in the fight against corruption in Cameroon.

1.1.3 Research question design and method

1.1.3.1 Research question

My research question stems from a reflection on the role of the churches in Cameroon and its intervention on social ills in particular the injustices caused by corruption. The gravity of dishonesty and the rapid growth of this phenomenon have challenged the churches in Cameroon. The Roman Catholic Church agrees on the need for its involvement in this, though this involvement is demonstrated at different levels and ways. I have chosen therefore to examine and reflect on one of them: their approach to corruption as expressed through several pastoral letters to the Roman Catholic Christians and well-wishers in the nation. What is the effectiveness of such letters in fighting corruption? What are the strengths and weaknesses of such letters? In this thesis I will challenge such theological interpretations that downplay the practical approach to combatting social

ills in favor of theoretical ways. I explore the possibilities and the need of the churches in Cameroon to work ecumenically when it comes to fighting against the root causes of corruption. Therefore the question that I will try to answer in this paper is: How might corruption in Cameroon be eradicated with the help of ecumenical *Diakonia*? In order to advocate for the voiceless which actions rather than theoretical approaches may be best suited? Why is it necessary for the Roman Catholic Church to go beyond pastoral letters against corruption? What role can (Catholic Church) play in the eradication of corruption in Cameroon, and how is the bases for such efforts actually communicated, both internally and in its external communication and advocacy work?

1.1.3.2 The Method

This thesis is a theoretical paper based on library research and not extensive field work. The method employed is purely descriptive. It includes analysis of the nature, causes and consequences of corruption as it allows us to see it in its phenomenally. A few attempts to gain information in the field were made but it became clear that not many informants were prepared to open up with details. Some were comfortable in the current situation and saw no reason why they should fight against it. Given the limited resources and scope the choice of qualitative over quantitative methods was clear. Quantitative method is not well suited to the study of corruption because of the nature of corruption itself and the bureaucratic systems in which corruption is practice in Cameroon. It demands a lot of time and material resources beyond the scope of a master thesis. I have therefore chosen the qualitative method which implies looking at a general phenomenon and trends. Discussing the position of the church in Cameroon within the society and analyzing its impact on political, economic and moral issues affected by corruption, I will examine the need for the church to fight corruption and injustices despite the challenges.

1.1.3.3 Literature review

The thesis builds on the available data, primarily secondary data sources. I will critically examine the pastoral letters of the Catholic bishops of Cameroon. The material for this thesis has been gathered from available literature in Cameroon and Norway, including books, periodicals and online sources, both in French and English. There has been a particular focus on the pastoral letters of the episcopal conference of the Catholic bishops of Cameroon in fighting corruption and other social ills, in view of a society of justice and peace. My interest to write on this topic was influenced from reading books on the importance and the implications of *Diakonia*. Some of the literature is from this perspective such as the letter from LWF on the global consultation and

prophetic *Diakonia: For the healing of the world*⁵ which dealt with the churches response to social issues. Thus literature on prophetic *Diakonia* and the on church and social issues have been used in this work as the churches in Cameroon have not emphasized more prophetic theology.

1.1.4 Motivations

After studying philosophy and theology I worked with the Roman Catholic Church in Cameroon as a pastoral care taker. In addition I represented the Catholic Church in ecumenical social work. I witnessed Cameroonian misery first hand. I have felt touched by the different ways in which many suffered innocently because of lack of information or protection. I was then motivated to seek advanced studies and new skills. I hoped to better understand the connection between corruption and lack of protection in light of the bishops' pastoral letters. My aim is to gain insight into disconnect between pastoral teaching on one hand and the social realities of Cameroonians in the other hand. I also wish in the this master thesis to bring in my humble contributions to the practical role of *Diakonia* and how it could be used to unraveled the pervasive corrupt practices in Cameroon. These contributions to knowledge are intended to bring out my love and concern for *Diakonia* which is more practical than theoretical.

1.2 Conceptual approach to corruption

1.2.1 Definition

"Corruption is like a multifaceted prism, we can look at it from different perspectives". Too narrow to escape reductionism, the Encyclopedia of Agora defines corruption as "*the use and abuse of public power for personal gain*"⁶. This is not only accurate, but also invoked in the development of most of the speeches and policies against corruption. In addition, it is not too expansive or too restrictive since the concept of public authority itself may involve not only agents of the State or of the government, but also any function that gives an individual a public authority. In this sense, *corrupt (is) the behavior of those in positions of public or private tasks missing their duties in order to derive private benefits of any kind.*⁷

However, this definition is limited because it does not include cases where corruption could benefit a third party who is not the holder of power. The author can also corrupt practices to benefit someone other than himself. It is this aspect of corruption highlighted by Dieudonné Kaldjob in a

⁵ This Lutheran World Federation report titled *Prophetic Diakonia For the healing of the world* was published in November 2002 and it mainly tackles thre problems facing our world today.

⁶ "Corruption", in *L'Encyclopédie de l'Agora*, Presses of university of Laval, Québec, 1998, p. 98.

⁷ Direction du Développement et de la coopération (DDC), *Combattre la corruption. Stratégie de la DDC*, Éd. DDC, Berne, 1998, p. 27.

definition he placed under the rubric of "*extortion*". He argues that corruption is *the act of committing or inciting to commit acts that constitute an abuse of a function or an abuse of authority. As it is for any person intentionally to offer, promise or give any undue pecuniary advantage, directly or through intermediaries to a public official or private. This in profit of a third party for that third party to act or refrain from acting in the exercise of his official functions*⁸

1.2.2 Corruption and Bribery (CB)

Corruption and bribery then designate two acts committed by a person holding political power in order to obtain, or to make a material benefit, financial or legal for the author or third party. Many features of corruption can be deduced from what has been said previously:

- One way to get something
- The secrecy and lack of transparency of the activity
- Reaching an illegitimate advantage
- The illegitimate acquisition of something that was not right
- Commitment economically inefficient ways
- The abuse of office, nepotism, often associated with blackmail
- Failure of a trust agreement
- The damage to the moral integrity and mutual agreement
- A violation of the law associated with the disintegration of the sense of right and justice.

Corruption is clearly distinct, e.g. gifts, components of a salary and tips. One cannot therefore justify corruption by saying it is part of a certain "gift culture". The gifts are not secret, or not linked to performance against clearly-agreed form of blackmail, or at least not to the extent of the sums involved in corruption today in Cameroon.

It is therefore appropriate, in light of the above, not to confuse *under-the-table and other pots of wine* with payments that are actually part of a salary such as tips. These distinctions lead us to talk about the different forms of corruption.

1.3 Types and forms of corruption

Corruption is a game involving malicious interaction of two individuals or two interest groups who choose to act outside of social norms or professionalism: *Whoever offers the pots of wine also needs someone who is willing, even after some resistance, to accept his offer. The moonlighter requires an employer to furnish work underground. The auditor needs a sponsor who*

⁸Emmanuel Dieudonné Kaldjob, « Corruption au Cameroun : fait culturel ou pathologie ? ». [<http://www.icicemac.com/news/print.php?nid=13730>].

wants to make its truths.⁹ This game is nothing more than a hidden pact that ties parties or individuals in relation to *the active subject and passive subject*, where the distinction we usually make between active bribery and passive bribery.

1.3.1 Active Corruption

Corruption is active when the *act is committed intentionally. This is the offering, or giving, directly or indirectly, of any undue advantage to a public official for himself or for someone else, for him or refraining one from acting in the exercise of its functions.*¹⁰

1.3.2 Passive Corruption

Corruption is passive when *the act is not committed intentionally. This is done for one of these agents from soliciting or receiving, directly or indirectly, of any undue advantage for himself or someone else or to accept the offer or promise to perform or refrain from acting in the exercise of its functions.*¹¹

These types of corruption according to their constituent material can take many forms. This means that the identity of the corruption is functional in so far as it is defined by the material that constitutes it. Without pretending to be exhaustive, we will simply mention a few.

The “wines bribes” or facilitation payments are certainly the most common forms. It is an unfair advantage granted to an individual or a group after receiving some material things of any kind, granting benefits provided by the regulations such as promotions and other favors related to the career of the individual or group. They are also referred to by the term “under-the-table”. Influence peddling is a form of corruption that is an individual vested with public authority is paid for or obtains a third party which may be a natural person or legal benefit of the public authority.

Fraud occurs when a person seeks gains *either directly or indirectly through acts such as embezzlement, false invoicing, non-performance or deliberately misleading information.*¹²

Commissions are defined as *the percentage that an illegal intermediary receives as its share for public service rendered. This practice is at the heart of the administrative operation of several underdeveloped countries.*¹³

⁹ Rudy Aemoudt, *Corruption galore, looks a sprawling phenomenon*, translated from the Dutch by Isabelle Delattre, Editions L'Harmattan, Paris, 2003, p. 26.

¹⁰ GRECO, « Questionnaire sur les incriminations prévues par la Convention sur la corruption » (STE 173), son Protocole additionnel (STE 191) et le Principe directeur 2 (PDC) adopté par le GRECO lors de sa 29^{ème} réunion plénière (Strasbourg, 19-23 juin 2006).

¹¹ *Idem*

¹² B. Bailey, “La lutte contre la corruption: Guide d'introduction”. [<http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/inet/images.nsf/vluimages/hudg2/files/primerfrançais.pdf>].

¹³ *Idem*.

Favoritism and nepotism are the tendency for individuals in charge of a public or private affairs, to promote and to give preferential treatment to members of their families, friends, constituents or relationships regardless of their intrinsic value. This practice presently affects the entire Cameroonian society.

Political corruption is defined by Sébastien Fornerod as *a specific form of manipulation of power that does not always pay money, but the benefits granted in the form of functions within the State paid themselves*¹⁴. This is the case of leadership and administrative nominations in Cameroun which we will develop in the second part of this work

The variety of forms of corruption just mentioned are a customary phenomenon that has taken root in the culture. In fact the truth is that corruption has become a phenomenon with global dimensions. It is an international morality.

1.3.3 Corruption, an international phenomenon

Corruption is one of the biggest obstacles to fair and equitable economic development and social justice. This is a cancer that plagues the world. The problem affects the North, South, East and the West. It is like a rising agent, as stated by my supervisor: *Corruption is therefore like yeast in flour altogether mixed up and difficult to separate from each other.*

This became the global note and is as old as the first societal projects. Corruption appeared at the time society first organized public institutions to preserve and develop services. It was in fact already present in antiquity. Cicero cited it in a book titled *Pleasure and Truth: There are men who all sense of proportion is unknown: money, honor, power, sensual pleasures, pleasures rules pleasures of all kinds, finally, they have never enough of anything. Their booty dishonest, far from diminishing their greed, rather excites: men sunk to lock rather than form.*¹⁵

In France, the first codification in the fight against corruption is an order of King Philippe le Bel dated March 23, 1302 in which he ordered his *bailiffs, provosts seneschals and the rules for their decisions cannot be tainted as irregularities or favoritism.*¹⁶

However, the adoption of the Code Napoleon in 1810 marked the introduction of *final heavy penalties to fight against corruption ... not to interfere with the duty of care of an individual or acts interfering with rights and homework.*¹⁷

The interest in the phenomenon of corruption has grown significantly in the late 20th century as emphasized by Daniel Dommel: *The last decade of the twentieth century saw corruption*

¹⁴ Sébastien Fornerod, « Corruption, les mots pour le dire », in *Ecovox*, n°39, janvier-juin 2008.

¹⁵ Claude Mathon, “corruption and bribery: a necessary recourse to moral”. [http://www.claudemathon.fr/public/corruption_et_mensonge.pdf].

¹⁶ *Idem*

¹⁷ *Idem.*

*invade the headlines and generate multiple investigations while the topic raised little interest until then.*¹⁸

These multidisciplinary investigations can be explained by the historical changes occurring in the world after the 1980s. *The first is the end of ideological blocs after 1989, and the second is the globalization of information. Both processes have contributed to shedding more corruption and raise awareness of the phenomenon more appropriately.*¹⁹ Therefore, in 1992, the Council of Europe has created a *Multidisciplinary Group on Corruption, formalizing the renewal of public corruption as a problem requiring specific regulations.*²⁰

One can therefore understand the impact of *adverse rankings*²¹ of the NGO Transparency International (TI). Since 1995 TI publishes an annual ranking, a list that shows for each country the extent to which corruption is perceived by the business community, the public and the international community. This index of perceptions of corruption (Corruption Perceptions Index, CPI) has been continuously refined systematically. It is based on at least three investigations. As these investigations have not been performed to the same extent, the index does not include all countries of the world. The absence of a country says nothing about its level of corruption. The index reveals trends. At the time of its publication, it triggers whenever violent political reactions in the countries listed in the bottom of the list, but also some corrective measures and therefore has had real effects. Developing countries are rated as particularly corrupted.

This method is now viewed as incomplete and was unilaterally corrected by the introduction of a second index of corruption developed by TI. This was published for the first time on 26 October 1999: Bribe Payers Index (BPI). Industrialized countries now appear, countries that host the headquarters of large international companies.²²

This historical overview and Global Corruption is sufficient to show that it is not a spontaneous generation but an evil which all men are interdependent. In other words: *Corruption is*

¹⁸ Daniel Dommel, *Face corruption. Can we accept that ? Can it be prevented ? Can we fight it ?*, Editions Karthala, Paris, 2003, p. 9.

¹⁹ Pontifical Council "Justice and Peace", "The fight against corruption". [http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical/councils/justpeace/documents]

²⁰ Pierre Lascoumes, *Corruptions*, Presses de sciences po, Paris 1999, p. 7.

²¹ Founded in 1993 by German Peter Eigen. It will be noted that the rankings of Transparency International, which annually gives the index of perception of the most corrupt countries in the world attracted the attention of the international community to the country, with greater visibility of the phenomenon. Several of these countries have in fact imposed outstanding efforts to improve their position in the standings. Copy of Rwanda "who made a meteoric rise (from 89th to 66th place), having developed and applied strict" zero tolerance "against corruption.

²² For details of the methods and sources of the two indices, see the homepage of Transparency International : <http://www.transparency.de>.

*not (...) the privilege of developing countries. It also exists in developed countries.*²³ To a certain extent and with less virulence, it operates within societies and mission churches.

1.3.4 Corruption in corporate mission and churches

Relief organizations, missions and churches are themselves part of both the problem and its solution. In the so-called "little corruption acceleration" (e.g. when it comes to clear or accelerate the release of goods from one port) or the small "corruption of obtaining" practiced for authorizations, churches, with their development projects and charities, are also affected by the phenomenon of corruption like other sectors of society. In addition comes the corruption which is the result of church managers and executives whose control is not very democratic. These accumulate excessive power and can develop genuine nepotism.

However, over the long term development projects form the major if exceptional corruption cases. When they are discovered, the authors are still often judged and punished by the courts. Rest assured that checks are carried out by ordinary accounts audit firms, but the reviews often lack rigor and are not instruments to detect cases of corruption. That is why the joint responsibility of the churches with the donor is not corruption in general, their involvement in suspicious transactions, but in choosing to continue to support organizations when doubtful of their effectively functioning. In this sense the continuation of cooperation is then considered as an endorsement of corruption.

Most development projects supported by the Protestant work and missions are certainly free from corruption (except for petty corruption that most projects cannot or do not want to give up). But even if they affect a minority of projects, cases of corruption as witnessed by churches weaken the image of development cooperation as a whole.

Corruption presents itself as a pathological phenomenon to distinguish natural phenomena. But if we seek to understand this phenomenon it is also with the desire to change, to stop it totally. It is therefore necessary first to find the cause or causes of corruption before considering ways and means to act on it. Corruption is indeed a result that depends on a cause, an antecedent.

1.4. Causes of Corruption

1.4.1 Bad governance (political)

Corruption is generally symptomatic of the approximate quality of governance in a country. In fact, when weak institutions, lack of control and accountability is joint, it is called bad governance. This coupled with weak legislation opens the door to arbitrary reign of injustice and

²³ Jean-Claude Usunier and Gérard Verna, *The great cheating, ethics, corruption and international affairs*, Edition La Découverte, Paris, 1994, p. 49.

confiscation of public goods. In fact, according to Casamayor corruption is not only a vice, *it is also a technical fault. (...), it thrives on the failure of the system, the complication, as the fungus on manure. To tamper with a public service, it is necessary to intervene in its march to the exact level of its imperfections.*²⁴

According to the Cameroonian philosopher Lucien Ayissi when governance of a state is corrupt, it looks like a mafia rule with secrets, backstabbing, clientelism, speculation, dirty money and patronage. *The mafia is symptomatic of the institutional crisis of the state, especially when injustice takes over justice because corruption is developed; it breaks down the barriers between the allowed and the forbidden, the legal and illegal, a standard gap.*²⁵

The weakness of the administration in Cameroon my case study represent the azimuths of all violations of human rights and poor control of the organs of civil society vis-à-vis the executive are often the pulse of corruption. It is the opinion of Professor Kaldjob: *This is the framework within which the public official and the private agent that will allow and encourage the emergence of corruption. The organization and management of public administration often suffer from malfunctions that make the country particularly vulnerable to corruption.*²⁶ Where jurisdiction ceases to be the criterion for selection of administration officials, when control over the political and administrative actors is weak or nonexistent, then a monopoly develops as leaders come to delegate discretion, having no accountability to anyone but themselves.

1.4.2 Low wages (economic)

According to the proponents of economic causality, lower wages are the main root cause of corruption. D. Dommel speaking of England said to this effect: *for many years this country has been largely spared of corruption, due to consistent tradition and revolution (...) for the sake of egalitarianism treatments in which officials closely supervised the economy and entrust great power.*²⁷

Low wages, economic crisis and devaluation in a state eventually trap officials, who then take steps in all forms to the detriment of the populations. The only way to survive for those officials is to defraud their fellow citizens.

It is a fact that officials have paid little or no recourse to: corruption to supplement their monthly wages. Michel Doucin cited a typical Cameroon example: *There is also a worsening of*

²⁴ Casamayor, « La corruption », in *Esprit*, n°420, janvier 1973, cité par Lucien Ayissi, *corruption and governance*, L'harmattan, Paris, pp. 132-133.

²⁵ L. Ayissi, *ibid.*, p. 58.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.129.

²⁷ D. Dommel, *op.cit.*,p 46.

*corruption in some countries where the practice of structural adjustment has resulted in reductions of salaries of public officials and / or staff reductions. Take Cameroon, where the salaries of civil servants decreased by 70%. A minister sought to offset this impact by a levy on all procurement under its jurisdiction to be redistributed to his entourage.*²⁸

Added to wage cuts one frequently finds obsolete working conditions (manual typewriters, not computers or electric typewriters) unmotivated agents working without a smile, in the dirt, sometimes surrounded by dusty cabinet full of faulty records classifications.

But Lucien Ayissi's thesis of falling wages while pertinent, *the thesis of low wages cannot explain the basis of which financial escapades of Cameroon as EDOA Titus, Pierre DSIRE Engo or Seidou Moutchipou were convicted*²⁹.

Today, judges, customs officers and military law enforcement, all persons whose remuneration was maintained or even increased despite the ravages of structural adjustment plans, are no less corrupt and corruptible than the victims of the economic crisis are the other segments of society. They are corrupt, as well as others not satisfied with their economic conditions. In addition, the company is organized so that individuals occupying positions with specific roles have a certain social status with pay and possibly other in-kind benefits (housing, vehicle or transport allowance). So if the person aggrieved in what he is entitled for the services rendered to the company, he can turn to the state and require improvement status. In order to be more effective this claim should be made in consultation with persons enjoying the same status. Any well-organized society gives individuals the right to organize to better demand their rights.

Thus, low wages alone cannot be sufficient cause to justify corrupt practices. The root causes of this social pathology must be sought in the maze of moral actions.

1.4.3 The moral causes

Corruption is not to be justified; it is a vice to fix. By this standard it is a moral deviance. It is therefore an a priori moral problem. This view is also favored by Jean-Claude and Gerard Usunier Verna who think that corruption would not exist *if the powerful are not as susceptible to money, if their character was as solid as if they escape the temptations.*³⁰ It will therefore be a person against the moral objective order to do good and avoid evil, or against the voice of one's

²⁸ Michel Doucin, "Corruption, violating human rights, Africa uncertain. ". [[Http://www.irennnes.net/fr/fiches-analyse-605.html](http://www.irennnes.net/fr/fiches-analyse-605.html)]

²⁹ L. Ayissi, *op.cit.*, p. 137

³⁰ J-C. Usunier and G.Verna, *The Great cheating, ethics, corruption and international affairs, discovery*, La Découverte, Paris, 1994, p.107-108..

conscience recalling the necessity to do good. It appears then that corruption is *symptomatic of the crisis of the human being*.³¹

It follows therefore that *it is not wealth or goods which are the causes of the corruption of men, but their desire for possession and power*.³² Since corruption is seen as an ethical issue and laws are better designed and would be ineffective without the willingness of managers to capture the values of honesty, integrity and transparency. As Janos Bertok said: *When one takes the point of view of ethics in the public sector, corruption is seen as a management problem. Integrity is a fundamental condition for the exercise of democratic governance*.³³

The review of the causes of corruption puts us in the presence of a kind of "*corruption complex*" consisting of poor governance, poor compensation, inadequate working conditions and a subversion of the objectives of moral order. This network of causalities inherent in corruption leads to harmful consequences for society in general and the individual citizen. Indeed, corruption distorts the functioning of justice, undermines economic development and hampers social cohesion.

1.5. The consequences of corruption

1.5.1 An obstruction of justice

Corruption seriously undermines justice as a value to the extent it becomes biased and unfair. In a system of corruption, judgments are not equal for equal cases; they are mostly false and not impartial. Legal scholars can detect that corruption regress law. The corrupt judge gives judgment where the patterns are inconsistent with the sentences, and the interpretation of legal texts is incorrect, hence the non-development of jurisprudence. This means that *corruption has a negative impact on the quality of governance in a country and promotes political instability by undermining the legitimacy of the political system*³⁴.

All this leads to outrageous violations of human rights and establishes a generalized climate of impunity. Disillusioned citizens are required to withdraw their confidence in the state and turn to parallel organizations like vigilance committees or vigilante groups. When we no longer believe in justice, the people have other ways to achieve justice, thus countries develop corrupt practices

³¹ L. Ayissi, *Op.Cit.*, p. 140.

³² M. Mauss, *Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques*, Presses universitaires de France, Paris, 2007, p. 25.

³³ János Bertok, « Corruption, éthique et intégrité », paru dans *Le Nouvel Observateur de l'OCDE*, n° 220, avril 2000, p. 26.

³⁴ L. Ayissi, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

called mob justice: lynching, executions of thieves, settling of scores between individuals in direct conflict.

Corrupt justice also leads to ostracism and the exclusion of honest judges makes the system eventually marginalize: the country loses competent and honest judges. The judge makes a decision related to the size of the purse and the legitimate person who deserves fair judgment loses more of its independence and rights to the truth. There is more space in his decisions on his conscience and the law. This legal uncertainty settles gradually into society.

1.5.2 An obstacle to economic development

The opinion of economists on the negative impact of corruption is more visible and significant. In reality neither donors nor financial institutions are interested in countries where corruption blurs good governance and seriously undermines economic development.

Indeed, in a system of corruption, contracts concluded, either by nationals or foreigners always come with envelopes left in the circuit allocation, payment and control. Everything is so paid into the pockets of officials and it affects the overall cost of the market. Thus, in an undertaking that should cost one billion, two billion is charged for the benefits of the officials. Corruption is paid by the state and more than enough for each procurement granted to private contractors.

Losses are also incurred in government revenues when the public official or agent asks the user to give him a part of the sum he had paid into the coffers of the state as the cost of services rendered. Sometimes the user is exempted from any public official payment to fund the state.

In a system where most of the links of the chains are infested, where everyone finds his account in the wrong, it is not surprising that the entire country is sinking more and more. A controller carrying out the work that is corrupt, the gravediggers let the economy flourish freely. As a letter carrier this reduction of national income, this corruption makes the state unable to play its role with people affecting schools, health facilities and infrastructure. Many investigations have determined that corruption is a violation of human rights, to the extent that it prevents people from enjoying the fruits of growth, it is the denial of the right to permanent development.

These negative effects of corruption on the economy have been admirably summarized in a review article by the Bank of Africa (BA): *Corruption increases transaction costs and uncertainty. It generally leads to inefficient economic outcomes. It hurts the foreign and domestic investment and in the long term leads to a misallocation of talent for research activities as well as the choice of*

technology (procurement for large defense projects taking precedence over the construction of health clinics rural specializing in preventive care).

It leads businesses to the underground economy, which reduces government revenue, so that taxes are heavier and hit a number of taxpayers increasingly restricted. The state is then unable to provide essential public goods, including ensuring the rule of law. This can result in a vicious cycle of increasing corruption and underground economic activity. Corruption is unfair. It imposes a regressive tax that weighs particularly heavily on commercial activities and services for small businesses. Corruption undermines the legitimacy of the state.³⁵

In sum, corruption cripples the economy and causes loss of resources, both human and material, and a huge shortfall in public enterprises and other private operators. The logic of corruption policies direct investment towards non-real needs, but towards those who are more likely to report in terms of bribes. *Highway to the village president instead of rural roads, dams instead of Pharaonic irrigation system at the village level, most modern hospitals in the capital (often with the unused equipment because too sophisticated) instead of dispensaries, supplied turnkey plants abandoned shortly after inauguration instead support small and medium sized local business.³⁶*

1.5.3 Weakening social fabric

Corruption is not only a hindrance to the economy, it also undermines the social equilibrium. It is a form of sociocide since it does not allow the construction of a solid company, based on the development of individuals. People are born with equal rights in a society where social functions are undifferentiated and complementary, where the company provides each of its members through training structures, an equal opportunity to access roles and titles to through personal effort.

Corruption thus replaces personal effort, it laughs so to speak of the social principle of equal opportunities. Corruption appears as an injustice to the members of the society. Reign of arbitrariness and partiality, it alienates the person, operates the *magic*³⁷ of things and give individuals the merits or defects that are not theirs. *Corruption is so ingrained in people's minds that even in companies whose success depends on merit, we tend to think that we will fail if we do not pay anything (...) A litigant may well have his right hand, he is convinced that he will lose his case as he has not done anything to be in the good graces of the judge in charge of his case.³⁸*

³⁵ *Bank of Africa*, n°17, juillet 1998, p. 9.

³⁶ Dieter Frisch, "Corruption, a major obstacle to economic and social development," in *corruption affects us all*, Cahiers de l'Institut d'Etudes of Justice, Éd. Bruylant, 2002, p. 48.

³⁷ Lucien Ayissi talks about the magic of corruption Corruption and Governance (pp. 75-88). The author thinks that in fact social, the game of corruption, small and large become negligible it gains notability.

³⁸ K.A Fodjo, *When ambition lose reason*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 2007, p.76.

In such a system it is not passing without an impact on education. Those young people who have a desire for effort lose out. Children, the most vulnerable members of society, adopt a model of life, the practice of intrigue, treachery, copy work and a corruption faculty. A teacher is corrupted by a student to move from one level to another by paying not to sit for the test but have a passed mark later on after the test. The school produces incompetent graduates, ill-suited to deal with the international intellectual competition.

Also the social corruption helps to accentuate the gap between rich and poor. It divides and contributes greatly to social inequality and conflict. This division can be either lateral or vertical. *When lateral, it separates the poor from the rich, observers from players. It encourages the poor to see the government as a predator and an oppressor rather than a facilitator, and their sense of powerlessness and exclusion is reinforced. When vertical, corruption contributes to divide ethnic groups and communities and causes feelings of rivalry and jealousy.*³⁹

In view of the foregoing, it appears that corruption is a social evil that can give content; find causes that underline and which can evaluate the consequences. Such an approach can claim the humanities or social sciences. However, it is now necessary to see the patterns from which the bishops of Cameroon approach corruption and how to interpret corruption in a genuine way with deep concern for the diaconal desire and role against this scourge. It is on these analyzes that grafted action and measures initiated by actors of anti-corruption consist of strengthening the criminal law and tax practice revisions and audits. These are also part of the "islands of integrity" universally valid (Transparency International), legal reforms on moneylaundering and the possibility of tax deduction of bribes, kickbacks, administrative reforms and public awareness, support of OECD guidelines for the fight against corruption and the release of the security risks to export if we can prove the existence of suspicious transactions.

1.6 Some key players in the fight against corruption

1.6.1 Transparency International and Institutional Reform

During his first trip to the African soil, U.S. President Barak Obama said: *Africa does not need strong men but strong institutions.*⁴⁰ It is in this context that Transparency International operates: to provide developing countries with strong institutions and fight anything that would tend to undermine these institutions. *The establishment of a balanced system and strong institutions is the*

³⁹ *Idem.*

⁴⁰ Barak Obama, "Africa has no need for strongmen, it needs strong institutions." "[[Http://www.lemessenger.net/?p=682](http://www.lemessenger.net/?p=682)]

*best way to reduce corruption.*⁴¹ This is to minimize the barriers that prevent ordinary citizens to participate in the political, economic and social aspects in their countries. It follows that: *The rule of law, democracy, separation of powers, the efficiency of public services, respect for human rights and the participation of civil society are part of a new package of measures to help countries: it is good governance.*⁴²

Actors in the fight against corruption are also unanimous in recognizing that in addition to strengthening institutional frameworks the country must simultaneously strengthen the domestic court against the scourge in both public and private companies.

1.6.2 The legal approach of the OECD

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was founded in 1961 and its approach is *by far the most successful*⁴³ in the international arena in the fight against corruption. The OECD's role is:

*To provide assistance to member governments in the development of long term economic growth, to support the improvement of living standards through the development of employment, financial stability, to assist other countries in developing and promoting the improvement of the growth rate of world trade.*⁴⁴

The organization is known for the publication of an essential contribution in the debate on corruption, "Convention fight against corruption", adopted on 21 November 1997. The convention covers the fight against the bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions and stems from the willingness of investors to band together against corruption as a non-tariff trade impediment. This article section 3 notes that criminal sanctions will be brought against any officer or officers who accept payments in conjunction with awarding a public contract.

Other organizations active in the fight against corruption include the World Trade Organization (WTO), established in 1996, the Council of Europe, in operation since 1949, GRECO, which promotes pluralist democracy and human rights and the G7, whose members are committed to combating corruption in international business transactions as it undermines transparency and fairness and carries high economic and political costs. These organizations and their measures operate at the international level in relations between states in areas as important as human rights, trade and the functioning of state institutions. Although necessary they are all based on the premise that to operate, they must also function at the individual level.

⁴¹ Boris Melkinov, *Handbook of reform, the fight against corruption: the solution to the private sector*, under the supervision of Kim Eric Bettcher, Centre international pour l'entreprise privée, Washington, May 2009.

⁴² L. Ayissi, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

⁴³ Rudy, *op cit.*, p. 77.

⁴⁴ "OECD Definition and role." [<http://www.weblibre.org/dossiers/ocde, 6983.html>]

1.6.3 The European Union

The European Union (EU) has recently developed a comprehensive program to fight against corruption in and among its members. Convention for the Protection of Economic Interests in 1995 was the first element. Subsequently the EU formed official delegations to the fight against corruption, an integral part of the economic interests of the community. In fact, the European Union itself has endured a serious cases of alleged corruption that led to the resignation of the committee on 15 March 1998. In its emergency aid programme the EU has also been affected by corruption.

1.6.4 The Council of Europe (CE)

The CE has prepared a draft legal proceedings in cases of corruption. Work is advanced, but not yet completed. Unlike the OECD Convention, the project is based on a broad definition of corruption: it includes in fact the active and passive bribery of officials and corruption by individuals and the private sector environments.

1.6.5 The World Bank (WB)

The WB began, about two years ago its intense work against corruption. It has published numerous reviews and studies and created its own ad hoc department. The WB finally established its own control, simply because it is itself often under fire from critics, because some of the bank's resources disappear into corruption. It follows from this that corruption presents itself as a widespread phenomenon but both insidious and occult. Immoral in character, it is publicly criticized even by those who see it as an evil.

As such, we have identified the causes and consequences of it. Corruption is both a moral evil and a symptom of a failure of the institution. Its impact on the lives of the people is incalculable materially, morally, spiritually and its effect on the system is difficult to quantify. It therefore deserves to be combated in all its forms. Thus, the main specialists in anti-corruption recognize unanimously that in order to curb this scourge, we should adopt not only institutional reforms, but also moral ones.

We propose therefore to examine in this second section the Christian resources, how both in terms of theological thoughts and diaconal action they can be mobilized to combat the growing phenomenon of corruption morally, spiritually, materially and otherwise.

Chapter 2. CORRUPTION, HOLY SCRIPTURES AND ETHICS

2.1 Corruption an issue in biblical ethics

Amongst many social disorders seen in the Scriptures is Corruption. It is an ethical problem also addresses in the Bible. Modern day Christian doctrine rests upon the premise that God preserved the Bible in an absolute infallible and pure state, in order that all men should know the (historical) truth and believe in the Son of God. Their doctrinal position is that if God permitted the Bible to have been altered, then the present day church could not be genuine. Based upon this dogmatic presumption that the Christian Church must be maintained in order for man to be saved, they reason that God would not allow the written word of the scriptures to be corrupted. That said corruption is therefore one of the many moral issues addressed in the different biblical writings, Like the letters of the Apostles and the Holy Gospels, not living out the Old Testament.

The Bible is a road-map that leads us to the Gate of the Kingdom, and the Word that is written in our hearts -- rather than a final revelation from God to man -- that we are able to even begin to come to terms with the Spiritual Gospel of Christ that can never be corrupted. I am therefore making allusions to some incidence in the bible where corruption was felt and this just to indicate that corruption is an ill that has been fought against since the creation of the Holy Scriptures.

2.2 Corruption in the Old Testament

Corruption is almost as old as man and we know it exists or has recognized in jurisprudence. Theories provide several biblical, theological-ethical criteria for judging corruption.

2.2.1 *The prohibition of corruption in Exodus*

The earliest mention of the corruption in the OT appears in Exodus, just three chapters before the Ten Commandments: *Thou shalt not receive this point because these blind ... will accept no gift, gift for blind and sighted the impediment to fair* (Ex 23:8). This prohibition stems from the pre-royal, and it is no coincidence that it is addressed to judges, urging them not to accept "gifts".

Impartial jurisprudence is essential from the beginning of any political system. The phenomenon was also known in the world of the OT, in Egypt and Mesopotamia, as well as in the Book of Exodus which contains a formulation of a law against corruption. The ethical foundation of the prohibition of corruption is also important: truth and justice, in particular the legal protection of the poor.

2.2.2 *The temptation of the Kings of Israel*

In the days of the monarchy, it is mentioned in the book of Samuel that the son of the king *accepted bribes of wine* (1 Sam 8:3). In the Books of Kings it is clear that corruption was also an instrument of foreign policy. The military bribed allies to conduct military operations against the king (1 Kings: 15, 19; 2 Kings: 16, 8).

2.2.3 Submission of the prophets

It is among the prophets that the theological foundation for the eradication of corruption is most evident. The Lord Yahweh is incorruptible because he himself is law and justice. That is why he buys his people Israel back from exile to his country by paying *Kyrios* kings, but not with "*dirty*" (as some of the people had suggested). Corruption destroys the community. Bribing is immediately regarded as godless and therefore also excluded from the closeness to God (Pr 17:23). One who fears God does not corrupt (Ps 26.10).

2.3 Corruption in the New Testament

2.3.1 The Holy Gospels

There is also a question of corruption in the NT. Again, it is generally condemned. According to the story of the Passion and the time before Easter, Judas was purchased by the High Priest (Mark 14, 10). The later and the former are probably paid soldiers to make the rumor that Jesus was not resurrected; but that his body was stolen (the passage is disputed from a historical perspective).

2.3.2 Denunciation of Acts of the Apostles

The question of bribery of judges appears in the Acts of the Apostles, when the governor Felix seems to expect money for the price of a merciful judgment against Paul (Acts 24.26). It is known that the Roman customs prevalent at the time of Jesus were corrupt. This fact is attested by the story of Zacchaeus' goods unjustly acquired, chief among the publicans, and of his conversion (Lk 19:1-10). But the most dangerous form of corruption may be that which affects the faith, as evidenced by the story of Simon (Magus): he offers the apostles Peter and John money for the faculty to bring the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands (Acts 8.8 to 24). The moral of this episode is that it is a gift of God and cannot be bought with money.

These biblical messages on corruption often transmitted through stories are important for ethics, because these stories transmit images of a successful life and a society free of corruption. They include the core values that will give rise to an ethic of transparency.

2.4 Moral objections to corruption: ethical view

The ethically reprehensible character of corruption has a broad consensus across cultural boundaries; it would not otherwise be practiced hidden in the shadows. Propositions that corruption belongs to the culture of the South and is part of their "culture of gifts" is a fatalistic justification and can be found in the historical and sociological analysis. In African societies, for example, corruption has increased dramatically in the context of colonial and postcolonial political structures and current international trade. In terms of terminology, we have already established a distinction between what corruptions is and what a gift is above.

Some ethical criteria allow us to judge the objective morality of corruption:

2.4.1 An obstruction of justice

It is what bridges the gap between the rich and poor, that is what is in the best interests of the strongest to the detriment of the weakest. Major corruption increases the advantage of the powerful and the gap between rich and poor. And corruption undermines the rights of the weakest who do not have the means or whose rights are not respected by corrupt judges as reflected in the Old Testament (Ex 23, 8).

2.4.2 A violation of human rights

Corruption prevents the individual from enjoying his inalienable rights, since he must pay. Whoever possesses can enjoy their "right" more fully than he who has nothing. Such a context creates a dense network of mutual dependence and pressure, and thus impede the expression of political freedom (rights and duties of citizens and human rights). Protection of the individual against corruption is in itself a basic human right.

2.4.3 The common good before personal gain

As an abuse of public or private authority in order to satisfy special interests, corruption sacrifices the common interest on the altar of selfish interests. Economically speaking, corruption is the *common good infiltrated by special interests*. This is often the part of those who practice corruption, greed and lust for power, who oppose the responsible exercise of power. Corruption increases the efficiency of certain individuals by reducing the efficiency of the entire system, which is an aberration in economic terms.

These ethical criteria that we have highlighted, concerns in particular extensive or major corruption. Petty, day-to-day corruption is often morally justified. Is it wrong for a minor employee to improve his pittance to support his family? Who condemns the custom of accepting an "envelope" to accelerate the delivery of drugs to a poor dispensary fighting to save lives?

Even if this petty corruption misery is understandable, it must be refuted ethically because, as with major corruption, and even if the consequences are less severe, it undermines confidence, disrupts the community, and ruins democracy. This does not mean that it is not or should not be practiced as a strategy for survival or because of unjust structures, insofar as it is not possible to escape individually. But we cannot consider it a legitimate ethical point of view, much less permit individualization "fault".

Here, as in other areas of life, nesting in unjust structures are part of the ethical dilemma of being human: we cannot live without liability. And we are here precisely at the heart of Christian discourse on forgiveness. Forgiveness allows the giver to name injustice as such, even if we cannot always escape to justifying it ethically. Forgiveness releases the constraint of innocence.

Chapter 3: THE POSITION OF THE BISHOPS OF CAMEROON ON CORRUPTION: A CRITICAL READING

3.1 Situation of Cameroon

The Bishops speaking from the Episcopal Conference of Cameroon think that corruption is rooted in all aspects and they see it in the objectives arising from their commitments made in the 1950s, in favor of social progress. This concern for social issues covers topics as interesting as evangelism, apostolic life, the laity, family, marriage, the fight against poverty. Social deviances like mismanagement of resources are viewed as barriers to the development of the people. During his first trip to the African soil, Pope Benedict XVI said this to the Cameroonian people: *facing suffering, violence, poverty, hunger, corruption, and abuse of power, on daily basis should not let a Christian to remain silent.*⁴⁵

To this end, the final symposium of Bishops of Cameroon and Germany on the theme for social issues, studied the social teaching of the Bishops of Cameroon in connection with the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church published by Bishop Jean MBARGA of Ebolowa-Kribi in January 2008. This revealed that the Bishops of Cameroon have produced a total of 25 pastoral letters and statements on six single themes of corruption⁴⁶. These are written with varying degrees of doctrinal or other canonical authority. Some had a very wide circulation. Others have been scarce. For these reasons that we can report on the evolution of thought only from the subject of Episcopal point of history.

⁴⁵ Jeune Afrique, Pope Benedict XVI began his first trip to Cameroon in Africa. (www.jeuneafrique.com/depeche_imp_2009031T11627207).

⁴⁶ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Bamenda on Corruption (1977) in which the Catholic Church has denounced publicly for the first time corruption. This letter is intended primarily to arouse the consciousness and the widespread phenomenon despite the false assurance that continued to give political leaders. Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon: Fight against corruption in Cameroon. Text of the Secretariat of the Episcopal Conference, published in Effort Cameroon Documentation catholique, 2236 November 19, 2000, p.987.

- Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of the ecclesiastical province of Garoua (1980). Documents the most widespread are ;

- Bishops Pastoral Letter on the economic crisis facing the country (1990): Corruption is associated with the economic crisis as one of its main causes through incivility, waste, capital flight and the embezzlement of public funds.

- Pastoral Letter on the adverse effects of tribalism (1996): corruption is dealt with in connection with violations of human rights and the degradation of the relational fabric that follows.

- Statement on the outcome of the seminar on Justice and Peace (1997).

- Statement on the outcome of the seminar on good governance (1998): Corruption is treated more as a result of leaders and custodians of a public authority whose faulty governance undermines the common good.

- Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon against Corruption (2000).

- Statement on the outcome of the seminar insecurity in our country (2001).

- ACERA, the Church and Poverty in Central Africa: the case of oil (2002).

The Church and Poverty in Central Africa: the case of forestry.

- Declaration on corruption and embezzlement of public funds, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness" (Mt 6,6), (2006).

3.2 Church and corruption in Cameroon

Should stolen money be repatriated and embezzlers granted amnesty? In their recent Pastoral Letter on the forthcoming presidential election, the bishops of Cameroon asked that stolen funds be recovered and amnesty granted to embezzlers, among other recommendations to improve the nation's welfare.

There are several things wrong with this statement: first, its logical soundness for a nation striving to be corruption-free, and secondly, the issuing body's example. The corruption level in Cameroon is legendary. In recent years, the government has jailed a number of former high-ranking personalities accused of misappropriating public funds. Recover the funds and grant amnesty to the embezzlers, the Bishops have recommended. This solution gives the impression that the issue is more about keeping the money in government coffers than in actually rooting out corruption. What good if the funds are recovered, only to be embezzled again?

While the masses suffer, public officials use public funds as capital for personal investments. If apprehended, should an embezzler spend a short time in jail and later be released thanks to an amnesty? The situation would end up as a vicious cycle of embezzling – brief detention – recovery of funds – embezzling. For corruption to be checked, measures have to be taken to make embezzling harder. Corruption in Cameroon does not only involve the big shots. In fact, it is worse among ordinary Cameroonians. Take a look at the way some common people cheat and it is obvious that given the chance, they will take embezzlement of public funds to a level not yet experienced in Cameroon.

Curbing corruption will require that every Cameroonian should do away with the attitude of trying to earn what s/he has not worked for. This often takes the form of inflating prices, withholding others' dues for personal gain, and demanding and offering bribes for whatsoever reason. Take the simple example of a child hawking goods. A good which should cost FCFA 1000 is priced at 2000. An ignorant buyer proposes FCFA 1500 and the child makes an additional FCFA 500 profit.

Some may argue that this strategy will make up for the deficit incurred on goods the child gets to sell at less than the cost price. Such reasoning, which unfortunately shapes many Cameroonians' thinking, means it is okay to accept to be cheated knowing one will just turn around and cheat the next person. This is the basis of corruption. It gives the impression that in Cameroon it is okay to get what one has not worked for; that it is okay to claim what belongs to another.

Another key factor which encourages corruption at all levels in Cameroon is the attitude of taking advantage of leniency, disorganization or the hierarchy's lack of tight measures to prevent the embezzlement of state funds. A nation cannot fight corruption when it remunerates workers

poorly, while at the same time tempting them by putting corrupting tools at the fingertips of struggling citizens. First, there are lax control measures, and second, individuals who, despite their circumstances, steal because it is possible and because every other person is doing it.

If the Bishops of Cameroon are serious about instigating sustainable change in the country, they should start by setting the example. How are finances handled in their own institutions? How many embezzlers have they recovered funds from? And most important, what measures have they put in place to make it harder for unscrupulous people to embezzle? Do they ensure decent living conditions for their priests and employees? Are all their financial transactions transparent? How seriously do they take accountability and auditing? Do they have a zero-tolerance level for such white-collar crime, especially among their peers?

The Church is expected to make a difference in any society, particularly a corrupt one. Hence, the Bishops of Cameroon are expected to go beyond a popular opinion many before them have expressed: "Recover embezzled funds and grant amnesty to embezzlers." Let them prove to the nation that there is transparency and accountability and responsible spending in their own institutions. When that happens, they will find themselves speaking with confidence and authority and not simply hiding behind clichés.⁴⁷

3.3 Interpretative schemes of corruption

3.3.1 Corruption is theft

The phenomenon of corruption is addressed first by the Bishops of Cameroon, in its purely material through an analogy with stealing. They used this analogy explicitly in their pastoral letter of 3 September 2000. Indeed this letter criticizes the scourge as embezzlement of public governance to lead Cameroon itself as corrupt.

It is sometimes the corruption of leaders and officials, other times small corruption pervades interpersonal relationships, and sometimes puts people on stage in the same class with one in a position of power. Using this analogy allow the Bishops to link corruption and greed as flight effects to their cause and to find that the procedure and the consequences of these two vices are the same. *Owning property of others unjustly is stealing.*⁴⁸

Indeed, "the abuse of public power for private gain" as theft or embezzlement of public funds are a form of misappropriation depriving the beneficiaries of the enjoyment of a public good in favor of an individual or a clique. As such they are a set of behaviors that spend the ruin of social values and undermine the basis of the efforts of individuals or groups to organize themselves

⁴⁷ L'effort Camerounais, News paper of the National Bishop's conference of Cameroon 2013

⁴⁸ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 988, § 7.

as human society around an ideal, the common good, understood as *the set of social conditions which allow both groups and their individual members, to reach their fulfillment in a more fully and more easy way.*⁴⁹

Okro, beer, tea, motivation, under-the-table bribes, kickbacks and gifts in Cameroon or elsewhere are trade names and idiomatic expressions commonly used to disguise corruption. These are sometimes borrowed from the social or cultural environments corrupted. Some of the poetic or euphemistic forms they have betray a widespread hypocrisy. Pushed to stage the most cynical hypocrisy managed to wrongdoing and shame, a cultural reality, the mode of administration, or worse, a game as such, corruption is stealing with which it shares many similarities: the mobile and the procedure.

It appears that the corruptor and the corrupted somehow rob individuals and society by accepting the use of force or deception goods that normally they would not consent to their surrender. Such a mode of operation is more or less a diversion: *Corruption is theft.*⁵⁰ Theft is condemned by the seventh commandment and appears as a criminal act essentially; to the extent that it involves the violation of the rule of individual or collective property. Stealing therefore exercise violence against someone in the ousting of an object or material goods of which he is the rightful owner.

The objective material element at stake here should definitely be returned by way of compensation:

*Those who directly or indirectly, have taken possession of property of others, are required to restore or return the equivalent in kind or in cash, if it has also disappeared, and the fruits and benefits that would have legitimately been obtained its owner. Everyone who participated in the theft in any way, or who have benefited knowingly, for example those who have ordered, or aided or concealed, is also required to return in proportion to their responsibility.*⁵¹

Theft as abduction, or any other way of appropriating or benefiting from property they do not own, is primarily a crime, a transgression of norms, and as such reprehensible in terms of positive law. In addition, the offense always involves an artificial shortage of these and could thus lead to the implication of a purely economic perception of corruption. This design stealing to limited to the material element and the criminal nature of the latter does not seem to realize the

⁴⁹ Vatican II. *The sixteen conciliar documents. Gaudium et Spes. The Church in the world of this time*, Fides, Montreal, 1996, n° 26.

⁵⁰ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 988, § 6.

⁵¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n° 2412.

crippling of public life in the apparatus of the state. They set it at the appropriate scale or the effects of widespread corruption and trivialized become a way of life that is normative school:

*Two observations were particularly alarming: the first is the example from above, in the sense that people in high places in our country are involved in the scandal, which gives others an easy excuse to do the same. The second is that our nation's children are born and grow in this climate of corruption, which distorts their consciousness from an early age into believing that success is achieved not by honest work, but by deception and theft.*⁵²

However, the hardware design is reducing corruption. Mathias Nebel said, *corruption is actually more complex than a simple theft.*⁵³ Indeed, corrupters and corrupted could also capture intangibles.

This is the case when ballot stuffing elections may bring individuals to prestigious positions. Bishops are therefore likely to deepen the meaning of corruption as any behavior likely to relegate human beings to value, to injure his dignity and impede its development:

*We denounce the external and internal factors that hinder the harmonious development of Africa. To all this is added corruption in all its forms: violation of human rights, tribalism, prostitution, embezzlement of public funds, squandering of national prestige purposes, mismanagement of common good, leading to economic disaster even in countries very richly endowed by nature.*⁵⁴

This definition is in fact the one that suits best to reconcile the analogy between corruption and theft. First, it distinguishes the corruption of a trip by stating that the social issues it can go beyond the simple consideration of simple material goods. Secondly, it is significant that incorporates a phenomenon as prostitution which they had once said he reported specifically the private sphere. From there, you can think anew about the report of the theft and corruption identifies these two vices, like immoral acts that could have a negative impact on the individual or the community. The Bishops present Cameroon corruption at various times not only as an act by which a person consumes a good that is intangible or not, but as a grave offense against the love of God which is given to all men. This love should then be translated concretely into practice through selfless service up to its climax, the sacrifice: *corruption is a serious violation of the commandment of God that asks man to love his neighbor as Jesus loved us.*⁵⁵

3.3.2 Corruption is an injustice

⁵² Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 987, § 3.

⁵³ M. Nebel, *The moral category of structural sin. Systematic test*, Cerf, Paris, 2006, p.124.

⁵⁴ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 990, § 17.

⁵⁵ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 990, § 14.

The use of the term "injustice" is not strictly speaking, the fact of the Bishops of Cameroon, it is based rather on a long development which is the subject of injustice in their remarks since 1977, the requirement of justice is everywhere in Scripture, its main source of inspiration. That is why the Bishops of Cameroon prescribe as primary remedies to corruption, attitudes that promote peace and reconciliation between individuals: *Each of us must ask God for forgiveness of his heart in this jubilee year of forgiveness for all sins to be forgiven but most especially for sins against honesty and justice.*⁵⁶

This social approach will also seem as most able to realize the pervasiveness of corruption. Indeed it exceeds by far the simple consideration of material goods on the one hand and on the other hand emphasizes the individual responsibility of every citizen in the spread of the phenomenon of corruption, sometimes even outside government structures:

If we are now entering the heart of the matter and report these situations of corruption in Cameroon, it is not to question certain persons, but we deal with all involved directly or indirectly. It is not enough that one or the other Cameroonians alone feels targeted by our words but we need that all will feel challenged, starting with Christians, especially those who have responsibilities in the church and in the society.

The problem of injustice is perceived first by the Bishops as dependent on selfishness already present in the heart of man from creation and even the first attempt of social organization. God's law given to this effect is of a preventive nature of conflicts that may arise from the exercise of the will to power and aspirations. However, what is said of the justice scale higher and broader divine law given to all humanity finds application in diplomatic and political relations between the individual members of a community and between nations on a global scale. Without this rule of justice indeed the weak suffer arbitrarily from the powerful and life would be impossible. Similarly weak nations would be taken hostage by the whims of the great imperialist and expansionist dictatorship and suffer even the risk of extinction.

In a second step the assimilation of corruption, injustice is addressed under the more concrete and more familiar breaches equity, understood as a rule to guide the actions of those responsible to impose sentences. By virtue of the equal dignity of rights and duties enjoyed by all human beings in God's plan, by virtue of the laws specific to each state constantly reminded by various charters of rights and freedoms, the vigilantes are blind vis-à-vis the wealth or social status and will at all times concern for correctness in judgment: *You shall not commit unrighteousness in sentencing. Thou shalt not favor the small nor let yourself be dazzled by the great* (Lev. 19:15).

⁵⁶ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 996, § 52.

Cameroonian Bishops also are well aware of their environment, that wealth and social status are the two factors most likely to distort human judgments and to prevent the emergence and implementation of a more just and fraternal world. That's why they denounce and condemn the opportunity to corrupt leaders and judges who pervert the meaning of the law, relegates to the rank of human value, not estimated based on its inalienable dignity but it has thus the rule of iniquity:

*Magistrates, judges and prosecutors are selling their judgment to the highest bidder. Defendants who are unable to pay will spend years in prison, even without ever having been tried, in flagrant violation of human rights and laws. Our courts become more scarecrows for poor litigants and their relations.*⁵⁷

Finally, the phenomenon is discussed in the more limited context of interpersonal relationships as lacking honesty. Trade on the basis of deception, as well as the exploitation of misery, weakness or ignorance of the other vices is against all justice that falls under the bishops of Cameroon: *You do not make injustice (...) in measures of length, weight or capacity. You have just balances, just weights. You do not exploit a humble and poor employee, whether of your brothers or foreign residence home.*⁵⁸ Rampant corruption in Cameroon sociopolitical environments allows the Bishops to examine the conscience of all citizens about the common good and to question the lack of trust and sincerity that characterizes exchanges because of the perversion of social ties. *Corruption creates a climate of suspicion and mistrust between individuals, condemned to live in fear and insecurity*⁵⁹.

3.4 Effects of corruption in public sector in Cameroon

To describe the effects of corruption in the public space, Cameroonian Bishops use two categories: the indispensability of the rule of law and its corollary, which is the common good, understood as normative around which human society is organized and built. The pastoral letter of 3 September 2000, generally has its effects on society as a whole, but the document does not state absolutely any distinction or classification levels, clarifications that suggest that some sectors are more severely affected than others. However, the document seems to be some subtle gradation targeting some sensitive sectors, probably because they directly engage the State: *this form of corruption is the most expensive in our country and at the award published (...) the form of the most*

⁵⁷ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 992, § 28.

⁵⁸ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 999, § 11.

⁵⁹ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 988, § 5.

*serious corruption in our country lies in our judicial system that has yet to mission fairness to prevail.*⁶⁰

3.4.1 Corruption in the political sphere

At the political sphere, there is a manipulation of the state which affects its ability to legislate and gradually become the property of those who use them when they are supposed to ideally serve the nation. Social inequalities and disparities between regions are increasing due to the distortion of resource allocation that follows. Corruption ruins the ability to regulate the state, the latter as a puppet becomes unable to state the law and its role as an arbiter between the competing interests of citizens which is its responsibility. In fact, since corruption is able to interfere in relations between the state and citizens, hidden structures through which it operates succeeds more often to take the place of the latter, and may even dictate laws in the appearance of legality:

*Living among the people of God entrusted to us, we are forced to admit, every day, all around us, violations more egregious human rights: the poor, the weak helpless are delivered to the arbitrariness of unscrupulous officials, officers of the police or even characters with poorly defined, covered or mantle of the party, or a mysterious impunity scandal.*⁶¹

Perversion resulting from corruption, undermines the credibility of the State both internally and externally and increases the level of civil society, institutional mistrust up to and disinterest and disgust vis-à-vis political affairs and disregard legitimate structures. This is the case when citizens disillusioned by a judicial system itself, wield corruption by using nicknames devoid of legitimacy to protect themselves and their property. The result in this case is none other than the violation of rights and freedoms burst:

*And when people lose confidence in the judiciary, it is justice itself. The arbitrariness is established. As a consequence we are visible in the replacement of the formal justice by mob justice. Cameroonians complain that the bandits arrested are released without justice being applied.*⁶²

When laws are violated, arbitrariness sets in. One inevitably leads to a progressive loss of meaning of the law.

3.4.2 Loss of sense of legality

Normalization of illegal behavior that eventually turns incivility then shows that corruption prevents the realization of even being a citizen. In fact I must say that corruption is primarily an

⁶⁰ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 991, § 23 et p. 992, § 28.

⁶¹ National Episcopal Conference. *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on the causes of the economic crisis*, extract the original text of the Secretariat of the Episcopal Conference, published in *L'Effort Cameroon. Documentation Catholique*, number 2010 of 15 July 1990, p. 709, § 15.

⁶² *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 992, § 28.

anomaly as such it cannot develop freely and outside normative frameworks. Montesquieu already pointed out that the desire for transgression of the law is so powerful that man is able to use this to corrupt. Also as an instrument of justice the authority of the rule of law appears as one of its preferred prey if not the first.

Indeed, justice ruined itself by the practice of corruption is unfit to fight, and especially to fulfill its essential function, namely to right and punish acts of corruption: *Few are those who still believe in the ability of some courts of justice honestly.*⁶³ That is why the Bishops argue that *"the form of the most serious corruption in our country lies in our judicial system that has yet to rule equity.*⁶⁴

This loss of meaning of the legality of the state apparatus is accompanied by another loss: criterion and standards of quality that only can guarantee the objectivity of the rule of law. We understand that public works are always of poor quality and that the investments themselves are not subject to regulatory standards. Lost standards then extend to the whole of life and relativism strikes all values since everything is cash. Just promise money or indeed even to cross the doors that once could only be done by the excellent and competent. The real culprits were released by the court, or at least what remains of it and the innocent and helpless without money can rot in prison even without trial.

Level of education is not enough to have to pass an exam or competition. Monetize to be sure to be among the winners. Besides enough money to buy examiners who feel no mood to forge notes or minutes to get the result. At the public at the entrance and inside, competence is replaced by money or sex, and promotions to positions of responsibility are made on the basis of arbitrary:

*The administrative staff assignments and access to positions of responsibility are often negotiated rates agreed by or on the basis of belonging to the network load operation. There is even some official examinations and entrance examinations in high schools, which are sometimes replaced by studies folder.*⁶⁵

And when the rule is arbitrary, the daily injustices demobilize a large part of officials who know that the rewards will always go to those sponsors. These wonder so why engage in a battle whose outcome is lost to them in advance, and why not better imitate others. In this way, the risk is great that corruption would have the path to social success.

⁶³ *Idem.*

⁶⁴ *Idem.*

⁶⁵ *Idem.*

*When corruption becomes a commonplace way of life, practiced by most in all good conscience, one who protests comes to wonder if he commits an injustice against his family, by depriving a right which all others use.*⁶⁶

3.4.3 Subversion of worship merit

It is clear that when corruption is rampant, it is never the best that are selected to fill positions of responsibility, but those richer and more adept at corruption. The relevance of the question of the role of the state in the functioning of society here allows the Bishops of Cameroon to query about the quality of performance of the country in the long term:

*Our youth must repeat, is thus increasingly convinced that success in less effort and research excellence in the ability to use its power and its equity to corrupt.*⁶⁷

However, assuming that the poor who trade places at the entrance of schools, ultimately become leaders and officials cannot be more sincere and objective in claiming that the work on sustainability and not death of the system of corruption that they have become what they are: corrupt officials or corrupt.

Hervé Magnouloux then noted that reforms in the fight against corruption are often unsuccessful because the profiteers of corruption were organized to keep the *goose that lays the golden eggs*.⁶⁸ Also questioning the academic value scrolls obtained, the bishops will worry at the same time about the future of the nation, thinking that the student of today is the corrupting citizen or the Minister corrupter of tomorrow:

*But what is the real value of such diplomas, since in reality these fraudsters have not learned or acquired any jurisdiction? What future are we preparing? What elites are we training?*⁶⁹

3.4.4 Distributive Injustice of the State

According to the bishops in the economic sphere corruption is at the root of the poor production system and the services and the achievement of public investment projects. It induces therefore budget increases, the costs of which are often attributed to the entire population, through the reduction of public spending on the one hand and increasing taxes on the other hand. This weakens the ability of the income distribution of the state and unfit to serve as a real lever for

⁶⁶ ACERAC, "Human rights: The peace and security in Central Africa". Final Document, p.56 quoted by *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, op. cit.*, p. 990, § 19.

⁶⁷ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 991, § 26.

⁶⁸ Magnouloux, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

⁶⁹ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 992, § 26.

takeoff and the economic seeds: *Through our corruption, our waste and our diversion, we are also ourselves responsible for underdevelopment of our country.*⁷⁰

For this purpose, the system of public procurement has emerged as the case most likely to reveal the negative aspects of corruption in the allocation of resources in general and in particular of material resources. Public procurement suggests also the pulse of the failure of the state to assist in the search for the common good. Professor Dieudonné Emmanuel Kaldjob did not hesitate to call it *main platform of the scam. It is, he adds, the domain of definition of masterly suspicious transactions of the state, men of state and government.*⁷¹

Indeed, as we can see, the life and nourishment of corruption are secret because it is itself a secret pact. It is the secrets and dirty tricks that characterize governance of a corrupt country. Transparency would be suicidal because it would reduce the opportunities for corruption. The structures of corruption among companies are like a cobweb infesting the state apparatus and specializing in encouraging illegal information. They fraudulently access information at key points of the government, allowing them to use that information, often with the help of accomplices, to fudge procedures and gain markets without competing offers.

In fact, they are aware of their incompetence and cannot venture to face others. They fear competition. *In a battle with unequal weapons indeed, the weakest often cannot hope to have the strongest reason that using deception or mercenaries*⁷². We see publicly when competition is engaged to fill a position. Poor officials have often resorted to trickery or seek support from influential people. Public investment then reaches a high level unrelated to real needs, because these corrupt companies exert pressure on the government in favor of the projects most profitable for personal gain. They do not provide for the interest of the community.

Those that generate corruption most are those expected to be the best and generate bribes beside the huge shortfalls of the revenue of the state. To this end, corruption is easier in large projects, such as weapons procurements which are mostly covered in secrecy, which are more likely to favor a large drain of wealth public in one fell swoop. The real needs are hidden and replaced by artificial needs. Corruption thrives where political steering of resources within the state apparatus is inadequate, lacking economic reforms, social changes and a normative framework. In the absence of internal structures that define the objectives to enable the state to respond effectively to the real

⁷⁰ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 993, § 36

⁷¹ Kaldjob, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

⁷² Severin Mawulolo Gakpé, "Approach and analysis methods proposed by states and international institutions to combat corruption in corruption" in *Stop corruption... Stop Develops homeland*, Regional Episcopal Conference of West Africa Francophone CEREAO Publishing, October 2008, p. 63.

needs of people, non-priority spending thrives and ghosts project are simply to finance. According to Severin Mawulolo Gakpé:

Many white elephants in Africa, attest to the greed of our leaders who appreciate the project and benefit from the tip they gain and not in relation to the project's viability and feasibility objective.

Since artificial needs generally involve fictitious expenses that can be justified only by using false invoices and billing itself, it must on occasion engage professionals to succeed in publicly financing such operations:

In addition, according to current practice, public projects are privately overcharged – sometimes significantly. It is very easy to report the purchase of 50 tons of cement while only 20 or 30 tons will be used in the project. The rest will be stolen by the officials of the company and resold in the markets for their personal benefit.⁷³

It is therefore clear that when corruption is rampant, it obscures the rules, and immerses people in uncertainty that cannot escape any sphere of social life. It obscures even the most firmly established rules. Speculation emerges as one mode of operation.

3.4.5 The market value of perversion

In the commercial sphere, corruption interferes with transactions and creates confusion between public and private because of the politicization of trade. This control of the state is at the origin of the formation of monopolies and oligopolies that lead to the privatization of entire sectors of the national economy, as a result the products of these companies are often of poor quality since they lack free competition and competitiveness.

Instead of considering only the competence and reliability of the company offering its services, we look first at how much it is willing to pay under the table. It starts well, as some have said thank you to the adventurers often participating in tenders – incompetent people whose only activity is wasting state funds.⁷⁴

Petty corruption is certainly the most widespread. It accounts for the degradation of public morality induced by official paternalistic public scandals:

Encouraged by these examples, state officials engaged in corrupting all their multiple bargaining. Customs and police extort users at the edge of the road, so that the regulation prohibits them from

⁷³ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 991, § 23.

⁷⁴ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 999, § 23.

*accepting donations in the exercise of their functions. In turn, teachers, and principals of secondary schools and professionals demand money to register a student or to bring him up in class.*⁷⁵

This review of the adverse effects of corruption as highlighted by the Cameroonian Bishops in their letter is one measure the severity of such a phenomenon but also reveals its complexity. Corruption appears finally as a real obstacle to the achievement of the political community as willed by the Creator for all men. All men are brothers and have the same rights under the equal dignity of their image and likeness of God.

When corruption breeds exclusion, it reveals itself as the negation of God's guarantee to all men in a land where all men are the means of their own subsistence. If you consider that any denial of the will of God is a sin, it is clear that according to the Bishops corruption is sin too. The highly complex causes relate to other factors whose mechanisms could escape its authors. That's why the Bishops of Cameroon believe it could be better treated without correlating the known mechanisms that Bishops, resorting to theological vocabulary call "*structures of sin*". These mechanisms or "*structures of sin*" allow Bishops to respond to corruption on strictly a theological level.

3.5 Structure of sin and corruption in Cameroon

The notion of "*structures of sin*" is very complex. Here it will be treated narrowly trying to establish a typology with the themes of collective responsibility and individual responsibility in the expansion and persistence of corruption in Cameroon.

*Corruption and embezzlement of public property are part of what Pope John Paul II called social sin in his Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio and paenitentia (On Reconciliation and Penance)*, and in the Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo rei socialis (On the social commitment of the Church) on the structures of sin.*⁷⁶*

In a first step, we try to develop an understanding of this concept. In a second step we see how the Bishops appropriate this theological notion to account for corruption and demystify structural mechanisms of sin, including social scandals of tribalism and external debt.

3.5.1 The notion of "*structure of sin*" in theology and *Diakonia*

⁷⁵ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 991, § 25.

⁷⁶ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 988, § 8.

Man, created in the image and likeness of God, is called to participate in the divine life of his Creator.⁷⁷ This participation, according to Pierre Gaudette, is an acceptance plan of love which God wished to associate with all men:

*Revealer of the Father, Jesus reveals the fullness of what God is Love. Him, everyone is called to enter into an intimate dialogue with the Father, and to accept the salvation announced.*⁷⁸

As such, sin appears as the refusal of the loving plan of the Father, and therefore as the rejection of God himself. Gaudette goes on to say that breaking the relationship with God leads to de facto, the deterioration of the relationship with one's neighbor, which inevitably leads to assert that there is also offense against God when the relationship with the next is violated:

The rejection of God is sin also when manifested through the refusal of the next, as well as through the refusal to respond to the questioning of moral values".⁷⁹ In fact, the relationship with the neighbor becomes even a privileged place of encounter with God, because "human relations are inserted into relationship with God".⁸⁰

Social life is not something superficial for man: it is the exchange with others, through reciprocal duties, through dialogue with the brothers that he develops all his capabilities and can respond to his vocation.⁸¹

As such, the person cannot logically be conceived only through its relation to others which require him to maintain relations of reciprocity and interdependence, which promote the participation of everyone in the group life, and calls for a duty of solidarity. Clearly, the human being is in a dual relationship: first with God vertically, then with others horizontally.

Indeed, it is not first with each individual that God made a covenant, but with the whole people of Israel. And it is with the people as a whole it is entered into a relationship.⁸²

Thus, as the glory may belong to a group, even so, it would be no exaggeration to say that sin is not that of an individual, but that of his social group, and extension, that of Man.

The collective sense of sin is not new, it is the same found repeatedly in the covenant between Yahweh and the people of Israel, where the responsibility for the actions falls not to the authors, but to all the people. *Tell them thus: that the nation does not listen to the voice of the Lord*

⁷⁷ Gn 1, 26.

⁷⁸ Pierre Gaudette, *Sin*, Ottawa, Novalis, 1991, p. 59.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁸⁰ *Idem.*

⁸¹ *Gaudium et Spes*, n°25, §1

⁸² Gaudette, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

their God, who does not accept his lessons" (Jr7:28s). In the same way, the Lord is as a jealous God who punishes "the iniquity of the father's son among three and four generations" (Exodus 20: 4).

3.5.2 Community Spirit

The New Testament puts more light on this community orientation of all human beings: *Through Christ, indeed, God is a new people with whom he enters into a new and eternal covenant.*⁸³ This is certainly the sense of sin of Israel together as the People of God with an individual consciousness, notwithstanding any feature which suggests the existence of consciousness due to structures and human organizations. Anyone could speak of the sins of modern times, or once the trivial example of the sin of Greek civilization. We understand that John Paul II, wanting to denounce patterns of social behavior unfit for the development of peoples chose to designate as the overall concept of "structures of sin".

These structures eventually designate the *situations of injustice, institutionalized violence*⁸⁴ that devalue human beings by placing them in situations in total contradiction with God's plan. They are also gross violations of human rights that the Holy Father wanted to expose. It goes without saying that this statement presents the danger that it may obscure any sense of individual responsibility, but at the same time allows the problem of the balance necessary to define the responsibility of persons in such systems. Indeed, *"individual responsibility and collective responsibility have no other purpose than to afford to live in a humane and just solidarity"*.⁸⁵

3.6 Appropriation of the Bishops of Cameroon

3.6.1 A vision of society, a community of destiny

The Bishops of Cameroon employed the concept of *"structure of sin"* based on their vision of society as a community of destiny. Indeed, concern for others and its extension to the community find themselves in a starting point that is the love of oneself and his family and then the community. In this way, he was born and raised in the consciousness of people the idea of belonging to a common destiny and duty to ensure the conditions for a good life and enjoyment for everyone:

Where the necessary assistance is reciprocally afforded from love, gratitude, friendship and esteem, the society flourishes and all are happy therein. All the different members are attached to each

⁸³ Gaudette, *ibid.*, p. 66.

⁸⁴ M. Nebel, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

⁸⁵ Jean Palsterman, "The representation of collective sin, an opportunity or a risk for solidarity?", In Pierre Watté and food. "Sin and collective responsibility", Publication of Saint Louis University Faculties, Brussels, 1986, p. 125.

*other by ties of love nice and affection, they are somehow attracted towards a common center by mutual good deeds.*⁸⁶

It is this requirement of communion which in turn implies the sharing of such resources, thus recalling the principle of the universal destination of goods. The Bishops in Cameroon reiterate this principle when they requires sharing as a "cure for greed".

*The goods of the earth are not made for selfish and personal profit, they are meant to be shared and serve the happiness of all. If I accumulate useless and superfluous wealth, whereas my brother, my neighbor, lives in need, I created a situation of injustice. And this is of course even more true if I stole my neighbor's wealth through corruption.*⁸⁷

This duty of charity when not lived entails forms of exclusion which prevent the realization of the political community and a degradation of the relational fabric. These forms of exclusion are integral structures and economic organizations that are socially, culturally and politically oriented exclusively to the benefit of a few. These structures of sins are mechanisms of social organizations promoting inequities and social differences. They do this in opposition to a true awareness of the universal common good. The Bishops of Cameroon denounce them as within the individual or collective moral responsibility and not a fatality:

*If the current structure attributed to difficulties of various kinds, it is not out of place to speak of "structures of sin" which (...) are caused by personal sin, and thus always linked to the concrete acts of people who are born, consolidate them and make it difficult to abolish.*⁸⁸

For the bishops these structures take concrete shape in forms such as tribalism and external debt.

3.6.2 Tribalism - The expression of structure of sin

The essence of tribalism is the promotion of a tribe or ethnic group and its members to the exclusion of others. This is the reason why the Bishops of Cameroon name tribalism in their condemnation as a clear expression of a sin of structure. Tribalism hurts the principle of equal membership of all Cameroonians to the same fate of all legitimate participation in public life. Roots *cultural, economic, political and religious*⁸⁹ invest all spheres of social life. Culturally, this practice is to discard all those who do not share the same linguistic features, traditions and customs and to promote both excessive and exclusive ethnicity. Politically and economically, everything here is made to promote the members of his tribe in a special way. On the religious level, we see the

⁸⁶ Caroline Guibet Lafaye, *Justice as a component of good order*, Québec, Presses de Laval of the Dalhousie University, 2006, p. 45.

⁸⁷ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 993, § 35.

⁸⁸ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 993, § 36.

⁸⁹ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 240, § 2.

perversion of pastoral workers who become accomplices of *certain attitudes or behaviors they should denounce.*⁹⁰

Tribalism and corruption are closely linked, and for several reasons.

When the governance of a state in Cameroon is held by select ethnic groups which lack objectivity in supervision, sharing and managing the public affairs, then it is subject to arbitrariness and nepotism. This means that tribalism *compromises the frank and constructive dialogue between different ethnic groups, tribalism and ethnic animosities maintain and prevent the construction of a true national unity, even when it does not destabilize political life and does not cause civil wars.*⁹¹

Embezzlement of public funds and other acts of mismanagement and favoritism, can be explained by the desire of the agent holder of an office to tap into the public treasury, accessing human and material resources to serve his tribe. The silence of the government vis-à-vis such situations lead the Bishops to conclude that tribalism is the basis of corruption and the game is expensive: *The political and ethnic interests are also at the root of moral misery that we know today. Tribalism is closely linked to corruption and its consequences such as poverty and moral misery.*⁹²

One can legitimately argue that which breeds corruption is closely linked to tribalism and tribalism is the highest fruits of corruption. Corruption in return maintains tribalism. The two are closely related and they belong to the "*structures of sin*" becomes more evident. Tribalism is fundamentally wrong and indefensible in that it carries within itself the seeds of division and hatred and does not promote unity of all peoples. The Bishops pointed out the unfortunate examples from among the more spectacular of the two ethnic conflicts between Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda, and between the Bosnian Serbs in Yugoslavia to illustrate the tragedy that can occur. In reality, it is a more selfish and homogeneous expression of particular group's creating and manipulating illusions within people for personal gains. The reasons and after effects can be both political and economic.

*This evil has its roots in the political interests of a few ambitious people. They want to exploit the tribal feeling to get the lowest political power, to serve the common good. Those who propose the idolatry of ethnicity really want to protect their group or get rich quickly?*⁹³

⁹⁰ *Idem*

⁹¹ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 241, § 4.

⁹² *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 999, § 33.

⁹³ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 241 § 4.

This leads us to the Bishops statement that tribalism is a manifestation of the "structures of sin" as spoken of by John Paul II, because its harmful character ends up not hitting the same individual consciousness and collective, to become something quite trivial.

Unlike tribalism, tribal consciousness could be defined as the feeling and the pride we feel belonging to a tribe and that in itself is the beginning of a certain national consciousness. In this regard the Bishops say:

*The diversity of Cameroon is its wealth, not its weakness. Be proud of the exceptional variety of languages and cultures of the country and convince his children is a noble reaction. Being proud of the greatness of others is nobler still. Each of our races has magnitude, values and wealth to communicate and share.*⁹⁴

My aim is to say that national unity can only be possible if it grows in people a sense of belonging to an ethnic group, and the will to overcome it in order to reach the sublime and nobler mind of belonging to a nation. That is to be conscious of the common good of the nations as individual and also working collectively for the good of all. It seems that this is the best way to resist the winds of globalization and homogenization due to the loss of minority and isolated entities. Love of tribe is ultimately good but also *love your neighbor as yourself is also a good thing as requested by the Gospel (cf. Mk 12:31)*".⁹⁵

3.6.3 External debt: sinful?

The problem of corruption, as the Bishops say, can be linked to external debt due to the global economic crisis of 1987, which had devastating effects on the Cameroonians who were plunged into unacceptable poverty by this.

*The church whose mission is to proclaim the good news of salvation to all men, cannot remain indifferent to the cumbersome and painful events that the crisis poses on individuals and on many often innocent families.*⁹⁶

Bishops then make the observation that the economic crisis is the result of two factors: an unjust world economic order and faulty internal governance, one of whose manifestations is corruption.

Indeed, the current world economic order *based solely on profit, selfishness, exploitation of the poor, the weak and oppressed by the rich and powerful of this world*⁹⁷ does not allow countries

⁹⁴ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 241, § 5.

⁹⁵ *Idem.*

⁹⁶ Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption, p. 707, § 7.

whose economies are fragile to cope. Now, the problem is that wealthy countries do not help. They lend their money with exorbitant interest rates to these countries, and sometimes these high interest rates do not allow them to repay their debt or get out of their slump:

*Debtor countries find themselves in a vicious circle: they are condemned to pay for debts to move out to an ever larger resources that should be available for their consumption and domestic investment, which for their development*⁹⁸

The greatest problem with this is the fact that this state of affairs (debtor countries) obliges poor countries to borrow more instead of paying what they owe, they are often imposed more interest to pay sometimes because of the duration and the heaviness of the loan. To remedy this they get involved in corrupt methods within the country to be able to manage such huge debts. In this context they consider first their individual pockets before the common good. So much needs to be done to improve their situation. Debt only serves to worsen the situation and it creates new forms of dependency: *economic, political, cultural, and financial dependencies*.⁹⁹

The statement of the Bishops of Cameroon attracted the attention of various actors of international trade, calling into question the meaning of life and cooperation:

*The Christian sense of international solidarity requires that instead of debt, it should be a new world economic order to create new terms of trade based on justice, the spirit of sharing, interdependence and complementarity. There must be resolutely no to debt and yes to a new economic order that would allow us to sell our products of the soil and subsoil at fair value.*¹⁰⁰

Where corruption is rife and the country is heavily indebted, it is usually the poorest citizens who pay the highest tribute. In addition to not having access to basic services, they are often subject to conditions of life on the edge of the unacceptable. The Bishops recognize that the responsibility for such a state of affairs lies with their leaders but also in the actions of foreign powers.

*Structures of sin that have perverted international economic relations were also found in our country as a privileged field. It is well known that money for our debt is often wasted in the senseless war industry and the arms trade, in supporting oppressive regimes and social injustice of frantic megalomaniac tyrants, in drugs, in embezzlement of public funds (...).*¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ *Idem.*

⁹⁸ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 708, § 8.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, § 7.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, § 9.

¹⁰¹ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 709, § 11

This last point then allows Bishops to denounce the immoral and inhuman Cameroonian debt, not only because of the harsh conditions which usually attached, but also because of the infamous structural adjustment measures that often have devastating consequences for poor families: *The debt service can be paid at the price of asphyxia in the economy of a country and no government can morally demand of people privations incompatible with human dignity.*¹⁰²

In sum, the Bishop's point out that the worldwide political and economic situation is unfair. It creates debt and is another disguised form of exploitation of man by man. No wonder then, that there are cleverly constructed "structures of sin". It is therefore urgent to address the international solidarity to be more just. These denunciations by the bishops need to take measures of a social approach of corruption in Cameroon and go beyond mere words toward more action. The Bishops also recommend a set of preventive and curative measures to those who join, also supported by the NGO Transparency International and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Chapter 4: CORRUPTION IN THE CHURCH AND THE PROPHETIC ROLE OF DIAKONIA

Many different types of churches exist in African countries. There are majority churches, states churches, free churches, migrants' churches, family churches; missionary churches (Catholic, Protestant, Presbyterian, Baptist, Lutheran and Methodist) and other independent churches. So-called family churches are sometimes managed by members as private businesses and as such represent an opening for corrupt practices in churches. Some of these churches, except missionary churches and state churches, have neither structure nor mission and have varying levels of financial transparency. These two types of churches, missionaries and state, are less involved in corrupt activities in Cameroon.

However, there are African independent churches (EIA/AIC) that make up a popular movement. The Christian churches are influenced also by Hebrew beliefs and traditions. A lot of Pentecostal and Christ based churches are now present in all the country. Their members are generally poor and uneducated people and mostly located in rural areas and urban slums. These churches have taken root in Cameroon, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and the Congo Basin. Currently they are widespread throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

¹⁰² *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 708, § 8.

The EIA divide themselves into several factions: the "nationalist" or "Ethiopian" churches who say they are mandated by God to reverse the policy and all forms of colonial domination; and churches called "spiritual" , also known as Zionist and Apostolic, in which the authority and power of the Holy Spirit is celebrated in close symbiosis with the African culture. More recently, there are also native African Pentecostal churches, which also call on the Holy Spirit. But these recent Pentecostal churches are oriented more towards a modern globalized world. Most of the teachings of these churches are not based on the inspired word of the Bible but on their doctrines that will open ways for their achievements both economically and financially.

This allusion to the different churches present in Africa and Cameroon is not trivial, because it allows us to understand the extent of corruption in the churches related to the ratio of these churches.

4.1 *Diakonia*: Significance, meaning and scope

The renewed interest which we are witnessing today for the ministry of *Diakonia* can be traced by these three factors:

- The commoditization and precarious living conditions related to the global economic situation and the disintegration of the welfare state in which we are faced today, with new challenges make it very important to take measures.
- The fact that the issue of diaconal ministry was not sufficiently studied, at least in most Lutheran churches. The constitutions lack references to diaconal ministry.
- Finally, it was appropriate after a number of years for a "wake-up call" to allow churches in the Federation to reclaim issues about what *Diakonia* is all about and to seriously reconsider their commitment.

It is these three factors that led to the rediscovery of *Diakonia* as an *intrinsic element of the being church*.¹⁰³ This means that *Diakonia* is not a second choice, as if part of practical theology, it was only the labor sector. It is theologically speaking for the other, the suffering man, it speaks of God and through it, and God speaks. *Diakonia* is an integral part of the being and mission of the church. As rightly said by Dietrich Bonhoeffer: *the Church is the Church if she lives for others*.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ *Diakonia in Context. Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment. An LWF Contribution to the Understanding and Practice of Diakonia*. published by The Lutheran World Federation, Geneva (Switzerland), 2009. p. 29.

¹⁰⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Nature of the Church*, Éditions Labor et Fides, 1990, Geneva, p. 35.

But before being an act of the church, *Diakonia* is a gift from Jesus Christ himself. From a scriptural perspective, the Lutheran approach is based primarily on biblical texts through which God invites us to see and think. Already in the Old Testament, the prophets' invectives like Isaiah (Is 10.12-17) on justice, show that *Diakonia* is the condition of true worship of God. As for the New Testament, most of the regional synods anchor their thoughts on the fact that the love of God is inseparable from the love of neighbor.

This reference to the biblical texts suggests several different but complementary ways of perceiving *Diakonia*:

- Diaconal commitment can be understood as obedience to Christ's command. Several resolutions cite the Johannine order in which Jesus gave to his disciples the commandment of love and service: "As I have loved you, that you love one another" (Jn 13:34). Other theologians refer to the order that Jesus gives to the master of law at the conclusion of the parable of the Good Samaritan: "Go, and do thou likewise" (Lk 10:37).

- Obedience to the orders of the Master is made possible because Christians and the Church have the *Diakonia* of Christ, who gave his life as a sacrifice for us and invites us to do the same. *Diakonia* is then seen as man's response to the *Diakonia* of God, a way to express our gratitude to the God who liberates us by offering us free salvation. *Diakonia* is all praise and response to the first love of God through us. This means that the reflection on *Diakonia* excludes any idea of justification by deeds. As noted by Isabelle Grellier, *Our service does not have its origin in itself. It is received as a gift of God in Christ: Responding to the love received and in practical recognition.*¹⁰⁵

- *Diakonia* as recognition of God's love is an eminently free act by the Christian. Before an act of man, *Diakonia* is a fruit of the grace that is given to us to be of the new humanity, according to the letter to the Ephesians that says: *created according to God in righteousness and holiness and in truth. (Eph 4, 24)*

What is true of the *Diakonia* of Christ is also true for the ministry of the church and what is true for the church, is true for each of its members. It is in this sense that the Lutheran World Federation says that *Diakonia* is an integral part of the life and mission of the church. It is through the office of deacon in conjunction with other functions that the church is called to manifest her own identity. The service is not a simple consequence but an indispensable foundation for the establishment of the church. In other words, the church is and is born if it is

¹⁰⁵ Isabelle Grellier, *Social Action and recognition for diaconal theology*, Strasbourg, Oberlin, 2003, p. 165.

diaconal. As also emphasized by K. Barth: *a community without diaconal responsibility would not be a Christian community.*¹⁰⁶

This *Diakonia* of the church is derived from the gospel. It is not an option in the spiritual point of view, neither theologically or ecclesiological. There is thus a complementary function in it: *the proclamation of the love of God cannot be separated from love of neighbor.*

This love of neighbor is lived first in the church as a Christian brotherhood and will not be an illusion if the ecclesial community did not favor this unstructured everyday *Diakonia*, consisting of small attentions towards each other. It will be a community and place for of reconciliation and sharing for all. The ecclesial community is the best place to live *Diakonia* in the Church, a little easier than elsewhere, remove the masks and recognize without (much) risk our fundamental poverty: we need God and each other. There is therefore a need in the church to work with a community dimension; the need to develop concern for others in our communities.

This *Diakonia* between members of the church must then be open to the outside and not be limited only to the ecclesial community. Intra-ecclesial solidarity must spill over to those outside the churches - even if they have not the slightest desire to enter. Jesus invites servant to service without distinction, without borders, without limits. *It is also the home of the brothers and sisters in Christ from elsewhere that the issue is embodied in the diaconal Church community.*¹⁰⁷

If we define *Diakonia* as we have just done, it raises the question of the specificity of *Diakonia*, that of its roots. Can we put this in specific actions taken from the motivations of the actors?

It appears that not always, same as indicated by G. Delteil and P. Keller: *The action is always ambiguous, always mixed motivations, the institutions never mirror of the Gospel.*¹⁰⁸ This means that *Diakonia* can never be a subjective construction. It should rather be defined on an objective basis, which is the gospel: *Finally can we really situate the specificity of Diakonia elsewhere other than the Gospel itself? [...] The point track is the word; the track created in us*

¹⁰⁶ Karl Barth, *Dogmatique*, t. 25, Éditions Labor et Fides, 1962, p. 241.

¹⁰⁷ Fritz Lienhard, *Suffering and human cross of Christ*, Lyon, Olivetan, 2006, p. 95.

¹⁰⁸ G. Delteil et P. Keller *Church and disseminated. Roaming and rooting*, Paris, Cerf - Novalis - Lumen Vitae - LF, 1995, p. 99.

can neither be objectified nor claimed. Such is the ambiguous status of all Christian *Diakonia*.¹⁰⁹

The only specificity of *Diakonia* is in the Gospel, and only the Gospel, of which we are not masters. It is the paradigm of diaconal action: *The specificity of the social commitment of the Church is seen in her ties with the Gospel in which it is based.*¹¹⁰ Based on the gospel, *Diakonia* is also rooted in the celebration of it through prayer and liturgy: *Diakonia finds its source in the spiritual life, worship, liturgical actions.*¹¹¹ This means ultimately that "the specificity of the diaconate approach is not what is done, but the fact that she lives driven by the worshiping community and she calls in return."

This grounding in the Gospel necessarily influences how we understand the objectives of *Diakonia*. It is the human being in all its dimensions, which is the heart. Human dignity, in the eyes of God, does not depend on its performance. *Diakonia* therefore has plans to "restore human dignity", and that is what she works for and what is needed in the situation of Cameroon; the presence of restoring *Diakonia* to fight against corruption.

If *Diakonia* intends to restore dignity, to assert their donations to give them the ability to be subjects in both church and society, it appears that it is an effective way to fight against the pandemic that is corruption, which as illuminated above is a serious attack on human dignity. If so, at what level should we situate this *Diakonia* capacity to eradicate this scourge? What theological aspect of *Diakonia* can be invoked and what would make it an effective fight against corruption?

The answer to these questions comes from the three theological dimensions of diaconal mission as outlined in *Diakonia in Context*, namely "transformation, reconciliation and revitalization". These reflect of the mission of God as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. Their Christological foundation refers to the process of the triple mission of Christ: The way of the incarnation, the way of the cross and the resurrection. If these three dimensions of diaconal mission in themselves are inseparable then they all are likely to start in the contribution of *Diakonia* in the fight against corruption. It is the paradigm of *the transformation of structures, which will be an answer to this mission. Indeed, while Diakonia begins its unconditional*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

¹¹⁰ *Idem.*

¹¹¹ Richard Paquier, *Treaty of liturgy. Essay on the foundation and structure of worship*, Neuchâtel, Delachaux and Niestlé, 1954, p. 144.

*services to the neighbor in need, it leads to social change that will inevitably restore reform and transform.*¹¹²

4.2 Diakonia, an instrument for the church

"Transformation" is the first directional basis of diaconal mission. It is presented as follows: *A continuous process of reorientation of life that is with all its aspirations, ideologies, structures and values. Transformation is an ongoing process of rejection of everything that can dehumanize and desecrate life, a process that adheres to everything that accepts the sanctity of life, which recognizes gifts of each and every one each and working for peace and justice in society.*¹¹³

This means that the diaconal mission of the church as it relates to the transformation is addressed primarily to individuals and structures in the society. Within the meaning of the words of Bonhoeffer, it is to see things from below, to be in the *perspective of the excluded, suspects, maltreated, the powerless, the oppressed and insulted in short be in the perspective of those who suffer.*¹¹⁴

The transformation mission is not new in the church. It has always been part of its mode of action. In the early church it was the responsibility of the deacon in the church to bring disputes relating to this social injustice for a restoration of social bonds. Classical Greek also used the word "*diakonia*" to describe the mission of *a go-between, a messenger, or even as an ambassador who has been mandated to restore relationships, to heal and to reconcile.*¹¹⁵ We conclude that *(t)he task of being a bridge-builder is integral to the very nature of Diakonia.*¹¹⁶ It is said more explicitly in these words:

*All diaconal actions, including those addressing the immediate needs, are embedded in a comprehensive mandate of building relationships. As a diaconal method, accompaniment of follow-up seeks to overcome isolation and exclusion, and also to identify pathways that may offer opportunities for broader sharing in mutual solidarity.*¹¹⁷

This transformation is fundamentally ordered to the justification of the sinner of sanctifying grace as a believer in Christ. It intends to unite the person *at the death, the burial and resurrection*

¹¹² *Prophetic Diakonia : "For the Healing of the World"*, p. 6.

¹¹³ *Diakonia*, p. 32.

¹¹⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and papers from prison*, in Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Works*, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2010, p. 52.

¹¹⁵ *Idem*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 47

of Christ, so that as Christ resurrected, it can lead a new life (Romans 6, 4-13).¹¹⁸ It is indeed a Pentecostal experience that continues in the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit.

This transformative dimension of *Diakonia* is the point of impact on corruption that we presented as an injustice and a grave violation of human rights. Faced with this corruption, the church faithful to her transformative mission is called to remain faithful to the contexts to penetrate in depth, identifying and fully sharing the fate of all those who are victims of this immoral practice. The church must therefore in a diaconal spirit be in total solidarity with those whom corruption has isolated and dehumanized by the unjust economic and political system. Give them hope and comfort. The Church is thus called to be the Church of the victims of corruption and awaken consciousness of those who practice and encourage such ills. This is what we read elsewhere in prophetic *Diakonia* in these terms:

*With regard to governments, churches need to serve a conscience, challenging patterns of corruption and insisting that governments carry out their appropriate, God-given responsibility to provide for the basic needs and the political, economic, social and cultural rights of their people. Churches should become more proactively involved in challenging, changing and shaping public policies toward these ends. At same time, churches should keep a critical distance from government so as not be coopted.*¹¹⁹

In denouncing and rejecting the structures and practices of corruption in both the public and private sectors, as sinful and destructive in society, the Church walks with Christ on the road to the cross. The goal here is to promote transparent governance at all levels of the society in changing power relations and structures that promote corruption.

Transformative dimension of *Diakonia* presents itself therefore as a *methodology and a priority item*¹²⁰ for the Church in its fight against corruption.

More so, while following the way of Christ in a broken and violent world as ours, the Church itself is subject to profound and often painful experiences. Before transforming the affected society or individuals, the church must be transformed positively herself and sometimes painfully have to give up the temptations of corruption to which she may be subjected.

4.3 Prosperity Gospel and corruption in the church

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹¹⁹ *Prophétic Diakonia*, p. 9.

¹²⁰ *Diakonia*, p. 46.

Both missions and churches are often themselves concerned with the problem of corruption. Indeed, the proliferation of churches in Africa, including in Cameroon, is an observable phenomenon and constantly growing. These new churches are placed in the category of "revival churches" and stand out from traditional or institutional churches mainly because they promise their followers a certain material prosperity in a continent plagued by extreme impoverishment. These emerging churches find their way as they intend to bring African solutions to unemployment, low income officials and social exclusion through the sharing of goods and strong solidarity. These churches are responding to the aspirations and postmodern neo-pragmatists who want to see the application of what works. As stated by Blaser Klauspeter, it follows that *the church as an institution undergoes a strong challenge so that its raison d'être and mission are continually resumed.*¹²¹

However, the growth of these new churches is their weaknesses as they are prisoners of what has been called the "prosperity gospel". *It is based on the promise of material prosperity and wealth to those who accept the Christian faith and contribute to the pastoral life of the church and contribute for the pastor's survival. The leaders of the Pentecostal churches live a lavish lifestyle with luxury cars, homes, and five star hotels for their evangelization missions and from their promises to the poor.*¹²²

This gospel has taken root especially in Cameroon and is a source of corruption and suffering for many Cameroonians already weakened by the daily misery. The leaders of these churches have replaced the witches and the marabouts who do not offer free services. Many of them are soaked in financial shenanigans and rob their followers by means of false theological doctrines. The "prosperity gospel" teaches that believers are entitled to the blessings, health and wealth and that they can obtain these blessings through positive confessions and seeding through the faithful payment of tithes and offerings.

We are here in the presence of a specific form of corruption that is simony, that is to say, the supply of sacraments and sacramental given freely by God to men against money or for money.

¹²¹ Klauspeter Blaser, *A church confession*, Geneva, Labor et Fides, 1990, in Pierre Gisel and ali, *Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, Cerf, Paris, 1995, "ecclesiology".

¹²² Charles T. Crabtree, *The Contemporary Pastor*. Springfield, Missouri. Gospel Publishing House, 2000, p. 21.

It follows that these pastors are getting richer at the expense of their sheep and flocks in the name of services and divinations. This means that the proliferation of churches in Cameroon is a source of vast system of corruption is a deadly stream. The present situation in Cameroon of these apostles of the “prosperity gospel” promoting personal enrichment and preaching greedy unscrupulously flattering draws an axis of evil that encourages Cameroonian men to escape dangerously to that. The challenge for these vendors’ illusion remains the financial side, the socio-economic exploitation of the poorly informed faithful. The corruption of the Church in Cameroon is orchestrated by managers and executives whose control is not democratic, and who accumulate excessive power or developing genuine nepotism. This corruption in the church is exercised at several levels:

- Improper use of church property
- Unfair labor standards for employees of the church, such as failure to pay competitive salaries and contributions to the pension fund of the church staff
- The payment of bribes, kickbacks by members of the church to be elected bishops, elders and leaders of hospitals, schools and colleges run by the church
- The appointment of church leaders because they are the founders of the church and not in consideration of their theological training
- Misappropriation of funds for church projects
- The unauthorized sale of land belonging to the church for private and at a price that is lower than the prevailing market
- The punishment of whistleblowers who report acts of corruption.

It is important to note here that there is also some co-responsibility of the donor organizations who offer to churches that are involved in corruption or at least suspected of corrupt acts. This is seen when they continue supporting such churches without the knowledge of their doubtful functioning. Continued cooperation is then considered as an endorsement of corruption. In this case, we see how the organizations that provide assistance may represent themselves part of the problem of corruption. Donor organizations should know the various churches. They should hold them to a higher standard of scrutiny without which they can suspend or permanently discontinue the funding of these churches. What should the prophetic *Diakonia* do in this situation?

4.4 Diaconial measures to fight corruption

Numerous studies have shown the position of reverence, moral legitimacy and influence of the Church in Africa and the world. *The churches in both developed and developing countries in the developing world are well placed to lead the fight against corruption.*¹²³ That is why corruption in the church is very worrying because the church is considered from the point of view of the moral authority it represents. Corruption within the Church has the negative effect of damaging the credibility of the speech given by the representatives of the church.

And yet the *Diakonia* of the church in the fight against corruption is irreducible because those who attend and are active are also members of civil society. There is therefore a need for a consultative approach and collective efforts of different sectors of society such as NGOs, civil society and the church.

The *Diakonia* of the church should be thinking in terms of restoring moral leadership and spiritual authority in society. The church must find a balance between "excessive theological radicalism" which places the salvation of the material at the center of its mission and theological rigidity that denies the need for a constructive engagement with the political power.

Therefore a visionary *Diakonia* is important in a context of corruption that is aimed at reducing poverty and implementing the principles of good governance, empowerment of women, the restoration of human rights and morality, all on the basis of a theological, ecclesiological and ethical significance.

4.4.1 An appeal to Theology, Ecclesiology and Ethics

It is necessary to rethink the theological foundations to eliminate corruption which refuse to publicly dismantle heretical theologies such as the "prosperity gospel" that encourages corruption by its theological models of prosperity and leadership.

The fight against corruption can be rooted in a theological vision of the church. The church is not only united by "the vision, mission statements, but by the Spirit of Christ, which gives each member a common identity within the family of God".¹²⁴ This church is composed of men and women who live in a world whose realities are not foreign to them. This is why the mission of the church is to meet the challenges of social, economic and political issues that its members face in the world.

¹²³ Christoph Stuckelberger. *Corruption-Free Churches are Possible: Experiences, Values, Solutions*, Gloethics.net Focus 2, Geneva, 2010, p. 7.

¹²⁴ Eddie Gibbs. *The Church Next: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry*, Illinois, Intervarsity Press, 2000, p. 115.

According to Ferdinand Nwaigbo, the church is a caring community that cares about the people through its mission in the world. *Helping implies respect for the human person and the transcendent value of the human being as a creature of God with rights to respect and life.*¹²⁵ Research shows that one of the missions of the prophetic *Diakonia* is:

*To give hope to the world, where there is no hope, especially with regard to the poor. (...) The church is to evangelize the poor both through direct contact with them and the appropriate critic of government activities and policies that do not serve the interests of the people. The church is the community of hope.*¹²⁶

In addition, it is a *community of love which functions as an organ of expression of human values: the political, economic, social and cultural.*” Thus, *“the church enters the world, especially in its involvement in education, ministries related to health, the fight against social problems, (...) in the mission of the church, the poor occupy a preference. The church gives direction to the poor in their lives.*¹²⁷

The fight against corruption is therefore based on the diaconate for a healthy vision of the church and society. This fight continues with a theology of leadership since Christians do many functions within the society and must attest to the very heart of their professional backgrounds.

4.4.2 Leadership and Governance

David Fisher defines a leader as a person who engages in a relationship with other people for a specific purpose: *Influence their thoughts, behaviors, values and attitudes. Thus a bishop or pastor is a leader in the church. The qualities of a pastor and church leader described by Paul as someone who is "moderate, conscious, respectable, hospitable, (...), not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not lovers of money.*¹²⁸

These servants of Christ and stewards are basically models of moral integrity and critics of corruption in all its forms. More leadership is characterized by the sacrifice precisely related to the testimony of integrity that does not shrink from threat. Eddie Gibbs is right to say that these are *more scars than stars.*¹²⁹ Leadership is a solitary journey. This loneliness is the leader who is evading collective corruption, which requires the reporting of corrupt and also grants the forgiveness and restoration of the authors of corrupt practices once they regret their actions.

¹²⁵ Ferdinand Nwaigbo. *The Church and Repositioning the Maternal Care in Africa : A Project of the Millennium Development Goals*, Harpercollins Publishers, New York, 2010, p. 59.

¹²⁶ *Idem.*

¹²⁷ *Idem.*

¹²⁸ David Fisher, *The 21st Century Pastor: A Vision based on the Ministry of Paul*, Zondervan, Illinois, 1996, p. 29.

¹²⁹ Gibbs, Eddie. *Leadership Next : Changing Leaders in a Changing Culture*, Intervarsity Press, Illinois, 2005, p. 112.

It is therefore necessary to promote a code of responsible leadership for leaders and members of governing bodies of churches and church-related institutions, establish minimum standards for candidates running for positions in churches and develop particular a clause prohibiting candidates to buy votes and that requires them to declare their assets.

It also means that we should adjust the salaries of churches, particularly those in positions of leadership, so that they are fair and decent, that is to say enough to live modestly in dignity. This transparency also implies that churches put in place mechanisms for peer review among churches to strengthen mutual accountability and community churches transparency. We think also to protect those who report fraud and corrupt practices (whistleblowers) in churches and church-related institutions.

4.4.3 Transparent management of resources

This implies that we should manage real property (land and buildings) of churches and church-related institutions efficiently and transparently. In all aspects of planning and tendering, pricing and market mechanisms controls should seek to eradicate corruption. They should develop and monitor carefully the churches' retirement foundations and related institutions and encourage ethical investments.

The sparing use of these material resources also allows people to avoid abuses. This is why we should choose church human resources managers from the best selection possible to avoid overseeing qualified ones because of power, which are also a form of gray corruption. The proper use of natural resources (soil, water, forests and non-renewable energy) also meets the call to sustainable use as good stewards. And since such resources are often gifts, improved donor coordination through financial transparency between donors and partners can effectively conduct anti-corruption.

4.4.4 Preaching, teaching, education and counseling

The exhortation and education focused on the Word of God are part of the prophetic commitment against corruption. That is, preaching, prayer and singing accompanied by concrete actions are deterrence and moral and spiritual conversion. This training also includes a conscious ethical values education (school and civic education are popular). Therefore, establish professional ethics course in church governance, responsible leadership and financial management programs in theological education. These are laudable initiatives. Indeed, organized ethics training should be implemented for church leadership as it promotes anti-corruption educational setups.

4.4.5 Equality and female empowerment

In a corrupt system like the Cameroonian, women are commonly victims of discrimination based on gender. They pay bribes so that their children can receive treatment in hospitals or enroll in schools. They are also excluded from major decisions. They are passive victims and must often offer their bodies to get benefits. This happens often in universities, schools, business sectors and the military. Forced marriages also happen and are for the benefits of the parents and many others.

In an empowerment perspective, *Diakonia* supports anti-corruption efforts, promotes women's access to leadership positions and financial responsibility in the churches; ensures that women and women's organizations have the Christian right to possess real property (land, buildings) managed under their own responsibilities, and trains them in the management of property of the church. It is also a bulwark against harassment and sexual abuse facilitated by corruption through ethical codes, reports, legal mechanisms and sanctions, and organizing workshops and consultations at various levels.

4.5 Diakonia fight for Justice and its implications

Corruption that occurs as a result of social injustice is a violation of human rights. *Diakonia* itself is inseparable from justice; it implies the fight for justice. It is this link between justice and *Diakonia* that was highlighted by the *General Synod of the Church of Norway held in 2007*¹³⁰ in a document entitled post-synod *Church of Norway. Plan for Diakonia*.¹³¹ Justice appears to be a major challenge to diaconal works.

The value of justice or fairness, threatened by corrupt practices, has always been protected and promoted by the church. It was the commitment of the deacons of the early church. In societies of the past marked by cronyism, the church offered other forms of socialization: it offered food to the hungry rather than compromise and submit to rich employers, it offered a different place and a life in community rather than egalitarian to those seeking meaning to their existence.

The survival of humanity depends on social structures. Globalizing systems that promote corruption affect people's lives. That is why it is necessary for the theologian to clarify the causes of corruption that breeds misery and suffering and dehumanizes man. It is true to say that *Diakonia* works and fights for justice and peace which our societies are deprived because of corruption as also seen in the case in Cameroon.

¹³⁰ Recall that the first general synod held in 1987, was adopted leading to the diaconate. In 1997, the first plan was updated in line with recent laws and regulations. The Synod of 2007 adopted a new plan this time based on a new definition of *Diakonia*.

¹³¹ Church of Norway National Council. P.O. Box 799 Sentrum, N-0106 Oslo, Norway. Web : <http://www.kirken.no/english>.

Indeed, if *Diakonia* is based on the call that Jesus addressed to the Levite *to make ourselves the neighbors of those we meet on our roads, it necessarily puts in his heart an encounter with the one who is in trouble. Diaconal work is a unique encounter with the other.* *Diakonia* also requires an organization to do as little harm as possible to the multiplicity of distress, and not to confine the person in trouble in a face to face situation which could create a dependency that strongly evokes the parable of the good Samaritan, as he entrusted the care of the wounded in the inn, an institution.

Diakonia is not only the "*Diakonia* of the Good Samaritan", that is to say relief, but it also touches on everyday justice in today's society, such as corruption.

Diakonia is therefore to restore the dignity of people to whom corruption poses a serious threat and who are suffering because of corruption. In the Cameroonian context that is our focus, many have died as a result of corruption. Many are suffering physically and mentally or morally because of the mismanagement of resources and or maldistribution of what belongs to the community

Diakonia is transformative. Rather, there is an urgent *Diakonia* that heals the wounds of victims of a system based on a structural corruption like in Cameroon. Corruption runs from top to bottom from the highest level to the lowest level. It is easy to find ministers and high political leaders in Cameroon practicing corruption. It is also very easy to find young students or pupils already practicing corruption. In a corrupt society like Cameroon there would need be to the long-term conversion, changing mindsets and the structures of sin. As so aptly said by L. Fritz: *local churches remain open and available to Diakonia to the other, the stranger, the foreigner ... while remaining especially vigilant members of the community without losing the mission which is the search for Holiness.*¹³²

This change of mentality, this conversion, is a positive analytical criminalization of corruption. We would look for another form of justice that we call restorative. Such justice can, without denying the damage caused by corruption, adjourn the meeting between the corrupt and their victims for the restoration and repair of harmony within a fractured social tissue. A trial turns to the past, while restorative justice is resolutely turned towards the future, towards new commitments.

This concern of transformation of unjust social structures, such as corruption, is inseparable from the gospel because it is the testimony of one way to share the good news for all humans and the whole humanity. *Diakonia* involved in the proclamation of the Gospel as it is proclaimed the

¹³² Fritz Lienhard, *From Poverty to service in Christ*, Cerf, Paris, 2000, p. 201.

*love of God incarnate in our everyday human situations.*¹³³ *Diakonia is a testimony that God takes care of all.*¹³⁴

This introduces working toward a process to exterminate corruption which would engage the Catholic Church in Cameroon.

Chapter 5. STRATEGIC MEASURES TO COMBAT CORRUPTION

5.1 Political, Legal and Economic instruments to fight corruption

The constant increase of corruption, as is the case in Cameroon, is still widespread and it undermines the foundation of a global economic ethic, which is necessary for the global and interdependent economy to last. Therefore, it is necessary to sharpen the awareness that corruption, because of the ravages it has on development, politics, economics and culture, is immoral.

These first calls for ethics that will not decrease corruption, but common structural measures that enable economic and political players to forego paying bribes are a start. We are here at the heart of social ethics understood as the establishment of structures ethically responsible. It is implementing several instruments simultaneously. How entrepreneurs and businesses, governments, administrations, business associations and churches can, together and separately, contribute to the fight against corruption.

5.2 Governmental instruments

5.2.1 Courts and Sanctions

Criminal law and tax law are significant opportunities to fight against corruption, such as legislation on risk guarantee exploration, accounting, banking, money laundering, mutual legal assistance international, etc. It is necessary to strengthen enforcement mechanisms in existing and future codes, as well as other administrative mechanisms, to promote transparency and fight corruption.

5.2.2 Anti-corruption clauses in contracts for development

The Development Committee of the OECD member countries invited in May 1996 the inclusion of anti-corruption clauses in their development contracts. Some countries have

¹³³ G. Delteil et P. Keller, *op. cit.*,, p.105.

¹³⁴ *Idem.*

implemented these recommendations, like Switzerland in 1998 within the Directorate for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Secretariat of State for Trade (SECO). They are the same private relief agencies that receive federal funds for development.

5.3 Non-governmental Instruments

5.3.1 Codes of conduct and standards

Increasingly often companies adopt codes of conduct specific to their industry which contain anti-corruption clauses. These codes are voluntary and good tools to start the fight against corruption. They can be very effective within the company if they provide mechanisms of enforcement. It is a relatively small instrument if the control is purely internal. It is a complement, but do not replace the necessary legislative measures of the state. Codes of conduct against corruption are often created for the benefit of government officials, professional groups, etc.

5.3.2 Integrity Pacts

Transparency International has developed integrity mechanisms called "covenants" or "islands of integrity". These agreements provide the various participants in a contest with the same economic opportunities to access an auction, for example in a tender for a project infrastructure such as an airport, a power station or a telecommunication network. Governments should be able to control companies and contractors taking on such responsibilities with an eye to curbing corruption. They should sign integrity pacts to prohibit any illegal payments or acceptance of bribes. The control of these pacts, like all anti-corruption measures, is of importance.

By "integrity pact" we mean all initiatives taken to restore a sense of professional ethics between applicants and service providers. This approach is rooted in a deliberate effort toward man; every man will choose to do good and avoid evil. Also, most of the government or private sectors must find integrity codes adapted to promote attitudes and avoid controversy.

To this effect, D. Sullivan says: *Given the financial scandals and new guidelines on how business resulting companies are forced to develop strong codes of ethics to guide the behavior of members of the board of directors, managers and employees are very necessary.*¹³⁵

The purpose of these codes is primarily educational and integrity: We must help the officials and other public service workers to cultivate habits of citizens and to become personally involved at their respective levels in the fight against corruption.

¹³⁵ John D. Sullivan and Aleksander Shkolsinkov, CIPE, "The Business Ethics: an essential component of corporate governance. "
[[Http://www.cipe.org/regional/mena/MENA% 20CG% 20CD/content/corporategovernancebasics/Business_Eth ics_- _CG_Component_-_French.pdf](http://www.cipe.org/regional/mena/MENA%20CG%20CD/content/corporategovernancebasics/Business_Ethics_-_CG_Component_-_French.pdf)]

*The fight is to deliver all the moments in which all stakeholders must be convinced that success is within their reach and that victory depends first and foremost on their own attitude. They must not be resigned to be considered corrupt or corrupting power.*¹³⁶

Certainly, an integrity code has no coercive value as such, but is in itself a moral commitment of the person signing, and invites him to observe its provisions. Thus Jean Godeaux thinks that corruption can be tackled effectively by anti-corruption slogans:

*When a boss of a company says "No bribes here please!!" that creates a state of mind and undoubtedly reduces the phenomenon. I notice that the companies which get the best results by these statements and the publication of such codes are mostly those which have educated members of the company at all levels against corruption.*¹³⁷

5.4 The church against corruption in Cameroon

5.4.1 Bishops Proposals

The bishops of Cameroon released a series of concrete proposals that are prerequisites for meaningful public action, as well as many ways to fight corruption.

5.4.2 Sensitize and Educate citizens

According to the bishops the free flow of information on cases of corruption is an effective way: *Not to talk loudly about corruption would be to keep a guilty silence. Not to fight it vigorously would be cowardice. To do nothing serious to eradicate this scourge would betray our people. It is therefore necessary to train our citizens to a greater perception of evil to expect better treatment.*¹³⁸

Indeed, experience has shown that corruption is cloaked in secrecy because it has itself an occult pact. It is generally favored by private companies, as recognized by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace: *On one hand, we can see how corruption favored companies in highly structured, rigid and closed, even authoritarian both within themselves and towards the outside, because there it is more difficult to be aware of this phenomenon.*¹³⁹

Also informing citizens about the reality of corruption and surrounding issues would allow them to take greater ownership of the fight against this scourge: *It is developing a greater awareness of the rights and duties of citizens to expose corruption and fight its consequences across*

¹³⁶C. Mathon, "Corruption and Lies. A necessary recourse to morality"

http://www.chantalcutajar.blogspot.com/archive/2005/03/193/corruption_et_mensong_e_par_laudemathon_c.html

¹³⁷ Denis Laloy, "Interview with Jean Baron Godeaux about the fight against corruption," IRE Newsletter n° 1/2000. [<http://www.ibr-ire/fra/periodikeberichten/berichten000103.aspx>]

¹³⁸ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 990, § 16.

¹³⁹ Pontifical Council "Justice and Peace", « The fight against corruption. »

[http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_juspeace_doc_2006092_1_lotta-corruzione_fr.html]

*the nation, especially among young people in search of an solid ideal and benchmarks for their harmonious development.*¹⁴⁰

It must be important to well-informed people to accept their human dignity and destiny in God's image and work to improve it.

5.4.3 The action of intermediate bodies

The call for civil society action allows the bishops to remember that the fight against corruption can be successful only through the concerted action of energy in all sectors of social life. Civil society appears as the representative of citizens who do not necessarily participate in public life under a particular public office. It is characterized by an ability to project its own, which tends to favor a more free and fair social life, where different groups of people come together, mobilizing to develop and express their views, to meet all their basic needs and to defend illegitimate interests.

Intermediate groups are groups of people situated between the individual and the state which enjoy full autonomy, in accordance with the objectives of their members. As civil society is a consensus power its ability to make a difference is considerable. The episcopate of Cameroon however cautioned against any misunderstanding of its action. Its role is to overcome certain shortcomings of the government and to promote the common good and not individual interest.

5.4.4 The commitment of Christians against corruption

Essentially the moral character of the action of intermediate bodies allows bishops to challenge a particular way for the church and its members to make themselves transparent. They invite the faithful to investigate each of his personal relationship with money and truthfulness: *In the parish, in the ecclesial living communities and associations of the faithful, in our colleges and schools, we seek to implement ways to combat corruption everywhere starting from our own ecclesial institutions.*¹⁴¹

The underlying idea is that Christians are the most likely to change the situation because of their involvement and commitment in both the ecclesial sphere and social public life in the management of temporal affairs. Their Christian formation and sociopolitical commitment predisposes them to grow everywhere and at all times to be aware of the urgency of taking concrete action against corruption.

¹⁴⁰ *Idem.*

¹⁴¹ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 994, § 40.

5.4.5 *The role of the educational community: Parents and Students*

Cameroonian bishops are unanimous in recognizing that the fight against corruption is also a real education in civic values and Christian values. It is establishing a culture of prevention: *Developing across a greater awareness of the rights and duties of citizens to expose corruption and fight its consequences across the nation and especially young people looking for an ideal and solid benchmarks for their harmonious development.*¹⁴²

To this end, the bishops recognize that the family is the primary place to shape and foster human values essential to life. Beyond speech, parents should themselves lead their children by their example and conduct in the society. That is why the bishops say:

*The acquisition of these values is not done first by words but by the witness of life of parents and their marital fidelity, honesty in relationships with family and entourage (...) Far from becoming in the game of their children or encourage their cheating, parents must be strict and unequivocal attitudes against fraud, cheating, stealing. They should react if their children engage in such acts.*¹⁴³

This is both the role of teachers and parents. The schools are happy places of learning, as we are reminded by the bishops. They must not only impart knowledge, but also be the crucible of values that help children in their full humanization. The teacher's role will be to help the student to forge a personality against corruption in a world where true values are affected by relativism, or worst case; *regarded with contempt.*¹⁴⁴ Bishops denounce this system destroyed by the state of decay and disrepair in the Cameroonian educational system:

*The education system in accusing us of serious shortcomings and provides the conditions for corruption to flourish unacceptably. Fraud, cheating, sexual harassment and financial dishonesty seem to build up universal laws and kill values of truth, justice, transparency, wrongly regarded as low virtues.*¹⁴⁵

In response to this malaise, the bishops call for *teachers to create school pride in a job well done, the necessity of effort, respect for others, their beliefs, their property, the common good, generosity, and spirit of service*¹⁴⁶ That's why parents and teachers can be retained together to

¹⁴² *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 993, § 34.

¹⁴³ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 994, § 41.

¹⁴⁴ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 988 § 34.

¹⁴⁵ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 995 § 42.

¹⁴⁶ *Idem*.

instill a sense of justice and truth as common values, imperishable and universal: *Parents and educators of children insist on the obligation to repair the harm in fairness that cause pain to others and to society.*¹⁴⁷

Religious and ethical education of families, churches, schools and the media are an important arena where long-term strategies for the fight against corruption can be built. As it remains a phenomenon tolerated as a daily practice and inescapable reality of economic activity, we cannot defeat it single-handedly. In this regard, I found in a textbook for high school ethics education in Cameroon, a chapter on corruption encouraging teachers and instructors to point out the ills of the Cameroonian society to the youngsters who are the future of the country.

5.4.6 The role of artists and media

Finally, the bishops invite the mass media and artists to show invention and creativity to help the Cameroonian society to fight corruption through information campaigns and awareness. Several stakeholders recognize that the messages conveyed by artistic productions often retain more easily and catch the attention and sensitivity to their recipients. As so aptly said by artist Chantal McGregor: *We tried several methods to fight against corruption in this country, we have laws and government agencies. But it is a big problem. Music is close to the hearts of people, allowing them to understand more easily that they can do something about it.*¹⁴⁸

Within the scope of actions against corruption in Cameroon, those organizations supported by the Cameroonian government, such as the OECD and Transparency International, are proving to be highly effective.

Investigative journalism is also an important element of dismantling corruption. However, as experienced in many countries, this is only possible if the concerned journalists and media are protected (personal safety) and if freedom of expression is guaranteed. In the current context of the fight against corruption at the international level and state (at least on record), these conditions have improved in recent years.

¹⁴⁷ *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon on corruption*, p. 994, § 41.

¹⁴⁸ Sarah Mc Gregor, "Tanzania: Tackling corruption through song"
[[Http://www.fr.allafrica.com/stories/2007](http://www.fr.allafrica.com/stories/2007)]

5.5 The Catholic Church and other forms to fight against corruption in Cameroon

In addition to the pastoral letters of the bishops, the Catholic Church in Cameroon is committed to fighting corruption by other means, including the strict monitoring of elections, removal of corrupt practices in schools and sensitization around Easter celebrations.

5.5.1 A police to supervise elections

A priori we can say that faith communities are engaged in the fight against corruption by the right end: *improving the democratic process*.¹⁴⁹ In fact, during the 1997 elections, the Ecumenical Service for Peace and Justice, led by the late Norbert Kenne, formed the *Alliance for fair and peaceful elections*, inviting Protestants, Catholics and Muslims to invest together in observing the electoral process. The report on the collective activity identified fraud and made relevant recommendations, such as the computerization of the electoral process.

Following a spate of several elections in the 1990s (two presidential and two parliamentary municipal), all challenged by the oppositions' political parties, the Bishops of Cameroon wanted to know more about the reality of various local and national elections. They told the National "Justice and Peace" Service of the National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon's (NECC) to conduct election observations to report on their findings.

Based on the report of the observation of double legislative and municipal elections of June 2002, the bishops issued a pastoral letter to the faithful and citizens of good will on "the right and duty to vote" (March 2004). This document reminded every Cameroonian of voting age that it is an honor for him or her to choose their leaders. It therefore invited them to make a personal approach and to go to register on the electoral roll of place of residence. It exhorted not to abstain from voting when the time comes, because voting is a duty of every citizen and the involvement of all public life is a prerequisite for the development of a true democracy. This pastoral letter also invited the administrative authorities to do their duty and faithfully deliver electoral cards to those who qualify.¹⁵⁰

Observation of the presidential election of 2004 highlighted that shortcomings in the voting came in part from the electoral law and did not favor an impartial and transparent vote. The Catholic Church took the initiative to conduct a debate on the electoral law. From September to December 2005, church representatives met the NCPC, a committee composed of people from

¹⁴⁹ Fabien Éboussi Boulaga and François Zinga, *La lutte contre la corruption. Impossible est-il camerounais ?*, Yaoundé, P. U. A., 2002, p.33.

¹⁵⁰ Andrew W. Goudié, *Corruption : the issues*, Paris, OCDE, 1997, p. 54.

political parties, civil society and state structures, to write two bills; one dealing with single electoral codes and the other suggesting the creation of an independent body to conduct the electoral process from beginning to end. To date, these initiatives inspired and accompanied the electoral process in Cameroon, although there are still cases of fraud.

5.5.2 *Combating corruption in schools*

The proposed fight against corruption in schools¹⁵¹ (Fights against Corruption through Schools) is a form of anti-corruption campaign conducted by the National Secretariat of Catholic Education, a structure of the National Conference of Bishops of Cameroon.

The pilot phase from October 2003 to October 2006 was to provide the necessary lessons for greater efficiency. Several schools were selected for this phase. The main lessons are:

- Development of educational tools and educational integrity: Integrity Pact and code, educator's guide, student book, documentary, posters and various games.
- Training of supervisors at all levels (training project managers, training of trainers, training of teachers, not only Catholics but from all denominations and Catholic education secretariats).
- Education (Application of the fruits of the trained teachers to students).
- Creating areas of integrity and sharing of the entire school community in the process.

The implementation of the above activities have achieved the following results:

- The acceptance of the project by the majority of stakeholders and strong adhesion among students.
- The majority of pilot schools actually become zones of integrity to fight against corruption.
- The quality of teaching tools produced and made available to stakeholders in all schools all over the country.

Overall, the process of positive change in the behavior of students, teachers, and school leaders has begun: denunciation of wrongdoing in schools and in families, fewer cases of cheating and theft, increase the number of objects found and reported, refusing bribes, wine and gifts attached with interest and favor.

5.5.3 *Sensitization around Easter Celebrations*

¹⁵¹ INSER, *Évaluation finale du projet de lutte contre la corruption à travers l'école*, Rapport final, Novembre 2006.

Pastor Jean Blaise Kenmogne, president of the Circle for the Promotion of Creation (CIPCRE), in partnership with the National Service "Justice and Peace" of the Catholic Church, the Federation of Churches and Evangelical Missions of Cameroon (FEMEC), the 'Islamic Cultural Association of Cameroon (RAC) organized in 2001, between the feasts of Easter and Pentecost an awareness campaign on the phenomenon of tribalism and corruption in Cameroon. I have personally participated in one where I was representing the North West region of Cameroon from where I come. This has enriched the knowledge about other churches fighting against social ills overall and corruption in particular.

For seven weeks, each participating denomination met its followers to discuss the basis for the misdeeds of these scourges.¹⁵² This included education and training activities consistent with the missions of these faith communities.

5.6 An ecumenical program in the fight against corruption

Corruption can be fought through networks and coalitions, both ecumenically and interreligious, especially in countries that are home to different religious communities and religious organizations. In Cameroon it has been a case of the Roman Catholic Church for a longer time. It seemed to be too theoretical preferring words to actions. The highest population of Christians in Cameroon are Catholics and as such are involved in one way or the other in this issue. It will be more profitable to fight ecumenically in action than writings and words. Although the Catholic Church has put in place some structures to this effect it will still need more efforts at all churches level. The control program can take different directions.

5.6.1 An Ecumenical Perspective of Theology of anti-corruption

Engagement in ecumenical struggle against corruption is to engage around a common theological discourse. In other words, it is promoting ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and the study of ethical principles to overcome together the corruption of religion and theological and philosophical traditions. These studies culminate in a real denunciations of corruption as a practice contrary to the objective moral order and commandments of God. They will also “*promote transparency and the work ethic*”.¹⁵³ Such joint productions must be disseminated in schools and universities so that their contents permeate the entire social fabric.

5.6.2 Shared Actions and ecumenical programs

¹⁵² “corruption”, in *ECOVOX*, n° 39, January-June 2008.

¹⁵³ Heiko Lange, Albert Löhr and Horst Steinmann, *Working across cultures. Éthical perspectives for intercultural management*, Kluwert, Dordrecht, 1998, p. 85.

The ecumenical action against corrupt practices is not limited to joint statements, but leads to real action and the development of meaningful programs. It is thus possible to run as a partnership between the churches in the South and ecumenical agencies partners in the North. Such a project took shape in what is called the "International Christian Real Estate Program" (CIIP).

In the same vein, it is appropriate to establish a resource center for churches and ecumenical international cooperation against corruption. The center would have a database to assist anti-corruption churches ecumenically through information exchange and training. Finally, it is possible to build a network of churches working for transparency and against corruption, for the exchange of research and mutual encouragement at national, regional and international levels.

5.6.3 A model of ecumenical dialogue

Finally, we discuss a model of ecumenical action to fight against corruption like the 8th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Harare, Zimbabwe in December 1998, in which more than 350 churches participated. Commenting on Human Rights, the General Assembly called corruption a "social evil" considering that the legal protection of every citizen against corruption was part of a basic human right. At this meeting the secretary of Bread (PPP), Christophe Stuckelberger, offered assistance; *a program to fight against corruption*. It was an attempt to extend the world "code of conduct" experienced in Cameroon for other churches and organizations.

Indeed, in 1998, Cameroon appeared at the *bottom of the list of countries registered in the International Index of perception of corruption*.¹⁵⁴ To this day it is seen as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. Meanwhile, Cameroon is a country with bread for supporters of the development from the perspective of the long experience of the Basel Mission and DM-Exchange and Mission.

Alarmed by this situation, Cameroonian NGOs and representatives of churches called for a more active fight against corruption from their partners Basel Mission and DM-Exchange and Mission.

In a first step, in 1998 four Cameroonian experts studied the situation along with 13 organizations of Cameroonians from diverse sectors. The second phase included a seminar held in late March 1999 in Mbalmayo near Yaoundé, which brought together representatives of the various churches and members of associations of farmers and environmental organizations. The seminar participants discussed, supplemented or modified grid analysis of the situation. This work resulted in the development of a "code" for the fight against corruption and for transparency of non-

¹⁵⁴ Christoph Stükelberger, *La corruption, un défi pour les Églises et les les ONGs*, Séminaire au Cameroun, Mars, 1999, p. 8.

governmental organizations and church projects. This code was a world first and a model of ecumenical work intended primarily to promote a transparent mode of presentation of accounts, the democratic structures of decision, the separation of powers and the protection of those involved in the fight against corruption.

The challenge for ecumenical *Diakonia* remains since the ratification of this code to ensure that it is respected by many organizations in Cameroon. This is not always easy because the presidents or heads of organizations are often themselves involved in corruption. However, the debate on the fight against corruption is gaining momentum around the world, and as the specific requirements posed to the United States grow, institutions and individuals increasingly understand this issue is detrimental to development.

It follows that the churches and relief agencies are in a better position to demand international companies, governments and multilateral institutions that engage in the fight against corruption. In projects related to churches, the fight against corruption can sometimes be hampered by a poor understanding of the idea of partnership, which becomes ideology when used to cover a lack of transparency. Transparency, openness and the need for mutual accountability are necessary conditions for a partnership based on trust.

General Conclusion

The urgent need for a critical theological examination of corruption is the same need for *Diakonia* except that is not only contemplative but also proactive. *Diakonia*, as we say, is not only the "*diakonia* of the Good Samaritan", that is to say relief, but it also touches on everything that plagues justice in our society today. The value of justice is now seriously jeopardized by corruption, especially in a context such as Cameroon.

It appeared to me throughout my analysis that corruption is as a global phenomenon, both insidious and hidden. Despite the fundamental immorality and complexity that characterizes and do not facilitate its study, we still managed to highlight the variety of forms, causes and explained the consequences corruption generates both to man and on the society. Consequences that require the mobilization of institutional plans and effective control measures (revisions, auctions, integrity pacts) that are universally valid.

My approach is not limited to a mere sociological study. Indeed, viewed from a theological perspective, the practice of corruption is not foreign to Holy Scripture, which also offers stories of impartial jurisprudence based on justice, truth and the legal protection of the poor. From this flows the ethically reprehensible nature of corruption in that it generates a poisonous climate of injustice and violation of human rights that is not conducive to personal development and the promotion of the common good. *Corruption creates an unjust society that no longer guarantees equal rights and opportunities for its citizens. It creates a climate of suspicion and distrust between individuals; it condemns them to live in fear and insecurity.*¹⁵⁵

On a strictly theological registry corruption is rooted in the corruption of original sin and that reflects the will power and the selfish aspirations of human nature. As such, corruption appears to be the same rejection of the Father's loving plan, of neighbor and a rejection of social practice in total contradiction with the requirements of the divine Word (love your neighbor as yourself). However, the discourse that identifies the corruption of sin and moral failure culminates in the hope of a future free society. It is the interest of *Diakonia* that not only wants to restore moral and spiritual leadership in a corrupt society, but also aims to reduce poverty, implement principles of good governance, empower women, respect human rights in light of a significant theological vision and above all bring hope and the Gospel into action.

¹⁵⁵ *Idem*

Therefore, we conclude that it is crucial to promote an ecumenical and interreligious dialogue with the study of common ethical and theological principles, in Cameroon and in other societies ravaged by corruption, to have a major societal impact in the anti-corruption fight.

It would be interesting in a further reflection, to address the issue of corruption on the basis of a structure of prophetic *Diakonia* around the idea of justice.

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