State formation, religion and land tenure in Cameroon

Kees Schilder

A bibliographical survey

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STATE FORMATION, RELIGION, AND LAND TENURE IN CAMEROON

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LEIDEN, NETHERLANDS
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this analytical bibliography is to provide the reader with an overview of the recently published social science literature on state formation, religion, and land tenure in Cameroon. It has been compiled for the specific requirements of the research projects to be undertaken in Cameroon by the African Studies Centre (Leiden, the Netherlands). The number of different references mentioned in this study totals at about 800. As in any bibliography, several restrictions have been made to focus the subject. Five important criteria should be mentioned here.

(1) There is a geographical limitation: only country-focused literature about Cameroon is included.

(2) Most publications included are based on social-scientific research, i.e. they are historical, sociological, anthropological, social-geographical, economic, or juridical in character. This means that literary books, policy notes of government and other institutions, articles in journals, weeklies and non-scientific periodicals, and brochures have not been systematically inventoried.

(3) The bibliography is limited in timespan, having a strong emphasis on the literature which was published in the 1970s and 1980s. The reason for this restriction is that the older literature has already been inventoried in several fairly exhaustive bibliographies on Cameroon, such as Dippold (1971), DeLancey & DeLancey (1975), and Gubry (1984). Most relevant references mentioned in those studies have not been entered again in this bibliography. Exceptions have been made for a number of publications which are still often cited, and those studies which deal with themes about which no recently published material is available. The bibliography was closed at
the end of 1986 (although some publications from 1987 have been included as well).

(4) The bibliography has three main themes, as the title indicates. The first chapter, on the Cameroonian state, is a reconnaissance of the relevant literature on the processes of state formation with an emphasis on nation building, the stability of the post-colonial political system, forms of state penetration on the local level, and the historical continuities which may exist between the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial era. The two following chapters are elaborations of two facets of the complex process of state penetration in the Cameroonian society. The second chapter deals with religious change; the indigenous religions, Islam, and Christianity are discussed in succession. The third (and last) chapter concentrates on land tenure, whereby special attention is paid to the influences of migration and urbanisation.

(5) The catalogues of the African Studies Centre library — which administers the most comprehensive collection of literature in the Netherlands on the afore-mentioned subjects (Hijma 1986\(^1\)) — have been used as the primary bibliographical tool. In addition, the respective catalogues of the library of the Royal Tropical Institute (Amsterdam) and the central library of the Agricultural University (Wageningen, the Netherlands), and several existing bibliographies, have been consulted. This selection means that the study cannot pretend to be exhaustive, and that several gaps may exist with regard to works which were published in Cameroon itself.

The included literature has been ‘unsealed’ in two ways. Every chapter is made up of several sections and subsections, each dealing with a subtheme. Every subtheme is introduced by a bibliographical essay which presents the relevant literature as a coherent body, i.e.

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\(^1\) Hijma, B.

the main themes, debates, and gaps are reviewed. Naturally, these introductory remarks cannot claim any pretension of being exhaustive. A subsequent list of references, arranged in alphabetical order, contains the following information per reference: the author's name, the year of publication, the title and any subtitle; the place of publication and the name of the publishing company of books are mentioned, just as the name, the volume, the number, and the pages of periodicals in the case of articles. Technical annotations indicate the number of pages of a book, the presence of a bibliography (bibl.) and/or an index (ind.), and whether the book or article is available in the African Studies Centre library (Asc. followed by the book number); this information is not complete in all cases. A thematic annotation, giving information on the scientific discipline and the main subjects of a study, concludes a single reference; again exhaustiveness cannot be claimed, because the available time and resources did not allow for consultation of all the books and articles mentioned. In several cases the thematic analysis is based on other bibliographies without this being mentioned explicitly.

The approach adopted implies that several publications are entered in more than one rubric. Generally, different thematic aspects are then emphasised in the thematic annotation.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude towards everyone who, in one way or another, contributed to the realisation of this study.

LIST OF BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Bjornson, R.

DeLancey, M.W. & P.J. Schraeder
A select, annotated bibliography with an emphasis on recent Anglophone publications. The references are classified according to subjects. It is the most useful introduction to the major books and articles on Cameroon for the time being.

DeLancey, M.W. & V.H. DeLancey

The most extensive bibliography with regard to Cameroon. It is partly annotated, and the time period covered is to 1973. More than 6000 references are arranged alphabetically by author within subject divisions. The work includes an ethnic, linguistic and geographical index, an author and personal name index, and a subject index.

Dippolt, M.F.

This volume contains over 6000 entries of material written in the German language. A subject index is included.

Gubry, P.

This partly annotated bibliography includes almost 2500 references on population research and related subjects. The entries are arranged in chronological order within subject divisions.

Haeringer, P.

Illy, H.F.
LeVine, V. & R.P. Nye

A handy, but slightly dated booklet of reference. It includes a brief bibliographical essay ('Introduction to the study of Cameroon') and an extensive list of references to books and published essays (p. 139-198).

Mucho Chiabi, E.

Includes research materials from the United States, Canada, Africa, and Europe.

Schrader, T.H.

An annotated bibliography about North Cameroon, focusing on books and articles regarding the topics of environment and development in the Extreme North Province.

Seydou, C.

Ungaro, D.

This list of references on political and economic topics covers books, articles and documents up to 1985.
CHAPTER 1

THE CAMEROONIAN STATE

This chapter concentrates on the themes and discussions which dominate the literature on the Cameroonian state since the end of the 1960s.

In line with the literature on state formation in Africa in general, the huge amount of available literature can be roughly divided into two broad categories. In the 1960s, the first decade of political independence, the literature is characterised by an enthusiastic attitude, optimism with regard to the developmental prospects of the new state, and emphasis on the creative capabilities of the new African rulers. The nation building school of the American structural-functionalist paradigm, accentuating leadership and institutions as the major vehicles for integration and order, is then quite dominant. LeVine, Johnson, and Rubin are the most important representatives for Cameroon.

In the 1970s Marxism becomes more and more the dominant paradigm in the literature on state formation. The inherent limitations of the institutional developments within the post-colonial state then come to the fore. Colonialism and imperialism, and the post-colonial economic domination by France and other Western countries are interpreted as the central factors in the process of state formation. The major expert on Cameroon is the French political scientist Bayart.
This distinction is inherent in the texts of the next sections. The structure of this chapter is inspired by an article of Van Binsbergen et al. (1986).2

NATION BUILDING

Cameroon is a country with sharp internal contradictions. There are important politico-economic and religious differences between the north and the south, there are many problems springing from the joining of an ex-British and an ex-French colonial area into one state structure, and the country displays an extremely high ethnic diversity. The strong ideological stress on national integration by the Ahidjo regime is reflected in the literature of the 1960s in an uncritical approach of this credo; the central issue is to clarify under which circumstances a stable regime is able to develop. Several themes touching upon integration can be distinguished.

(1) The evolution from a more-parties system to a single-party system. The ruling party, the UC, was able to incorporate all opposition parties in the first half of the 1960s, and since then Cameroon has actually been a one-party state. Information on this process can be found in LeVine (1964, 1971), Johnson (1970a), Rubin (1971), Prouzet (1974), and Kumbuo (1976). The direct effect, the interlacing of party and state, is not theoretically elaborated. This intertwinement is apparent, for example, from the accounts of the four party congresses; these are important sources of information on government policies, especially Ahidjo’s speeches; the attendance list is, moreover, an important indicator of the composition of the political elite at any certain point of time (see CNU 1967, 1974, 1975, 1980a, 1981). Tabuwe (1980) sees this development to a one-party system as the reestablishment of traditional political institutions in Cameroon: the more-parties

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2 Van Binsbergen, W., F. Reyntjens, & G. Hesseling
system is interpreted as a Western introduction and a rupture with the past.

(2) The evolution from a federal state to a unitary state. The institutional and constitutional aspects of this process have been extensively studied by jurists and political scientists. Juridical studies, focusing on the interrelatedness of this political and constitutional development, are Gonidec (1969), Gonidec & Breton (1976), Enonchong (1967), Kontchou-Kouomegni (1980), Akame (1979), Imbert (1982), and Mbarga (1982). Ngongang-Ouandji (1973) describes the influence of the French model on constitutional law in the Federal State. The juridical studies of Jouve (1977), J. Owona (1973, 1976), Mbarga (1973), Mbome (1981), and Breton (1972) also contain detailed information on the constitutional reforms of 1972. The major studies written by political scientists are LeVine (1971, 1976) and Rubin (1971); they are confined to the federalist period.

Several authors have studied the increasing political and economic integration from a West Cameroonian perspective. A much more critical voice is heard here. They point to the inferior position of this area within the national constellation, and to the extreme concentration of power in the national political centre. Examples are Ardener (1967), Benjamin (1972), Ndonko (1975a), Stark (1976), and Dinka (1986); the latter author even argues in favour of a revision of the constitution of 1972.

(3) The evolution from a moderate presidential system to presidentialism. Studies like LeVine (1971), Johnson (1970a), and Rubin (1971) do not explain this concentration of governmental power in Yaounde, suggesting that it is just a logical outcome of the process of nation building. This evolution is interpreted as being largely determined by the ideas, aspirations, and personal characteristics of the national leader. Cameroonian publications which express this ideological glorification of the person and ideas of president Ahidjo, are the books written by Ahidjo himself (1964, 1969, 1976), biographies (e.g. Beaschlin-Raspail 1968), popular works like Eno Belinga (1976) and Alima (1977), and several
publications from the CNU. (e.g. 1968a, 1968b) The consolidation of the presidential power by Biya, Ahidjo's successor, in 1985 is affirmed by the publication of two similar works at that time: Sam-Kubam et al. (1985) and CNU (1985). Stark (1980-81) is a critical analysis of the function of political rhetoric for legitimizing governmental power.

The constitutional facets of the process of centralisation have been studied by Breton (1973), Etonga (1980), Gonidec (1969), Gonidec & Breton (1976), and Mbome (1978). Several studies, written by students of public administration, concentrate on the tension between centralisation and decentralisation as two organising principles of the state. Information on the diminishing public authority of the local and regional level administrations can be found in Audat (1968), Mbarga (1972), Ndongko (1975a), Champaud (1977), Kontchou-Kouomegni (1979, 1980), and Mawhood (1983). Lippens (1974) and Mawhood (1971) go into the bureaucratic organisation on the local level. Available also is some literature on the Communes or Local Authorities (juridico-territorial units with limited financial and administrative competence), notably Mademba (1957), Biwole (n.d.), Kwayeb (1960), Otabela (1965), and J. Owona (1979). Ngongang-Ouandji (1968) and Mintya (1968) deal with the 1966-67 reforms. Attempts to theoretically analyse centralisation as an administrative-legal process of state penetration on the local level, are almost completely lacking.

The nation building literature has lost much of its prominent position during the 1970s, but it did not disappear altogether. Several Cameroonian scholars continue to work in this tradition, for example Tunteng (1978), Forje (1981), Kofele-Kale (1978, 1980a, 1980b, 1980c), and Nwabuzor (1980a, 1980b). The two last-mentioned modernisation sociologists have researched into one of the problematical aspects of the concept of national integration: they oppose the prevailing view — also held in political circles in Cameroon — that the creation of a self-reflexive national community cannot be reconciled with expressions of regionalism or ethnic
loyalty, and they point to the dangers of a repressive policy towards cultural pluralism.

Ahidjo, A.  

This work represents the early systematisation of Ahidjo’s political views on the major internal and external problems that could hinder the development of the Cameroonian nation.


This volume contains the text of Ahidjo’s address to the First Congress of the CNU, in 1969.


Description of the action programme of the party and the state. The then president goes into the ‘Révolution Pacifique’ of 20 May 1972, national independence and non-commitment, the CNU’s efficiency, social justice, and the need of revolutionary changes.

Akame, J.F.  

Juridical description of the phased constitutional evolution in Cameroon in historical perspective.

Alima, J.-B.  

The author is a well-known journalist in Cameroon. He describes the nation building process in Cameroon. The tone is not critical. Nationalism, the UPC uprising, the experiment of the federal form of government and of the ‘centralised’ democracy, and the economic and foreign policy come up for discussion in succession.
Ardener, E.

This article was written from a West Cameroonian perspective. The author points out the distortions of the federative idea and the overwhelming importance of the Francophone part of the federation.

Audat, P.-L.

Comparative study about the local and regional level administrations in Mali, Ivory Coast, Senegal, and Cameroon. The author distinguishes between decentralisation and deconcentration, and deals with (1) the role of government bodies in modernisation, and (2) the role of authorities and institutions with delegated competence in modernisation.

Beaschlin-Raspail, B.Ch.

A tribute to the former president Ahidjo, written in journalistic fashion by a Swiss journalist who had worked in Cameroon for two years.

Bella Ndong, M.

Benjamin, J.

The author discusses the influence of federalism on the West Cameroonian Anglophone minority. The first section deals with the effects exercised by the federal institutions on the political, econo-
mic, and administrative activities in West Cameroon, and the second section with the influence of the dominant Francophone political culture in the ex-British colony. Benjamin, a Canadian, develops a theory about federalism which is more generally applicable, for instance in contemporary Canada.

Biwole, G.
nd. L'institution communale au Cameroun - Local council in Cameroon. n.p.: Editions SOPECAM.

Boorn, P.H.J. van den
1984 Kameroen (Landendocumentatie 1984 no. 3). Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute.

A useful general introduction. The author successively discusses the natural environment, the origins of the Cameroonian ethnic groupings, the colonial period and independence, several social aspects of the Cameroonian society, the economy, and the means of subsistence. The performance of the Ahidjo government is admired, although several structural problems are noticed.

Breton, J.-M.

Juridical article about the phased development of the political institutions within the Cameroonian state, as a process based on the principle of national unity. The institutional unity which the constitutional reformers of 1972 had in view — the establishment of the unitary state of Cameroon — is extensively discussed.

Champaud, J.
Clignet, R.  

Inventory of the problems which educational institutions, trying to overcome the divisions caused by ethnic factors, are confronted with. In Cameroon this lack of unity is strengthened by the dissimilar colonial experiences of the country.

CNU  

A collection of the most important documents, speeches, and other aspects of the First National Council of the CNU, held in Yaounde in 1967. The major topics of discussion were the general role of the party, the relation state-party, elections, the party’s role in the execution of the Plan, party meetings, and several financial problems.


A collection of Ahidjo’s speeches in commemoration of ten years of Ahidjo rule in Cameroon.


A tribute to the accomplishments of the Ahidjo government between 1958 and 1968.

1974  First Cameroon National Union Congress held in Garoua. La Loupe: SIPE. 303 p.

Report concerning the Congress, containing important indications of policy intentions. The principle speeches are those of president Ahidjo. There is also a French version.

A collection of documents, speeches, and reports of the Second CNU Congress, in 1975. It includes messages from friendly political parties from abroad, a report on the party’s finance, and a list of high ranking members in the party’s political hierarchy.


A collection of short quotes by Ahidjo.


Includes an interview with president Ahidjo, and several articles on the party’s history, activities, and structure.


The document is an exposition of the ideology of the Cameroon National Union. Its purpose is to make available to the public a new publication for information and reflection, and to answer the question on the place and role of the CNU in Cameroon.


Important source of information about government policies and the political elite in Cameroon at that time. Ahidjo’s speech takes up 34 pages.

A memorial volume about the Fourth CNU Congress, in Bamenda, which was presided by Paul Biya. After a brief biographical sketch follows a summary of his political ideas, concerning, for example, the ethical base for his policy of renovation and the emphasis on the national sovereignty. The work concludes with a discussion of the programme of national integration.

Decret
1976

The literary text of the decree regulating the authority of the prime minister.

DeLancey, M.W.
1983

Concise outline of the Cameroonian political process and its history.

Dinka, G.
1986

The Foumban Constitution, the agreement between East and West Cameroon about the federal joining of the two territories, was abolished in 1972 when Ahidjo proclaimed the Unitary State of Cameroon. The author discusses what has since become of these arrangements, and makes several proposals for a new system.

Eno Belinga, S.-M.
1976

The ‘Révolution Pacifique’ of 20 May 1972 refers to the date that Cameroon has become a Unitary Republic. The unitary process, and Ahidjo’s role in it, are glorified. The joining of the two territories and the education of the youth are defined as the principle purposes of the Cameroonian nation.
Enonchong, H.N.

The first juridical analysis of the constitutional institutions of the federation at the national and federal level, written by a Cameroonian student. It contains an extensive survey of the Cameroonian constitutional evolution since the German agreements of 1884 and the constitution of 1886, and it discusses in detail the constitution of the federation.

Etonga, M.

Juridical study on presidential power as laid down in the Constitution. The author draws parallels with the American presidential system. The analysis is focused on the deeper constitutional and political motives which have led up to an authoritarian presidency.

Forje, J.W.

A political-sociological study on nation building in Cameroon. The author focuses the analysis on the interrelations between political integration, system change/social change, and political stability. Three different periods are discussed: the time of federalism (1960-1966), the transition to a uniform government and a unitary party within the Federal State (1966-1972), and the time since the establishment of the unitary state (1972-1980).

Foumban Akawe, J.
First published biography on Biya, the second president of Cameroon.

Frenay, P.

Gonidec, P.-F.

Brief, but useful study, written by a jurist, on the Cameroonian political institutions and processes in the Federal State. It contains chapters on the political and constitutional evolution, the political forces, the contemporary political regime, and the nature of the Cameroonian society. Two appendices contain information on constitutional documents of the federation.

Gonidec, P.-F. & J.-M. Breton

A continuation and actualisation of Gonidec (1969) on the Unitary State of Cameroon, which was established in 1972.

Imbert. J.

Johnson, W.R.

An important system-functionalist work. The author applies the integration theory to Cameroon, and analyses the processes which made the bilingual political federation of Cameroon a success, notwithstanding the many social cleavages. Especially the first years after independence are very well treated.
Jouve, E.

Article written in reference to 20 May 1977 when Yaounde celebrated the fifth anniversary of the 'Révolution Pacifique'. The author endeavors to explain the long duration and stability of the Ahidjo government, and pays a lot of attention to the almighty position of the head of the state.

Kofele-Kale, N.

First publication on a political socialisation project, which makes a reconnaissance of the influence of social environment factors on the process of nation building.


Empirical-comparative study about the relation between place of residence and ethnic group values in West Cameroon. Two hypotheses are examined and affirmed: (1) 'Ethnic ties and loyalty do not detract from national orientations', and (2) 'variations in national political identification reflect differences in environmental conditioning'.

Inquiry into the relation between place of residence (village, plantation, or town) and the national political orientation in West Cameroon. The degree of political identification with the Cameroonian nation is measured for four political-cultural subsystems: identification, symbol, rule, and faith. The relation between environment and political orientation, which the author demonstrates, is neither explained nor put into an historical context.

Kofele-Kale, N. (ed.)

A collection of twelve essays, divided into four sections: the search for national identity, the distribution of political power, the establishment of an economic order, and aspects of social development.

Kontchou Kouomegni, A.

Juridical article on the relation which exists between the official state ideology and the constitutional development in Cameroon: there is a close correspondence between the political ideal of national unity and the establishment of a strong, centralised, omnipresent state. The author points out the dangers which cling to the unitary myth and an excess of concentration of power, namely an alienation between the population and the regime.


Juridical article in which the author explains the phased evolution of the constitutional institutions in the direction of increased centralisation from ‘l'idée-force de laquelle dépend la quasi-totalité des autres principes idéologiques du régime: l’impératif de l’unité nationale’.
Kumbuo, S.

Kwayeb, E.K.

LeVine, V.T.


The author examines the stability of the Cameroon Federal Republic since the unification in 1961 of the former French and British trusteeship territories. After a description of the historical background of Cameroonian nationalism, independence and integration, follows a sketch of the contemporary political process and a discussion on several central themes, such as national unity, economic development, and foreign relations.


Brief historical account of the steps which have led to the establishment of the Unitary State in 1972, and an analysis of several dimensions of the integration process.
Lippens, P.

Article on the lack of dialogue between the urban population and the municipality in the town of Douala. The author discusses the Communes, the institution of the ward chief, and the public services, and argues for administrative structures which better suit to the ‘modes d’expression actuels de la population’. The article can also be found in: Bulletin de l’Institut International d’Administration Publique, 27 (1973), p. 45-63.

Loi

Mademba, S.

Mawhood, P.

Comparative study which focuses on the administrative tasks of the local government, its relation to the central government, its internal structure, the local finance, and the local government functions.


Study on the local government in Cameroon, focusing on the allocations through the formal structures of government from the theoretical perspective of centralisation versus decentralisation. Since independence Cameroon has been characterised by an increasing dominance of the central government in Yaounde.
Mbarga, E.


The establishment of the Unitary Republic of Cameroon was adopted by the people through a referendum on 20 May 1972. This article discusses the politics of nation building that underlies this political success.


Juridical article on the different processes and institutions which constitute the political system of the Unitary State. The study is largely descriptive, and confined to the national level. The subjects are: the election system and the role of referendums, the role of the strong presidency and the ministers, the authority of the parliament, and the influence of the consultative and juridical bodies. An appendix contains the integral texts of the Constitution of 20 May 1972, and of the constitutional reforms of 9 May and 29 June 1979.

Mbome, F.


Juridical study in which the constitutional reforms of 9 June 1979 are analysed and evaluated. It concerns the articles no. 5 (regarding the prime ministry as a permanent institution within the government structure) and no. 7 (regarding the procedures for the delegation of presidential power).

Mintya, S.
Analysis of the East Cameroon Communes as institutional instruments for socio-economic development. The author describes the different forms as they existed until 1966, and the reforms of 1966 and 1967, which were meant to reduce the villages’ autonomy vis-à-vis the Communes.

Ndongko, W.A.

A study on the process of planning for economic development in the Federal State of Cameroon. The author discusses the nature of the organisations which were set up for this purpose, the societal implications, and the effects on the federal relations between East and West Cameroon.

Ngongang-Ouandji, A.

Juridical article on the structure and legal competence of the Cameroon Commune.


Juridical article on the public (in)violability of government officials. After the author has demonstrated a legal evolution within the Cameroon Federation in the direction of French written law, he describes the differences between the two legal systems.

Nwabuzor, E.
Political-science article on political culture in an ethnically pluriform state. The author intends to demonstrate the differences and similarities in political preferences and norms between the major ethnic groupings in Cameroon (the Widikum, the Beti, the Duala, the Wimbum, the Bamileke, the Tikar, the Bassa, and the Hausa-Fulbe). These might be relevant for the process of nation building in the national socio-political arena.


Part of the author’s survey investigation of ethnocentrism in West Cameroon. This article’s subject is the relation between the propensity for cooperation with other ethnic groupings, and the evaluation of the differences and similarities between these groupings, the so-called ethnic value distance.

Otabela, H.
1965 Pour une organisation communale de développement. Yaounde: mimeo.

A review of the fragmented municipal structure, and the administrative inefficiency due to the lack of control of the spending of financial sources, written by a then public officer.

Owona, J.

The establishment of the Unitary State in 1972 — approved by 99.99% of the population — became possible, because of the strong presidency, supported by a single-party system, and the weakening of the controlling and legislative powers of the Parliament. The article concludes with the full text of the new Constitution.

The constitutional reforms of 1975 did not affect the presidential system, and emphasised the fundamental, but unwritten, political principle of a systematic balance between the different provinces. Nevertheless, a political opening was made towards the young, rising generation of technocrats. Furthermore, the presidency was deconcentrated, i.e. the tasks and competence vis-à-vis the other top officials within the government were redefined.

1979


Prouzet, M.

1974


Political-science study of the national centres of political authority, paying equal attention to the formal state structures and the actually existing power relations. The author argues that the regime's stability is quite weak, since it rests on the authority of one single person. Furthermore, 'une sorte de léthargie politique semble avoir frappé l'immense majorité de la population'.

Rubin, N.

1971


Study on the historical processes which have led to the establishment of a federation which includes the former French Cameroun and the southern part of the former British Cameroons, and on the evolution of the political institutions and the policies of the new federal government. The second part deals with the methods through which the national elite has tried to forge Anglophone and Francophone elements into one nation, including the political institutions which were established for this purpose, such as a strong presidency and a unitary party.

Sam-Kumbam, P., & R. Ngwa-Nyamboli (eds.)

1985

An collection of six uncritical articles, written by Cameroonian scholars, on the changes which have taken place in Cameroon since the accession to the throne by Paul Biya.

Scheffler, G. (ed.)
1979 Überseeische Verfassungsvergleichung II. Frankfurt am Main etc.: Alfred Metzner. 14 p.

A comparative study on constitutional law in Cameroon, Rhodesia, Zambia, and Ethiopia.

Stark, F.M.

A critical article, written from a West Cameroonian perspective. A real federal state did not come into existence, because of the strongly centralised government structures and the East Cameroonian dominance on the federal level. The author examines why there was almost no resistance in West Cameroon against the unification. He concludes that the Ahidjo circles managed to incorporate the regional political elites through clientalist relations.


Political-science study on the relevance of political rhetoric and ideologies in the political life of the Cameroonian state. Political authority is based on shared values and symbols, which function as the vehicles of political legitimation.

Tabuwe, A.
1980 The one-party system and the African traditional institutions - Le système à parti unique et les institutions traditionnelles africaines. Yaounde: SOPECAM. 63 p., bibl., Asc Hc2949.

The author tries to explain the development of a single-party system in post-colonial Africa from its similarities with traditional political institutions; the chosen case study is Cameroon. The text is written in both English and French.
Tunteng, P.K.

A critical article which discusses the potentials of language to become a vehicle for politico-economic subordination.

Werf, S. van der

An outline of postwar political developments in Cameroon, in a nation building perspective. The achievements of the Ahidjo government are considered in a positive way.

POLITICAL STABILITY

Since the beginning of the 1970s ever more publications from Cameroon political students have appeared. These studies are more descriptive than theoretical, and criticisms of the political processes going on in the national arena are usually uttered in a very discrete way. The attention shifted somewhat to the enduring political stability of the Ahidjo government (in comparison to most other African states); this issue is closely bound up with the above-mentioned process of concentration of power among the political top elite. This common theme is present in almost all recently published political-science literature. Several explanatory factors have been proposed, but a satisfactory explanation as has yet not been found.

The nation building literature emphasises a personalistic explanation: Ahidjo’s statesmanship is held responsible for a relatively successful economic policy, a strong presidency, a strong national political party, and a well advanced integration of East and West Cameroon. Examples are the already-mentioned LeVine (1976), Jouve (1977), and Prouzet (1974); the last author, however, has his doubts about the durability of the political order, since it is founded on only one person.
Ofiaja (1979) stresses two other factors in his comparative study: the relative cohesion of the Cameroonian political elite and the extreme ethnic fragmentation in the country. A few studies on the political elite are available. *Elites* (1976) and Ngayap (1983) are person-oriented inventories, which reveal such a cohesion; the latter work also clarifies the criteria of recruitment. Nassara (1975) investigates the mechanisms through which the state bureaucracy consolidates and perpetuates its privileged position. A major example of a Marxist study which a priori starts from the existence of a dominant class as the 'Träger' of the post-colonial state, is Kom (1971). The suggestion of cohesion, which is implicit in the concept of class, is disputed by the political scientist Bayart. His publications on state formation in Cameroon (including 1974, 1978c, 1979) and in Africa in general (1981, 1983a, 1983b) emphasise the autonomy of the state: the formation of a politico-administrative elite — a kind of nascent ruling class — occurs within the state apparatus. He maintains that the top elite around Ahidjo has managed to establish a broad alliance with many different regional and ethnically based elites, having divergent economic bases and being made up of both the old ruling groups and the new educated leading groups. This clientalist encapsulation presupposes a very prudent manoeuvring from the side of the national elite in order to preserve a regional and ethnic balance in the national political arena. The elimination of open electoral competition resulting from the CNU's party monopoly, has made politicised ethnicity less visible, but did not destroy it at all. The factional competition behind the scenes is rather difficult to investigate in contemporary Cameroon. Kofele-Kale (1986), Stark (1976), Johnson (1970a), and Azarya (1978) pay some attention to the theme, besides Bayart. Geschiere (1984d) points out that an historical continuity between the old and new relations of authority on the subnational level, which Bayart presupposes, won't do in the forest zone in the south and west of Cameroon: institutionalised power positions which could have been encapsulated by the national
political top, were lacking in the strongly segmented societies in these areas.

A fourth factor which may partly explain how the Ahidjo regime managed to continue in power for more than two decades, is the state's autocratic character. As almost everywhere in Africa did the national political structure in Cameroon not develop according to the principles of the Western democracies, as they were instituted at the time of political independence. Only a few empirical studies about the increasing state interference with democratic freedoms and the increasing recourse to repressive means, are available. Joseph (1978) is a major study on the autocratic nature of the Cameroonian state; worth-mentioning are also the Amnesty International publications (1985, 1986) about political prisoners, and the articles of Bayart (1973b) and Nga Ndongo (1986-87) about the encroachment on the liberty of the Press. Marxist inspired opposition circles have also raised the question to what degree the Ahidjo government is backed by popular support; these small groups of exiles in Paris and Accra emphasise the neo-colonial relations with France and the suppression of all political opposition. Examples are the afore-mentioned Kom (1971) and Mbembé (1986), and also Eyinga (1978a, 1978b) and Kunde (1979). These analyses, however, strongly polarise between the authoritarian state and a supposedly passive powerless population. Bayart (1979), inspired by Gramsci, takes an important step to overcome this sterile duality by paying more attention to the ideological aspects of political action. He relativises the powerlessness of the popular masses by introducing the theoretical concept of 'popular modes of political action': the apparently a-political, diffuse counter-actions 'from below' against the establishment of new equalities. Geschiere (1984d) is a commentary upon this theory. The socio-economic foundation of the Cameroonian state will be more fully elaborated on in the next section. Foreign policy is an issue that touches upon the Marxist literature which stresses the relevance of the international politico-economic context of the state. Bayart (1972), A.N. Njoya (1976), Kofele-Kale (1981a), Oyono (1983) and
especially Beuth (1975) point out the small margins of an ‘independent’ diplomacy in a context of international economic dependence.

The Succession Crisis in the political centre in the years 1982-1984 came as a surprise to most scholars, since they were focused on the regime’s supposed stability. At the outset the presidential succession seemed to pass off orderly and constitutionally; this was attributed — in conjunction with the personalistic properties of the moder-nisation sociology — to Ahidjo’s careful policy in this respect; see the articles of Kamto (1983), Bipoum-Woum (1983), and LeVine (1983). The delegation of power was, however, incomplete. Ahidjo, still the leader of the CNU Party, turned out to be a menace to Biya’s presidential authority. Several Cameroonian publications have been devoted to the escalating power struggle between the two leaders, culminating in an unsuccessful coup d’état in 1984, and the subsequent consolidation of president Biya’s power: Oyono (1984-85), Kamga (1985), Ewandé (1984), Biyiti bi Essam (1984), and Bandolo (1985). LeVine (1986), Moutard (1985, 1986), and Bayart (1986) are attempts to analyse the difficult transition of power. The last two authors interpret the crisis as a conflict between the party and the state against the background of a changing power constellation in the Cameroonian society, which is the result of an ongoing power struggle between the established political elite and a rising generation of technocrats.

Amnesty International


Contains information on the imprisonment and detention of Jehovah Witnesses after the attempted coup d’état of 1984.

Contains information on the circumstances of political prisoners in Cameroon in the year 1985.

Azarya, V.

Historico-sociological study on the changing authority of the Fulbe in North Cameroon, North Nigeria, and Guinea in the political, economic, and religious field, caused by the colonial and post-colonial impact of state formation. Azarya uses the comparative method. The book is not only an important historical study, but contains also relevant information on the contemporary political power of the Fulbe on the national level.

Bandolo, H.
1985 La flamme et la fumée. Yaounde: SOPECAM.


Bayart, J.-F.

In this article the author compares the general principles on which the Cameroonian diplomacy is based, such as non-commitment, diversification of foreign relations, economic independence, international cooperation, and pragmatism, on the one hand, and their actual realisation on the other. The relations with France, the O.A.U., Francophone Central Africa, Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, and the Vatican are examined.


The author's aim is to clarify the societal base of the Ahidjo government. The major topic is the relation between the regime and the dominating social forces in the Cameroonian society. Bayart concludes that the presidency has acquired an ever increasing autonomy vis-à-vis the party, the army, and the business circles.


This is an analysis of the post-colonial state of Cameroon according to theoretical ideas borrowed from Gramsci. The author explains the establishment of an authoritarian state and a one-party system from the inequalities which arose in the colonial era as a result of the expansion of the capitalist mode of production.


A hallmark in the study of the African state in general. The author examines the development of political structures and processes in post-colonial Cameroon in terms of a ‘crise hégémonique’. He emphasises the state’s autonomy vis-à-vis the societal classes, and explains the government’s stability from the existence of a broad alliance of old and new regional elites (‘alliance hégémonique’). The totalitarian ambitions of the regime — the struggle for the ‘société civile’ — are interpreted as an attempt to compensate for the state’s weak economic base. Furthermore, the study points out the apparently a-political and diffuse counter-actions ‘from below’ against the establishment of these new power relations.


A theoretical article, inspired by Gramsci, in which the author presents his view on the African post-colonial state. See also Bayart (1983a, 1983b).


This is a survey of the turbulent years of transition of the Ahidjo government by Biya. The events are discussed in the politico-historical context of the Cameroonian society, and the competition between Ahidjo and Biya is interpreted as a competence struggle between the state and the party.

Beuth, H.-W.

An historical study about the foreign policies of the Cameroonian state. The first section is concerned with the political and economic history of Cameroon during the colonial epoch in terms of international dependence. The second section discusses the internal determination of the foreign policy of the independent Cameroonian state ('die aussenpolitische Aktionen zur internen Herrschafts-stabilisierung'). The final section analyses the economic base of the foreign policy, i.e. its very limited elasticity due to Cameroon's international economic dependence.

Bipoum-Woum, J.-M.

A juridical study about the quiet delegation of presidential powers in 1982 in accordance with the relevant constitutional rules. The author speculates on the possible effects on the political relations in Cameroon, such as a rise of the political conscience among the population, a desecration of the presidency, and a new balance between the state and the party.

Biyiti bi Essam, J.-P.
A journalistic account of the events which led to the failed coup d'état in April 1984. Topics discussed include the quiet succession of Ahidjo by Biya, the growing hostility between the two leaders, and the political manoeuvres for influence.

Boutrais, J.

A case study on a successful project by the Cameroonian government on the Bamenda Plateau to sedentarise the Mbororo, cattle-breeding nomads in the North and West of Cameroon. The author describes the technical, social, and cultural implications of this profound change in the way of living of an entire group.

Clignet, R.

A sociological article on the geographical and temporal variation of education as a determining factor on the professions and income levels in Cameroon.


This is a comprehensive analysis of the cultural determination of the influence of education on the way people enter the salaried labour market, the accessibility of the higher educated levels, and income levels.

Elites

A survey of the personnel composition of the most important political institutions in Cameroon. It is complemented with an alphabetical list of the political elite, brought up to date until June 1976.

Ewandé, D.

A brief summary and analysis of the 1984 coup d’état.

Eyinga, A.

The author, a Cameroonian, discusses the neo-colonial properties of the post-colonial state of Cameroon. The major topics discussed are the nationalistic demands since the First World War, the exclusion and repression of the UPC by the French, the institutionalisation of a neo-colonial political structure between 1956 and 1958, and the government’s increasing recourse to repression to preserve its power: ‘l’Etat néo-colonial est ... avant tout et partout, un État repressif’.


A critical personal account of the author’s unsuccessful attempt to candidate himself for the presidential elections in 1970; he was imprisoned for five years. Eyinga argues that the central leadership of the Ahidjo government, which had entered a new colonial relation with France, maintains a permanent state of emergency, and suppresses any form of free expression of opinion.

Geschiere, P.
The author argues that Hyden’s thesis on the uncaptured peasantry is one-sided. It is true that the post-colonial state has only a limited grip on the rural relations of production, but nevertheless the peasants’ production is tightly interwoven with socio-economic institutions which are firmly controlled by the state. The theoretical argument is corroborated with a case study of the Maka in southern Cameroon.


The author is concerned with the work of the French political scientist Bayart, who tries to elaborate Gramsci’s ideas for the African reality, such as the struggle for the civil society, the hegemonic project of the regime, and the various cultural-ideological manifestations of counter-movements in the society. Geschiere focuses on the relation between peasants and the state, sketches the regional differences which can be encountered in Cameroon, and concludes that the theory of the articulation of modes of production may fruitfully enrich Bayart’s analyses.

Hebga, J.-A.

The author points out the dangers of the existing religious and ethnic disparities for the national upbuilding of Cameroon, but he considers the negative effects of possible conflicts among the political elite even more dangerous.

Hugon, P.

An important, non-Marxist analysis of the Cameroonian economy.

Irele, M.
An annotated bibliography, containing 286 references, on the relations between Cameroon and Nigeria since independence. The author provides some general background information on politics and administration in Cameroon.

Jacquot, H.

Johnson, W.R.

A major system-functionalist application of the integration theory to Cameroon. Examined are the processes which made the bilingual political federation of Cameroon a successful experiment, notwithstanding the many social divisions, including the ethnic diversity.

Joseph, R.A.

Joseph, R.A. (ed.)

An important volume which centers on the autocratic Ahidjo government and its neo-colonial dependence on France. It contains articles written by Bayart, Mongo Beti, Eyinga, Lippens, Green, and Joseph. The major topics are the relations between Cameroon and France, the internal political system, the violations of human rights to preserve that system, and the Cameroonian economy.

Jouve, E.
Article written in reference to 20 May 1977 when Yaounde celebrated the fifth anniversary of the 'Révolution Pacifique'. The author endeavors to explain the long duration and stability of the Ahidjo government, and pays a lot of attention to the almighty position of the head of the state.

Kamga, V.
1985  

A popular work about the transition of power in 1982-1984. The author argues for reinforcement of the democratisation policy, as prudently started by the Biya government since 1984, and he strongly opposes against the dictatorial facets of the former Ahidjo regime (1958-1982).

Kamto, M.
1983  

A juridical article about the continuity problems with which a political regime is confronted in the time of succession of the head of state. Ahidjo’s policy in this matter was characterised by creating legal guarantees, and a careful political preparation; furthermore, the appointment of a crown-prince is an effective technique of ruling.

Kofele-Kale, N.
1981a  

An analysis of Ahidjo’s foreign policy. The author examines as to how far the principles of national independence, non-commitment, and regional and international cooperation are actually realised in the relations with France, Israel and the Middle East, and like-minded African countries.

1986  
The author examines the major sources of political conflict in the country, and the general effects of the Ahidjo rule on the mutual relevance of these factors.

Kom, D.
1971  

A detailed Marxist analysis of the Cameroonian economy under the Federal State. Starting from a class analysis, the author deals with the repressiveness of the post-colonial state apparatus, and he interprets the economic policy (‘le libéralisme planifié’) as an instrument on behalf of the imperialist forces.

Kunde, N.
1979  

A portrait of Ruben um Nyobé, the secretary-general of the UPC, who was killed in 1958 by French soldiers.

Lanne, B.
1984  

A general survey of the economic situation and the political events for the period 1972 until 1983.

LeVine, V.T.
1976  

Brief historical account of the steps which have led to the establishment of the Unitary State in 1972, and an analysis of several dimensions of the integration process.

1983  
A periodical article about the preparational steps that Ahidjo made before his retirement. The author emphasises that Ahidjo is still powerful as the president of the CNU, and he is quite optimistic about the prospects of Biya’s presidency.


The topics discussed include Biya’s installation as president, the causes of the presidential change of power, and the conflicts which appeared in the wake of the peaceful delegation of competence.

Mbembé, J.-A.

The author’s aim is to rehabilitate those who died for the nationalist struggle in the 1950s. This conflict is a political taboo in contemporary Cameroon, due to the UPC trauma.

Mboudou, A.M.
1982  Le financement du développement au Cameroun. Thèse 3e cycle, University of Yaounde.

Medard, J.-F.

Moutard, G.

The author analyses the disorderly change of power in 1983-1984 in terms of a tumultuous change of the power relations between the old political elite and a new technocratic generation, whereby the predominant force of regionalist tendencies made itself felt. Finally the article points out the effects: an increased politicisation of the army, a consolidation of Biya’s authority, affected prestige abroad, and a reform of the CNU.

Nassara, P.

A critical article on the mechanisms through which the bureaucratic elite in Cameroon is able to consolidate its power; the author points out the bureaucracy’s legislative competence, the impedimenta raised for the rise of competing power groups, and the consolidation of privileged positions through the educational system. Also the population’s reactions to these forms of domination are briefly considered.

Nga Ndongo, V.

An article about the relatively liberal policy with regard to information of the Biya government.

Ngayap, P.F.

The first systematic study on the Cameroonian top elite (the thousand most powerful persons in the country) under the political system of the Ahidjo regime, inherited by the Biya government. The topics discussed include the criteria for recruitment, several profiles of careers, changes in power positions, and the relations between the various categories. The author concludes that the Cameroonian political elite is quite homogeneous. An analysis in terms of the Cameroonian political economy is not presented.

Njoya, A.N.

Ofiaja, N.D.

A comparative study which deals with the political systems in Nigeria and Cameroon. The author puts forward the following factors to explain the relative stability and progress in Cameroon: an able leadership of the president, a strong national unitary party, a coherent political elite, and a fragmentation of ethnic identities.

Ombe Ndzana, V.


A critical study on the Cameroonian development policy. The volume refers to the South West Province, and centres on the Cameroon Development Corporation and the recent petrol industry boom in Limbe; both are strongly dominated by foreign capital.

Organisation Camerounaise de Lutte pour la Démocratie

A small volume which presents the opposition O.C.L.D. view on Cameroon’s development prospects in the light of the petrol reserves. The organisation asserts that only the foreign interest groups which conspire with the top of the government and the CNU Party, profit from the petrol incomes, and not the Cameroonian people.


Topics discussed in this manifesto are the nationalist movement and the neo-colonial political system in contemporary Cameroon, as well as several political and economic measures which are considered necessary for a real emancipation of the Cameroon people.
Oyono, D.

A description of Cameroon’s African foreign policy in the beginning of the 1980s. It is characterised, on the one hand, by attempts to follow a certain independent course from France, but, on the other hand, by strong economic, especially monetary, ties with that country.


After the attempted coup d’état in Yaounde, 1984, president Biya insinuated that there had been a relationship between the mutiny within the national forces and a complicity by foreign befriended nations.

Prouzet, M.

Political-science study of the national centres of political authority, paying equal attention to the formal state structures and the actually existing power relations. The author argues that the regime’s stability is quite weak, since it rests on the authority of one single person. Furthermore, ‘une sorte de léthargie politique semble avoir frappé l’immense majorité de la population’.

Schatzberg, M.G.

A study on the ‘moral matrix’ of the Cameroonian political system.

Stark, F.M.
A critical article, written from a West Cameroonian perspective. A real federal state did not come into existence, because of the strongly centralised government structures and the East Cameroonian dominance on the federal level. The author examines why there was almost no resistance in West Cameroon against the unification. He concludes that the Ahidjo circles managed to incorporate the regional political elites through clientalist relations.

STATE PENETRATION

The many administrative and institutional forms of the Cameroonian state, such as schools, hospitals, marketing boards, the police and the army, are the major channels of state penetration. Some information on the legal framework of the government bureaucracy — as studied by administrative law — can be found in Bockel (1971), Mbarga (1966), Nlep (n.d.), Duic (1978), Enonchong (n.d.), Owona (1979, 1985), Bipoum-Woum (1972), and Mawhood (1983). Cameroon’s judiciary, regulating the legal relations between the government and its civilians, is, however, not able to control the whole scope of administrative activity; see Ngongnang-Ouandji (1969a), Enonchong (1965), Jacquot (1974), Mescheriakoff (1980), Binyoum, Bipoum-Woum (1972) and Owona (1975).

A juridical facet of the process of state penetration is the mutual influence which the lowest echelon of the bureaucratic apparatus and indigenous legal systems exercise on each other’s functioning. This theme touches upon the recent debate about the actual functioning of formal administrative structures; Enonchong (n.d.), Essama (1969), and Doumbé-Bill (1983) contain some general information on this topic.

The Marxist-inspired literature on Cameroon extensively deals with the politico-economic facets of the process of bureaucratic state penetration, i.e the limitations of that process. Accordingly, a common denominator is the political economy in Cameroon. A theoretically leading study is the already-mentioned Bayart (1979). The author maintains that the authoritarian pretensions of the political elite are evident from the attempts to control the ‘civil society’; he explains this tendency as arising from the weak
economic base of the political leaders, and stresses that encapsulation succeeds only partially, because of the popular counter-movements in the margin of the political domain. Medard (1977a) also points out the relative weakness of the post-colonial state, stressing the extreme inefficiency of many bureaucratic institutions. Illy (1976), Ndongko (1974, 1975a, 1975b, 1985a, 1985b), Ombe Ndzana (1986, 1987) and Willame (1985) are critical economic analyses of the development schemes mapped out by the Cameroonian government. Schatzberg & Zartman (1986) is a recent compilation of articles which deals with several aspects of the Cameroonian political economy.

The limitations of state penetration is also a dominant theme in the Marxist-inspired literature on the relations between the peasants and the state. State intervention in the structures of agricultural production on the grassroots level in the name of development is generally interpreted as an attempt to incorporate the peasants into the market economy; see, for example, Kandem (1984), Ombe Ndzana (1986), and Langley (1984). Its function would be to subordinate the peasants’ productivity to capitalist groups, thus, the expropriation of agricultural surpluses for the benefit of a further expansion of capitalism. The major studies which touch upon this ‘articulation of modes of production’ are Henn (1980), Geschiere (1982), Konings (1986), Ntangsi (1984), Tchala-Abina (1982), and Epale (1985). The (transformed) persistence of non-capitalist structures of production indicates, however, that state penetration into the Cameroonian countryside is far from complete. Geschiere (1984c, 1984d, 1984e) tries to elaborate Bayart’s insights, relating them to theoretical views of the French anthropologist Rey in order to find an explanation for the regional variations of state penetration in Cameroon.

Pastoralism takes up a minor position in the Cameroonian society, and, not surprisingly, has attracted little scholarly attention. A small minority of the Fulbe in the northern frontier areas near Nigeria lead a pastoral way of life. No specific monograph is available about these so-called Mbororo, but several descriptive

Another aspect of state penetration is the mobilisation of the population through the channel of nation-wide organisations which are encapsulated into the state bureaucracy, for example, trade-unions. The most important vehicle in this respect is the CNU Party, which is totally incorporated into the formal administrative structures. Bayart (1970, 1971, 1973a) analyses the CNU as an inadequate institution to mobilise the population for government politics, express the interests of the population, and acquire sufficient authority vis-à-vis the governmental apparatus. Nevertheless, Bayart (1978a, 1978b) believes that elections do have some meaning in a single-party system as arenas of social competition. Geschieré (1986) is a regional application of Bayart's analytical model, but he is more pessimistic about the political relevance of elections.

Bayart's analysis of the CNU as an inadequate channel of communication between the population and the political elite was corroborated by the Crisis of Presidential Succession (1982-1984): the party stayed passively aloof, and did not stand up for the president. Hence, president Biya announced a reorganisation at the party congress in Bamenda (1985): more room for dialogue and limited democratisation in the appointment policy. This reform was marked by a change of name — 'Union Nationale Camerounaise' became 'Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Camerounaise' (RDPC) — and by a change of party-device ('Unité, Progrès, Démocratie'). Moutard (1985, 1986), Bayart (1986), and Scott (1985) are descriptive articles about this change. It is still too early to evaluate the degree to which these ideas have been put into effect.

Balandier, G.
A sociological study of the ideological reactions of the population to its economic and political incorporation during the colonial epoch. The author extensively discusses the important role the Fang have played in the nationalist movement.

Bayart, J.-F.

An article about the unitary party CNU. The author focuses on its integrative role, i.e. its assigned function as the mobiliser of energies on the individual level for the sake of national development.


An article about the gap between what the CNU pretends to be, and what it actually is. The author discusses the heterogeneity behind the facade of unity, and the party’s powerlessness vis-à-vis the government apparatus.


The author critically discusses the centralisation of authority, and the party’s inability to integrate the population into the national development schemes. ‘The regime established by M. Ahidjo is a poor response to the need for integration and identification, for the expression and meeting of interests. It frustrates the adaptation of the Cameroonian people to modernisation; it is dysfunctional from the point of view of political development’ (p. 140).

Bayart asserts that clientalism, or the existence of extensive networks of patron client relations, 'can be understood only in relation to the historical evolution of the structure of systems of inequality and domination' (p. 67). He believes that elections in the context of the Cameroonian one-party government can play an important role as arenas of social competition.


An analysis of the election process in the clientalist state of Cameroon, and of the decreasing significance of elections as an important factor in the political power struggle, due to the 'autonomisation de l'Etat'. The author also pays attention to the popular protests with regard to the elections.


A hallmark in the study of the African state in general. The author examines the development of political structures and processes in post-colonial Cameroon in terms of a 'crise hégémonique'. He emphasises the state's autonomy vis-à-vis the societal classes, and explains the government's stability from the existence of a broad alliance of old and new regional elite ('alliance hégémonique'). The totalitarian ambitions of the regime — the struggle for the 'société civile' — are interpreted as an attempt to compensate for the state's weak economic base. Furthermore, the study points out the apparently a-political and diffuse counteractions 'from below' against the establishment of these new power relations.


An analytic article about the change of power in 1982-1984 in terms of a struggle between the state and the party, and about the restoration and consolidation of Biya's presidential authority (1984-1986) through a programme of renovation which meets to a certain degree the increased dynamics of certain social categories.
Binyoum, J.
Le contentieux de la légalité en droit administratif camerounais.
University of Toulouse.

Bipoum-Woum, J.-M.

A juridical article on the status of administrative law within the Federal State of Cameroon. The author signals a development of administrative law in the direction of bureaucratic regulations and procedures at the cost of judicial procedures.

Bockel, A.

One of a series of studies in African administrations, this booklet briefly examines the Cameroonian administrative structures and procedures, as well as the juridical foundation of the bureaucratic organisation. An extensive appendix provides the original texts of the documents on the establishment of the 'Cour Fédérale de Justice' in 1969, and of the 'Statut Général de la Fonction Publique Fédérale'.

Boutrais, J.

The drought in the Sahel zone in the early 1970s induced many herdsmen to migrate to the high plateaux of Bamenda, the Bamun plateau, and the southern flank of Adamawa, where they often encounter opposition from the authorities and the established population.


A description of the state-induced sedentarisation of the Mbororo in western Cameroon.

Doumbe-Bill, S.

Duic, W.Z.

A manual of all aspects of the government administration: public life, commerce, the legal system, and public health in the African states, including Cameroon.

Ejedepang-Koge, S.N.

The author, being a member of the Bakossi, intends to preserve the ‘dying tradition’ of his people. See especially the chapter on ‘Traditions’. The book could be read in connection with Ejedepang-Koge (1975).


The study examines the interaction between traditional and modern
methods of earning a living, in relation with the peasantry’s incorporation into the cash economy.

Enonchong, H.N.

A juridical article about the legal relation between the government and its citizens in the Federal State, i.e. the legal competence to prosecute citizens, and to be sued by its citizens.


Epale, S.J.

The author provides an economic-historical analysis of the Cameroon Development Corporation.

Essama, P.R.
1969 Structures traditionnelles et nouvelles autorités administratives et politiques dans la République du Cameroun (essai de sociologie politique). Faculty of Law in Paris.

Frantz, C.

This is a case study on the pastoral Fulbe inhabiting the border areas between Nigeria and Cameroon. Topics discussed are the increasing state intervention in their way of life, and the increasing ethnic dynamics of these so-called Mbororo.
Geschiere, P.

1982 Village communities and the state: changing relations among the Maka of Southeastern Cameroon since the colonial conquest. London etc.: Kegan Paul International. 512 p., bibl., ind., Asc 10472.

An important political-anthropological study about the changing power relations in the Maka villages in southern Cameroon, as a result of the penetration of the colonial state in the forest zone, and of the rise of a regional elite of Maka bureaucrats within the post-colonial state apparatus.


An article on the articulation of old and new modes of production, as developed by French Marxist anthropologists like Meillassoux, Rey, and Godelier, and the role of the state in this process. The author tries to clarify the explanatory potential of this model for the colonial state in Africa, focusing on Cameroon and French Central Africa, and its relevance for explaining the precarious role of the post-colonial state.


The author is concerned with the work of the French political scientist Bayart, who tries to elaborate Gramsci’s ideas for the African reality, such as the struggle for the civil society, the hegemonic project of the regimes, and the various cultural-ideological manifestations of counter-movements in society. Geschiere focuses on the relationship between peasants and the state, sketches the regional differences which can be encountered in Cameroon, and concludes that the theory of the articulation of modes of production might fruitfully enrich Bayart’s analyses.
1984e ‘Marxistische visies op de post-koloniale staat in Afrika: de
discussie in R.A.P.E. en de historische benadering van Rey’, in: W.
van Binsbergen & G. Hesseling (eds.), Aspecten van staat en
maatschappij in Afrika: recent Dutch and Belgian research on the

The author argues that several insights of the French Marxist
anthropologist P.P. Rey might be relevant for the debate on the
post-colonial state in Africa, as carried on in the periodical ‘Review
of African Political Economy’. Rey’s model of the articulation of
capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production provides an
opportunity to distinguish regional variations in the patterns of class
formation and the role of the state. Geschiere illustrates the argument
with the Maka of Southeast Cameroon.

1986 ‘Paysans, régime national et recherche hégémonique: l’implantation
de l’U(N)C, le Grand Parti National dans les villages maka’, in:
Politique Africaine, 22, p. 73-100. Asc.

The article deals with the establishment and role of the CNU on the
regional level, in the Maka villages in Southeast Cameroon. The
argument is concentrated on the Party’s impact on the relations
between the state and the peasantry, and on the formation of a
regional elite. The analysis is inspired by the theoretical views of
Bayart about a ‘recherche hégémonique’, but emphasises the histor-
ical discontinuity which characterises the process of elite formation.

Henn, J.K.

1980 Peasants, workers, and capital: the political economy of labour and
incomes in Cameroun. Ann Arbor etc.: University Microfilms Inter-
national. 396 p., bibl., Asc 11768.

This is a Marxist class analysis of the Cameroonian economy. The
author distinguishes three modes of production, which together
form one social formation: the patriarchal subsistence mode, the
merchant capitalist and state dominated petty commodity production
mode, and the capitalist mode of production. The expropriation of
agricultural surplus by the state is extensively discussed.
Hurault, J.

The article discusses the conflicts which have emerged between Fulbe pastoralists and Tikar agriculturalists.


Illy, H.F.

An important history about the development policy of the government in terms of an interaction process between political and economic factors. Topics discussed include the political evolution of the Ahidjo government, the translation of development purposes into a political infrastructure, and the opted strategies for economic development. The author draws the following general conclusion: ‘Economic growth and political stability as primary objectives and results of a development policy did not generate more but less social justice’ (p. 389).

Jacquot, H.


A juridical article about the history, the organisation, and the competence of administrative law in Cameroon.
Kandem, E.

A description and analysis of the support the Cameroonian government offers the cooperative movement (1) through the creation of a legal framework, and (2) through finance, management, and control. The many problems involved are also discussed.

Konings, P.

This is a case study about the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC) in West Cameroon. The author analyses the proletarisation of the local peasantry through the mechanisms of expropriation of land and contract agriculture, which are imposed on the peasants by an alliance of the post-colonial state, international capital circles, and the agro-industry.

Langley, P.

A critical article about the very limited participatory opportunities for the popular classes in the decision-making process of state development institutions.

Mawhood, P.
Study on the local government in Cameroon, focusing on the allocations through formal structures of government from the theoretical perspective of centralisation versus decentralisation. Since independence Cameroon has been characterised by an increasing dominance of the central government in Yaounde.

Mbarga, E.
1966

An analysis of the principles of the administrative organisation, discussing, among other things, the central government, the local level administration, and the evolution of local government institutions.

Medard, J.-F.
1977a

The author characterises the Cameroonian political system as underdeveloped, because of the inefficiency of its political institutions. A fundamental paradox is clarified: the state is strong, authoritarian and absolute on the one hand, but powerless and weak, due to the absence of bureaucratic discipline, on the other. The cause: ‘L'autorité politique-administrative est converti en patrimoine privé par la bureaucracie’.

Meschériakoff, A.-S.
1980

A sociological article about a legal institution in crisis: the administrative proceedings in Cameroon. The crisis might be resolved by accommodating this institution, which is modeled after the French version, to the Cameroonian reality.

Moutard, G.
1985
The author analyses the disorderly change of power in 1983-1984 in terms of a tumultuous change of the power relations between the old political elite and a new technocratic generation, whereby the predominant force of regionalist tendencies made itself felt. Finally the article points out the effects: an increased politicisation of the army, a consolidation of Biya's authority, affected prestige abroad, and a reform of the CNU.


This article, which is a continuation of Moutard (1985), examines the period 1984-1986. President Biya consolidates his authority, and announces a more democratic and liberal policy in the political and economic life. The author pays ample attention to the reform of the unitary party at the CNU congress in Bamenda in March 1985.

Ndongko, W.A.


A study of the process of planning for economic development. Topics discussed include the nature of the established development organisations, their societal impact, and the effects of planning for the federal relations between East and West Cameroon.


This article deals with the diffuse system of revenue allocation between the federal and state level administrations in the Cameroonian Federation.

An economic analysis of the development policies, the foreign aid, the transmission of technology, and the investment policies in Cameroon.


This is an historico-economic analysis of the economic base of the post-colonial Cameroonian state. Foreign capital is a dominant factor in the national economy. The state expanded from an intermediary institution between indigenous and foreign business circles, usually favouring the foreign interests, to an instrument for the bureaucratic and political elite to accumulate capital through (para)statal enterprises. Thus, the absence of a capitalist middle class in Cameroon is compensated for by bureaucrats and politicians. The same article is published in: M.G. Schatzberg & I.W. Zartman (eds.), The political economy of Cameroon. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. p. 83-110 (1986).

Ngongang-Ouandji, A.

This article is concerned with the institutional organisation of the administrative proceedings in the Federal State of Cameroon.

Nlep, R.
Ntangsi, J.V.

The penetration of capitalist relations of production in the countryside through the introduction of cash crop cultivation goes hand in hand with the generation of a considerable agricultural surplus. The author focuses on the mechanisms of how a large percentage of these surpluses are transmitted to the public sector.

Ombe Ndzana, V.


A critical study on the Cameroonian development policy. The volume refers to the South West Province, and centres on the Cameroon Development Corporation and the recent petrol industry boom in Limbe; both are strongly dominated by foreign capital.

Organisation Camerounaise de Lutte pour la Démocratie

A small volume which presents the opposition O.C.L.D. view on Cameroon’s development prospects in the light of the petrol reserves. The organisation asserts that only the foreign interest groups which conspire with the top of the government and the CNU Party, profit from the petrol incomes, and not the Cameroonian people.


Topics discussed in this manifesto are the nationalist movement and the neo-colonial political system in contemporary Cameroon, as well as several political and economic measures which are considered necessary for a real emancipation of the Cameroon people.
Owona, J.

A critical article about the institutionalisation of exceptive legislation within all sectors of public law, favouring the executive.

1979 Droit administratif spécial de la République Unie du Cameroun. 2 vol.

1985 Droit administratif spécial de la République du Cameroun (Série Manuels et Travaux de l’Université de Yaoundé). Paris: EDICEF.

Schatzberg, M.G. & I.W. Zartman (eds.)

Scott, F.

The article reports on the CNU party congress in Bamenda in 1985. Biya announced a reorganisation of the party, which was symbolised by a change of name to Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement (CPDM).

Tchala-Abina, F.
1982 The state, the bureaucracy and farmers in rural development: a case study of the social relations of production in selected development corporations in Cameroon. Ithaca: Cornell University. 437 p., bibl., Asc 13455.

A comparative analysis of the institutional framework of a growing number of state-controlled development corporations which influence the peasantry’s modes of production. The author discusses many explanatory factors for the development of the social relations of production in the context of these schemes.

Willame, J.-C.
HISTORICAL CONTINUITY

State formation in the pre-colonial and colonial period

In the 1970s the relation between the contemporary power structures of the modern state and earlier pre-colonial political systems, especially the transformations of the latter during the colonial and post-colonial era, has become an important field of study. A growing cooperation between anthropologists and historians in the study of African societies reflects this new emphasis on historical continuity. Several general historical works which deal extensively with the 19th century political constellation in Cameroon, are available. The classic study of East Cameroon is still Mveng (1963); see also Mveng & Beling-Nkoumba (1974). Such a survey does not exist for West Cameroon; regionally confined information can be found in Ardener (1962), Eyongetah & Brain (1974) and Nkwi & Warnier (1982).

The more recent historical researches made into Cameroon's pre-colonial societies make systematical use of oral traditions and focus on the processes of state formation. As a general rule, the most sparsely populated regions have been studied least intensively; in combination with the absence of incentives of 'early state' formation, this explains the small number of regional historical works referring to the forest areas of southern Cameroon. Major examples are Geschiere (1982) on the Maka, and Laburthe-Tolra (1977, 1981) and Quinn (1980) on the Beti. The first emphasises the discontinuity between the old power structures and the establishment of French colonial rule. A little more literature is available on the coastal jungle areas. Ardener (1956) and *Nature* (1978) describe the segmentary political structures, whereas Bouchaud (1952), Ardener (1968), Austen & Jacob (1974), Austen (1977a, 1977b), Chem-Langhêè (1985), and Wirz (1972, 1973) contain information on several aspects of the 19th century political economy, notably trade and slavery.

Hardly any literature is available on the origins of chieftainships in the Grassfields in the wake of the expulsion of large numbers of
people from Adamawa, caused by the Fulbe invasions. Consequently, only few studies contribute to the debate on the development of the old pre-colonial African states from preceding organisational forms. The same holds true for the discussion of the economic foundations of pre-colonial states, which deals with issues such as the grip that state elites held on the peasants' production, and the acquisition of state incomes from trade and plunder. Only Tardits (1979, 1980) on state formation among the Bamun, is important in this respect; see further Chilver & Kaberry (1967), Benjeng Soh (1980-81), Geary (1976), and Fardon (draft). Rowlands (1979) deals with the effects of long-distance trade on state formation. Of course, a considerable number of older anthropological studies do exist, which describe the local remnants of these 'kinship states' as they persisted in the colonial context; the neo-traditional aspects of these incorporated forms of political organisation are, however, usually not drawn into the analysis. The most and the best literature is available about the Bamileke, the numerically largest ethnic grouping in the region. Monographs on this people as a whole do, however, not exist; this may be due to the political fragmentation — the unit of investigation is usually one or several chieftainships — and to the fact that the Bamileke as such are probably a neo-traditional creation. The same applies to the Tikar, who live on both sides of the frontier between East and West Cameroon. The central theme of this expanse of literature is the interrelatedness of the political institutions and the patrilineal social structure. Delarozière (1949), Hurault (1962, 1970a, 1970b), Tardits (1960), Kwayeb (1960), Chilver (1964), Brain (1972), Pradelles de Latour Dejean (1979, 1985), Barbier (1977), and Maillard (1985) describe the Bamileke; Kaberry (1952, 1963), Ritzenthaler & Ritzenthaler (1962), Ritzenthaler (1967), and Strootman (1972) are about the Tikar; and I. Njova (1950), A. Njova (1977), and Njeuma (1974) refer to the Bamun. For a multi-ethnic study on the Bamenda region, see Forde & Kaberry (1967). Several works have appeared which draw attention to the changes which these 'traditional' political institutions have undergone as a

The 19th century state formation processes in the Islamic North of the country have been intensively studied since the beginning of the 1970s. Especially worth mentioning are the studies written by Mohammadou (1976, 1978, 1979, 1982, 1983), and furthermore Njeuma (1973, 1978), Dika-Akwa (1970), and Abubakar (1972, 1977). All of them are Cameroonian historians. The power of these Fulbe states was largely based on the exploitation of the surrounding regions through trade and slave-raids, so that sharp contradictions in the form of relations of slavery and serfdom came into existence; see Wirz (1972), Derman (1973), Azarya (1978), and Burnham (1980b). A possible explanation for this richness of historical study might be the fact that the pre-colonial political systems were much better preserved in Adamawa than in other parts of Cameroon, so that forms of historical continuity can be rather easily demonstrated; the German and French colonisers utilised the institutionalised authority of the the Fulbe rulers, the ‘laamiido’s’, to establish their own rule in these remote areas. Not much research has been devoted to the encapsulation of these states into the colonial state. Froelich (1954), Azarya (1978), and Shimada (1984) contain information on this topic; Lestringeant (1964) and Burnham (1980a) deal with the position of the Guider and the Gbay'a respectively within this 20th century political context. In the 1960s and 1970s the public authorities did not allow any inquiries into the political structures of the Fulbe chieftainships, because this regional political alliance formed the major power base for Ahidjo, the former president. A comparative study on the
chieftainships in the north and the west of Cameroon is not available.

A second aspect of continuity in state formation processes has to do with the historical relation between the polity and the operation of the colonial state on the one hand, and the contemporary structures of authority within the post-colonial state on the other. Most scientific analyses on this topic were produced by historians and jurists. It is remarkable that documentation on the German Protectorate era is much more extensive than on the successive mandatory and trusteeship periods under France and Great Britain. The most important works on German colonial rule are: Hausén (1970) on the interrelatedness of the colonial economy and the government, Waltz (1981) on criminal law, Wirz (1972) on commercial developments, Mandeng (1973) on forced labour, and, furthermore, Stoecker (1960, 1968) and Rudin (1938). These studies written by German historians are invariably quality products, which may perhaps be explained by the limited scope and duration of the German colonial empire of the time. They are fierce charges against German colonialism and based on Marxist interpretations, excepting Rudin. Accounts about European rivalry in the 1880s concerning Cameroon can be found in several studies, including Rudin (1938), Stoecker (1960), and Ndongo (1984). Literature on the African reactions to European expansionism is much more scanty; see, for example, Geschiere (1982) on the Maka, and Quinn (1980) on the Beti.


There is not much literature on the topic of French colonial rule in Cameroon. General studies on the French colonial empire which contain empirical information on Cameroon, are: Suret-Canale (1971, 1972, 1982) from a Marxist-Leninist perspective, and
Delavignette (1950), Chazelas (1931), and Costedoat (1930) from a colonial perspective. Quinn (1974) compares the characteristics of German and French rule in Cameroon, and Alexandre (1970) describes the many different public functions within the colonial bureaucracy. Several works deal with the economic foundation of the French colonial state. Kapteue (1979) describes the system of forced labour, while Geschiere (1978, 1982, 1983, 1984a, 1984c, 1984e) and Guyer (1978, 1980a, 1980b, 1981, 1984) analyse the role which the colonial state has played in the expansion of capitalism in the southern forest area; also significant is Quinn (1970). It is remarkable that the literature on this topic is largely confined to the southern part of Francophone Cameroon, and that scientific analyses of the societal involvement of the colonial state in the western and northern parts of the country hardly exist. A good source of information on the inside impressions of the colonial experience is the non-scientific literature. There are several works by Cameroonians on the colonial period, such as Kuoh-Moukouri (1963), Mongo Beti (1956, 1957, 1958), and Ferdinand Oyono (1956a, 1956b). Furthermore, annual reports have been published by both the German and the French colonial governments (see France, Germany), and many official documents which contain information on the views of public servants on political issues, can be consulted in the archives of the O.R.S.T.O.M. documentation office in Yaounde. Witherell (1964, 1973) offers surveys of the official publications which came out in British and French Cameroon. Osuntokun (1977-78) is a comparative study on the administrative systems devised by the two colonial powers.

The existing literature on the British colonial administration is scanty, dated, and merely descriptive. Cameroonians scientists have not occupied themselves with the subject. Overview studies are not available. Short functionalist descriptions of the politico-administrative organisations in the distinct regions can be found in Chilver (1963), McCullogh et al. (1954), Chilver & Kaberry (1967), Kaberry (1952), Gardiner (1967), Ruel (1969), and Brain
(1972). Historical works which deal with the societal facets of British rule, are completely lacking.

Abubakar, S.

A history of the establishment of the Fulbe in northern Cameroon, including the creation of an emirate, the domination of the pre-existing peoples, and the spread of Fulfulde and Islam.


This is a history of the processes of centralised state formation in pre-colonial Adamawa, focusing on Yola, the old capital of the Fombina emirate. The author distinguishes several phases in the process of state formation, notably its origin, consolidation, expansion, and disintegration. Some attention is paid to the rise of Mahdism in the southern part of the emirate.

Alexandre, P.

Andrews, C.M. & S. Konya-Forstner

Discusses the second partition and reunification of Cameroon.

Ardener, E.
Ardener worked as a government anthropologist in West Cameroon from 1952 until 1961. This book is based on thorough fieldwork research, complemented with an extensive survey of the then available literature. The majority of the volume is devoted to the traditional life of the Kpe, including their political organisation.


This is an historical geography of the Cameroonian littoral, which supplements the ethnographic study of Bouchaud (1952).

Austen, R.A.


An historical article about the enduring Duala resistance in the beginning of this century against the domination of the Germans.


Austen, R.A. & K. Jacob


An historical article about pre-colonial slave trade operations. The Duala operated as the middle men between the Dutch and the slave-drivers of the Grassfields.

Austen, R.A. & R. Headrick

A general survey study about the goals of the European colonisers in Central Africa: the supply of raw materials, the access to protected markets, and the elevated international status. The degree to which these goals were met, depended on the material and historical situation in each colony, and on the investment level from the metropolis. The study provides many references to Cameroon.

Azarya, V.


Historico-sociological study on the changing authority of the Fulbe in North Cameroon, North Nigeria, and Guinea in the political, economic, and religious field, caused by the colonial and post-colonial impact of state formation. Azarya uses the comparative method. The book is not only an important historical study, but contains also relevant information on the contemporary political power of the Fulbe on the national level.

Barbier, J.C.

Should be read in connection with Nkwi (1977).

Beek, W.E.A. van

An anthropological article about the Kapsiki-Higi in North Cameroon and Northeast Nigeria. The marginalisation of the Kapsiki should not be interpreted in terms of geographical factors, but in terms of this people’s interaction with processes of state formation since the 18th century.
Bejeng-Soh, P.

An historical article about the development from a segmentary to a centralised political system among the Awing in West Cameroon, a development which ran parallel with the 19th century sedentarisation of this ethnic grouping.

Beti, Mongo


The English translation is ‘Mission to Kala’ (1966), translated by P. Green.


Blanc, P.

Bouchaud, J.

A history, which is still important because of the archival sources which the author was able to consult.

Brain, R.

An important volume about the Bangwa kinship system. The author analyses the patrilineal relations in the context of the economic and political life.
Burnham, P.


A major study about the social organisation, history, economy, and environment of the Gbaya, living in the eastern part of Adamawa, including a discussion of the historical relation between the Gbaya and the Fulbe. The author also deals with the adjustments of the Gbaya political system to European colonial rule.


This is an historical article about slavery in 19th century Adamawa, centering on the effects of slave-raids and trade upon the Fulbe state of Ngaoundere and the neighbouring people of the Gbaya.

Chazelas, V.

An extensive descriptive study, written by a former public officer, about France's role as the mandated ruler of Cameroon and Togo. The author presents the colonial argument, i.e. the positive achievements of French rule are emphasised.

Chem-Langhé, B.

Chilver, E.M.
An account of the activities of German and British civil servants in the West Cameroon savanna area, at the fluctuating frontier of two administrative philosophies, i.e. direct and indirect rule. Furthermore, the author discusses the crosscurrent of Christianity, and the process of effecting administrative decentralisation (and its limitations).


This article includes information on the political and social organisation of a Bamileke chiefdom which was incorporated into the colonial state.

Chilver, E.M. & P.M. Kaberry

A socio-historical study about the traditional systems of several Bamenda chieftainships. The historical information is rather meager, because the data were only collected through surveys and interviews. The analysis does not deal with the incorporation of these traditional political institutions into the West Cameroonian colonial state.

Copet-Rougier, E.

Costedoat, R.

The author defends the ‘effort français’ in Cameroon with arguments which are nearly racist. The mandatory system is evaluated as being favourable to both France and Cameroon. Costedoat extensively describes France’s involvement in the social, political, and economic development of Cameroon. An appendix includes historical documents about the colonial administration.
Delarozière, R.

The first overview of the Bamileke social structure, centering on the chieftainships and the societies, and compiled from official reports.

Delavignette, R.

This volume, originally published in Paris in 1946 as ‘Service africain’, was a classic study in French colonial administrative circles. The author had served as ‘Commandant du Cercle’ in Francophone Cameroon. The majority of the book deals with the peasantry, and analyses the changes which had taken place as a result of the influence of world economic forces.

Derman, W.

One of the topics of this study is 19th century slavery in North Cameroon (p. 27-41).

Derrick, J.

Dika-Akwa nya Bonambéla, B.G.

Topics discussed include Fulbe state formation in 19th century Adamawa, and the conflicts which were provoked by the German invasion in the Fulbe regions in the north and the Duala region in the south.
Eballa, Y.

Elango, L.Z.

Eyongetah, T. & R. Brain

An introductory history about Cameroon, written for educational purposes. The emphasis is on West Cameroon.

Fardon, R.O.
draft Raiders and refugees. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Includes analyses of the processes of pre-colonial state formation in the border regions of Nigeria and North Cameroon, focusing on the establishment of the Chamba conquering states.

Forde, D. & P.M. Kaberry (eds.)

Includes a chapter on the Bamenda kingdoms in West Cameroon.

France

Annual official reports about Cameroon, addressed to the League of Nations.

Annual official reports about Cameroon, addressed to the League of Nations.

Froelich, J.C.


Topics discussed include the formal political organisation of the pre-colonial Fulbe states in Adamawa, and the established polity in the colonial era.

Gardinier, D.E.


Geary, C.


A history about the state formation process in a small West Cameroonian kingdom over a period of two centuries.


A descriptive paper about the influence of the legal institutions as established by the colonial government, on the functioning of conflict-regulating institutions in the kingdom of We in the Grassfields.


A paper about the Bamun thrones, which were the visual symbols of the kingship. One of them is presently in the 'Museum für Völkerkunde' in Berlin. The author discusses the collection of ethnographic objects by Europeans in the early period of Cameroonian colonialism.
Germany, Auswärtiges Amt
1895-1907 Jahresberichte über die Entwicklung der deutschen Schutzgebiete.

Annual government reports, including Cameroon.

Germany, Reichskolonialamt
1907-1909 Denkschrifte über die Entwicklung der Schutzgebiete in Afrika und Südsee.

Annual government reports, including Cameroon.

1910-1912 Die deutschen Schutzgebieten in Afrika und Südsee.

Annual government reports, including Cameroon.

Geschiere, P.

This article deals with the various forms of local and regional level leadership in the colonial period.

1978 ‘The articulation of different modes of production: old and new inequalities in Maka villages (South-East Cameroon)’, in: African Perspectives, 2, p. 45-68.


A significant political-anthropological study about the changing power relations in the Maka villages, caused by the penetration of the colonial state in the area, and about the rise of a regional elite of Maka bureaucrats in the post-colonial state.


The author argues that the peasants are not fully incorporated into the modern politico-economic constellation. This factor, in combination with the articulation of capitalist and pre-capitalist relations of production, and the autistic properties of the national bureaucracy, hinders rural development. The case study presented is the establishment of a ZAPI cooperation in a Maka village in southeast Cameroon.


An article on the articulation of old and new modes of production, as developed by French Marxist anthropologists like Meillassoux, Rey, and Godelier, and the role of the state in this process. The author tries to clarify the explanatory potential of this model for the colonial state in Africa, focusing on Cameroon and French Central Africa, and its relevance for explaining the precarious role of the post-colonial state.


The author argues that several insights of the French Marxist anthropologist P.P. Rey might be relevant for the debate on the post-colonial state in Africa, as carried on in the periodical ‘Review of African political economy’. Rey’s model of the articulation of capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production provides an opportunity to distinguish regional variations in the patterns of class formation and the role of the state. Geschiere illustrates the argument with the Maka of South East Cameroon.
Guyer, J.I.

This is an historical analysis of the effects of colonial policies during the Interbellum period on the Beti village economy in the Yaounde region. The author focuses on the increase of agricultural output, and the marketing of food for the growing non-agrarian population.


This paper discusses the interaction between the rural economy in the Yaounde region and the colonial government’s development policies. The author concentrates on the long-term influence of the Native Provident Societies, which were the major institutional instruments for rural development programmes over the period 1937-1960.


Hausén, K.

Includes several monographic studies about a huge variety of political, economic, and social facets of the colonial state in the time of the German Protectorate.

Heine, P.

A study about the colonial history of North Cameroon.
Hurault, J.

This is an important volume about the kinship and marriage system and the socio-political structure in the two Bamileke chieftainships of Bandjun and Batié. The study is based on fieldwork in 1955.


A functionalist overview of the Bamileke social system. The author discusses the system of kinship and descent, marriage relations, and the ward institutions.


Kaberry, P.M.

Kaberry is one of the prominent researchers of the Grassfields people in West Cameroon. This study focuses on the position of Bamenda women, but it also includes a vivid account of the traditional socio-political organisation of the Grassfields population.


Kaptue, L.

Kuoh-Moukouri, J.

This is an autobiographical writing which sheds a sharp ironic light on the Cameroonian colonial society of the 1950s.
Kwayeb, E.K.

Laburthe-Tolra, P.
1977 Minlaaba. Lille. 3 vol.

A comprehensive study about the pre-colonial history of the Banen, living to the south of Yaounde.


The author’s goal is to reconstruct the pre-colonial Beti society on the basis of oral traditions and archive documentation.

Lestringeant, J.

An ethnographic account of the geography, history, habits, and social change in 20th century Guider. The author, who had been a colonial officer from 1957 until 1959 in the district of Guider, extensively discusses the establishment of the traditional chiefdoms and their subsequent development under colonial rule, as well as the relations between the Fulbe and the Kirdi. He also presents an overview of such current societal changes as migration, retarded economic development, competition between the Fulbe and the Kirdi for economic power resources, and the general transformation of the social structures.

LeVine, V.T. & R.P. Nye

An alphabetical survey of the major persons, places, and events in the recent history of Cameroon. A comprehensive, but rather outdated, bibliography is included.
Louis, W.R.

This study discusses the second partition of Cameroon.

McCullogh, M., M. Littlewood & I Dugast

An ethnographic survey of the residence, origins, socio-political organisation, life cycle, religion and magic of the ethnic groupings in the central section of Cameroon. The chapter on the Bamileke is the most interesting one.

Maillard, B.

This is an anthropological monograph about the Bamileke chieftdom of Bandjun. The author utilises an phenomenologist approach to elucidate how the traditional religion and the political state structures are interwoven. Historical change is not discussed.

Mandeng, P.

This study is concerned with forced labour. The functioning, ideological legitimation, and socio-economic effects are analysed in terms of the following underdevelopment hypothesis: 'Die Arbeitskräftebeschaffung für die Kolonialwirtschaft stellt den entscheidenden Desintegrationsfaktor der naturwirtschaftlichen Gesellschaftsordnung in der Kolonie dar'.

Mayer, W., F. Metzger & J. Wilhelmi
A general history of German imperialism. Topics discussed are the life of the German colonist, the administrative system, the colonial economy, the activities of the churches, and the revolutionary impact on the life of the African population. A final section deals with the contemporary activities of business men, tourists, and development workers. Includes many scattered comments regarding Cameroon.

Mohammadou, E.


An historical survey of 19th century state formation in North Cameroon. The author describes the pre-Fulbe states of Kotoko and Mandara, the rise of the Fulbe states, and the relations which came into being between the Fulbe and the original peoples.


This is an anthropological study about the historical traditions of a number of lamidates which were united in the 19th century emirate of Fombina. The author delineates the state formation process into different periods, tries to make a synthesis of this material, and presents accounts from oral witnesses.


A cultural-historical study about the political history of the lamidate of Wandala, based on archive material and oral traditions. The author discusses the origins of the state, the royal family, the titles and functions at court, the state activities (financial, administrative, military, and diplomatic), as well as the function of Islam as a court religion.

The author describes the origins of several smaller Fulbe states, and reconstructs a regional history of the upper valley of the Benne river.


Mohammadou, E. (ed.)

This study, a compilation of the oral traditions of the lamidates of Maroua and Pétté, is a part of the author’s project of reconstructing the Fulbe history in Adamawa.


A description of the evolution of the lamidate of Ray or Rey Bouba, based on interviews with a former court functionary.

Mveng, E.

A very well documented history about the pre-colonial and colonial period in East Cameroon.

Mveng, E. & D. Beling-Nkoumba

A publication about several traditional political systems in the forest areas in Cameroon. There are sections written by J.-C. Barbier, J. Moutome Ekabi (about the Maka), P. Titi Nwel (about Mbombok), P.N. Nkwi (about the Meta), and B. Delpech (about the Banyang).

Nchouat-Njoya, O.  
1971 Système politique traditionnel et organisation municipale du Cameroun (exemple Bamoun). University of Paris I.

Ndongo, J.A.  

The author provides a description of the establishment of French colonial rule among the Masa of North Cameroon.

Njeuma, M.Z.  

An historical article about the Fulbe administration of the 19th century Fombina emirate, with an emphasis on political integration. The cohesion within the multi-ethnic system was accomplished by the evolution of an authority system based on personal loyalty or clientalism.

The three phased evolution of the 19th century Bamun state is typical for many Sudan states: a period of conquest, then a period of consolidation of the dynasty’s powers, and finally a period of disintegration. The kingdom was in its last phase when the Germans conquered it.

1978

Topics discussed in this historical study are Yola, the ‘jihad’, the attempts to consolidate the conquests, and finally the European intervention.

Njoya, A.N.  
1977  

A biography of the last Bamun king (1867-1933), unseated the throne in 1885, and whom the French forced to move to Yaoundé in 1931. He is well-known as a ruler, the inventor of his own writing system, an architect, and a writer.

Njoya, I.A. (ed.)  
1950  

Njoya, sultan of the Bamun, devised his own alphabet, which the scholars at the court used to lay down the history of the Bamun people.

Nkwi, P.N.  
1976  
Traditional government and social change: a study of the political institutions among the Kom of the Cameroon Grassfields. Fribourg: Fribourg University Press. 233 p., bibl., Asc 8452.
An important political-anthropological monograph about the Kom, written by a scholar who is himself a member of this people. The first section discusses the traditional aspects of the kingship, the jurisdiction, and the local level administration. The second section is devoted to the changes of the political institutions as a result of the incorporation of the chiefdom into the colonial and post-colonial state.


Should be read in connection with Barbier (1977).


The author examines the role of Grassfields chiefs in the political evolution of West Cameroon in the time of nationalism, and discusses the establishment of a House of Chiefs and the 1977 decree regarding the reorganisation of all chiefdoms in Cameroon.

Nkwi, P.N. & J.-P. Warnier

Osuntokun, J.


This article is concerned with the colonial administration in the British and French sections of Cameroon. The French practiced an indirect rule principle in the north, like the English in the west, but they devised in the south an hierarchical system, which put severe restrictions on the civil rights of the population through the ‘indigénat’, the ‘prestation’, and the ‘conscription’. The author concludes that the mandate system was just another moral rationalisation of the traditional concept of imperialist expansion.
O’Toole, T.

Ouden, J.H.B. den
1979 The process of incorporation with regard to the relations between local populations and outside world: the case of two Bamiléké chiefdoms, Cameroon, in the period 1900-1970. Wageningen, Agricultural University; Yaounde, Centre Universitaire de Dschang. 32 p., bibl., Asc A2171.


A political-sociological article about the changes in the households of the Bamileke chiefdoms of Tsa and Ngang as a result of their incorporation into national and international systems. The author emphasises the adaptational potential of the traditional structures, and concludes that the commercialisation of staple crops has contributed to a more independent position for the women.

1986 In search of personal mobility: changing interpersonal relations in two Bamiléké chiefdoms, Cameroon. Wageningen, Agricultural University. 52 p., bibl., sum., Asc A3633.

A sociological paper about the changing interpersonal relations of power and authority, due to the incorporation of the studied Bamileke chiefdoms into the national and world market, and into the colonial and post-colonial state. The author, utilizing an actor oriented approach, discusses the commercialisation of agriculture, migrational and commercial circuits, and the erosion of the political institutions of the chiefdoms.

Oyono, F.
The English translation is ‘The old man and the medal’ (1967), translated by J. Reed.


The English translation of this novel appeared in 1966 as ‘House boy’, translated by J. Reed.

Paideuma

This number of the Paideuma periodical is entirely devoted to architecture and traditional politics in Cameroon, notably the royal residence. Articles are written by R.G. Dillon, B. Chem-Langhéé, E. Geary, E. Ghomsi, P.N. Nkwi, D. Price, C.-H. Pradelles de Latour Dejean, M. Rowlands, E. Shanklin, C. Tardits, and J.P. Warnier.

Pradelles de Latour Dejean, C.-H.

This functionalist study analyses several sacrificial rituals of the Bangwa in West Cameroon in the context of the ancestor cult: their function is to contribute to the persistence of the kinship system.


An analysis of the power relations between the different generations in a Bamileke chiefdom; see also Pradelles de Latour Dejean (1979).

Quinn, E.F.

1974 'German and French rule in the Cameroons’, in: Tarikh, 4, 4, p. 54-69. Asc.
A brief functionalist analysis of the German and French administrative systems in Cameroon. The author compares the political, economic, and cultural aspects of the administrations. Their fundamental similarity is that 'they disrupted the balance of political power in local societies in ways from which the African groupings could not recover by their own means. In the process colonial rule left the leaders of many African societies neither fully in control of their own peoples nor fully involved in the European administration' (p. 54).


A history of the political career of Charles Atanga (1880-1943), a Beti chief under the German and subsequently the French government.

Ritzenthaler, P.

This is an account of the life of the Fon of Bafut in West Cameroon in the decades around independence. Topics discussed include the traditions, the politico-religious rituals, the Fon cult, and the ancestor veneration.

Ritzenthaler, R. & P. Ritzenthaler

This anthropological study is devoted to a small village-state of the Tikar in West Cameroon.

Rowlands, M.J.

Rudin, H.R.
1938 Germans in the Cameroons 1884-1914: a case study in modern imperialism. London: Jonaphan Cape. 456 p., bibl., ind., Asc 6492.
The author analyses German colonial rule in Cameroon in terms of the imperialism hypothesis. He discusses many aspects of colonial administration and economic exploitation, like trade, tariffs, plantations, and export crops. He concludes that the German activities might be interpreted as ‘an unusual achievement’ (p. 11).

Ruel, M.

This political-anthropological analysis deals with the processes of individual and collective action in a political community in West Cameroon, in the context of the changing political structures due to colonialism.

Shimada, Y.

The author discusses the process of political change in the North Cameroonian Fulbe state of Rey-Bouba in the period between the two World Wars, when the area experienced French indirect rule.

Stoecker, H. (ed.)


This important work, consisting of two volumes, consists of articles, written by young Marxist historians from East Germany, based on thorough archival research, and meant as a reaction to the dominant colonist historiography. The topics discussed include the annexation, the genesis of a working-class, the imperialist conquest of the south and the north, the land concessions, and the Duala resistance to German rule.
Strootman, G.

This is an ethnographic account of the accession to the throne in 1968 of a 17 years old schoolboy as the Fon of Bafut (Grassfields) under the name of Aboomi II. The event is depicted against the background of the Bafut traditions and the political incorporation of the Fondom into the Cameroonian state.

Suret-Canale, J.

This is the English translation of 'Afrique Noire II: l'ère coloniale 1900-1945. Paris: Editions Sociales'. The author provides a Marxist-Leninist critique of the political, social, and economic system which came into existence in French Equatorial Africa in the first half of this century. Suret-Canale extensively discusses facets of the economic sector, such as the effects of the First World War and the economic crisis of 1931, the pacification of the equatorial interior, and the forced labour system.


The nationalism and independence of French Tropical Africa is analysed in terms of being the logical conclusion of an historical dialectic, i.e. of contradictory developments during the colonial era.

Tabuwe, A.
1974 Political conflicts within the traditional and the modern institutions of the Bafut-Cameroon. Louvain: Vander. 175 p., bibl.
This is an analysis of the different types of conflict within the traditional political institutions of the Bafut society in West Cameroon in terms of the more general conflict between modern and traditional political institutions. The author, himself a member of the Bafut society, believes that economic development can only be achieved through understanding between individuals and through attempts to resolve the inherent tension between traditional and modern institutions.

Tardits, C.


This is an important history of the kingdom of Bamun. The first section deals with the political evolution of the state until it was dismantled in 1934, with an emphasis on the reign of sultan Njoya. The second section describes the social relations on the level of the lineages, and the third section the social relations on the central state level (including the economic, juridical, and religious role of the king). These last two sections are a theoretical analysis of the relation between kinship and state institutions as two non-exclusive, overlapping socio-political structures.


A political-anthropological study about Bamun kinship structures.


Waltz, G.
A juridical study about criminal law in the time of German rule in Cameroon.

Welch, C.E.

This is a comparative study of the prospects of political unification in West Africa, examining four examples of attempts to unite (parts of) ex-British and ex-French colonies. The author is quite pessimistic about the results because the political, economic, and cultural necessity of nation building turns out to be stronger. The fourth and fifth chapters discuss the Cameroonian Federation.

Wirz, A.

This politico-economic work examines the effects of the European presence in Cameroon before the First World War on African social structures. Topics discussed include the major characteristics of the German colonial economy, trade and politics among the Duala, commerce in South Cameroon and Adamawa, and the expansion of cash crop production.


This is the French translation of a section of Wirz (1972).

Witherell, J.W.
This inventory includes a list of the official publications of the mandated territory of Cameroon; most were printed in the official publishing-office in Yaounde during the Fourth Republic (1946-1958); see p. 26-39.


A survey of official documents published in Francophone Central Africa until 1970, which the author was able to find in American libraries. The section on Cameroon (p. 220-253) includes publications which were directed to the League of Nations and the United Nations.

Ethnicity and protest

Cameroon is a country characterised by a mosaic of peoples, languages, cultures, societies, and religions. The important role ethnicity plays behind the scenes in the national political process, has already been indicated. Several historical aspects of ethnic diversity, whose roots reach to the pre-colonial period, are reviewed in this subsection.

Ethnic identities have been shaped in social, political, and economic processes, especially trade, migration, and state formation. Ethnic developments in pre-colonial Cameroon are still far from clear. Although some knowledge is available on the turbulent 19th century patterns of migration caused by the Fulbe invasions in the north — see, for example, Lembezat (1950, 1961), Alexandre & Binet (1958), and Dugast (1949) — its impact on the dynamics of ethnicity is as yet far from clear. The one noteworthy study in this regard is Tardits (1981a), which contains information on the effects of trade and migration on the ethnic composition of the population. The literature on 19th century state formation has been dealt with in the preceding subsection; of these, only Azarya (1978) and Burnham (1972, 1980a) explicitly discuss ethnicity. Awad (1979) gives a description of the ethnic integration which is
caused by the genesis of a commercial region in the Sahel zone in conjunction with the expansion of Islam.

Ethnic contradictions persisted in the colonial era, and even intensified considerably. Colonial civil servants simplified and fixed social reality by imposing ethnic classificatory schemes upon the population. Ethnographic studies served as a scientific basis for legitimizing these administrative divisions. In the 1940s and 1950s several regional surveys on the ethnic heterogeneity in Cameroon were published. For the north, see Lembezat (1950, 1961). McCulloch et al. (1954) is a synopsis of the ethnic groupings in the western parts of East Cameroon. Such a study is not available for West Cameroon. Dugast (1949) is an inventory of the ethnic composition of the forest populations in the southern part of East Cameroon, and Alexandre & Binet (1958) surveys the Pahuin, a collective noun for several culturally and linguistically related ethnic groupings in the south. Murdock's well-known study (1959) contains information on several Cameroonian ethnic groupings in a wider ethnographic context; Mveng (1963) also deals extensively with this topic. Finally, three recently published works should be mentioned: Marguerat (1976) is a concise survey of the ethnic diversity in Cameroon in general, Fonkoué (1981) is an attempt to make an inventory of the complicated ethnic and linguistic nomenclature in Cameroon, whereas Chia (1983) and Breton (1983) try to classify the indigenous languages of Cameroon.

The socio-economic changes which were brought about by the colonial state, led to increasing competition about the sources of economic and social development. The rivalry was predominantly expressed in terms of ethnicity. A good example is Burnham (1980a), a study which includes a discussion of the position of the Gbaya in the eastern part of Adamawa vis-à-vis the other ethnic groupings in the region (Hausa, Fulbe, Mbororo, Bamileke, Mbam etc.). The growth of the cities created new social arenas where social competition was much more intensively felt, and where the ethnic confrontations became more strained. Kleis (1980) makes an analytical distinction between 'incorporational' and 'confrontatio-
nal' ethnicity for rural respectively urban areas in West Cameroon, illustrating the argument with a case study of the Igbo in West Cameroon (see also Kleis 1975). Confrontational ethnicity in East Cameroon is most clearly manifest in the case of the Bamileke. The ethnic tensions in the cities which accompanied the economic dynamics of this ethnic grouping will come up for discussion in Chapter 3. Kofele-Kale (1980a, 1980b, 1981b) comes to the conclusion that ethnicity in an urban environment is less prominent than in the countryside, because of the establishment of inter-ethnic social networks. These networks are also described by DeLancey (1973, 1974), however, not in the towns but in communities of estate workers.

Several other factors which influenced the ethnic categories, are religious in nature. A limited number of indigenous languages was transformed into a standardised written form, because of the translations of the Bible by the missions; this contributed particularly among the Duala to a strengthened ethnic consciousness. The extremely rapid process of collective conversions in the Cameroonian South ran largely parallel to ethnic lines, and should above all be interpreted in terms of upward social mobility. The collective conversions to Islam by the so-called Kirdi in northern Cameroon, a process which also goes hand in hand with a redefinition of ethnic identities, are the subject of several analyses; these are discussed in Chapter 2.

The societal changes during the colonial period led to the rise of politicised forms of ethnicity. Ethnic groups formed the basis for anti-colonial protest movements. Relatively well documented is the armed Gbaya rebellion of 1929; see Mouctar Bah (1974), Burnham (1975), Burnham & Christensen (1983), and O'Toole (1984). Early forms of protest were of frequent occurrence among the coastal peoples of southern Cameroon. Courade (1972a) includes some information on the Bakweri uprising in West Cameroon against the Germans. The Duala, however, are the ethnic grouping with the longest history of anti-colonial resistance, starting with petitions against land expropriation in the town of Douala and running into
demands for political sovereignty. Recently published literature on these early forms of popular resistance is, however, scarce (see Chapter 3).

Information on the nationalist movement since the Second World War can be found in the older literature; see LeVine (1964a), Gardinier (1963), and Chaffard (1965); Nwosu (1976) is a study about the international law aspects. Postwar nationalism was fragmented along ethnic lines, and its leaders originated from the westernised elite. The rise of this elite cannot be separated from the educational opportunities, and these were ethnically restricted; especially the Duala and the Bassa were able to take an advantage in this field. This ethnic factor in the rise of a native politico-administrative elite has as yet not been an explicit field of study. The ethnic competition in the Cameroonian South became acute in the last decade of the colonial period, when great opportunities for promotion arose for educated Cameroonians (because of the intended departure of the French), and when ‘political machines’ were created to mobilise the ethnically restricted clientele. Specific studies are not available, but empirical information on the formation of political parties can be found in, for example, Zang-Atangana (1960), LeVine (1954a, 1964b), Ziemer (1978), and Geschiere (1982), and, of course, the above-mentioned general works on Cameroonian nationalism.

One of the most important nationalist parties, the UPC, was characterised by an anti-capitalist stance and radical demands concerning immediate independence and the unification of French and British Cameroon. Its following was largely confined to the Bassa, the Duala, and the Bamileke. The major studies on the UPC have been written by Joseph (1973, 1974, 1975, and especially 1977). The party started a revolutionary guerilla warfare after its official suppression in 1955, which lasted until well into the 1970s. The American political scientists Johnson (1970b) and LeVine (1968) have devoted articles to the UPC phenomenon, but a full scientific monograph on the period of guerilla warfare has as yet not been written, although there are several publications from
active participants, like Um Nyobè (1985). In the time of the legal proceedings against Ouandié, who was executed as a result, several UPC-sympathetic publications came out, notably *UPC* (1971), Ugeux (1971), and M. Beti (1974). Kunde (1979) and Woungly-Massaga (1984) are recent studies which present the UPC as a communist alternative for the government in power. Kingue & Ntumazah (1982) and *Opposition* (1982) voice the internal factional struggles within the exiled branch of the present UPC.

The history of nationalism in West Cameroon is a separate topic, because of the British colonial rule there. Two major themes can be distinguished in the literature. (1) The rise and victory of the reunification movement in the Southern Cameroons; see Welch (1966) and Chem-Langhèë & Njeuma (1980). (2) The important role that the chiefs played in the political process during the 1950s — a fact that cannot be separated from the British indirect rule — and the resulting formation of a House of Chiefs (1960-1972); see Nkwi (1977, 1979) and Chem-Langhèë (1983, 1984). Ethnicity is not an explicit topic in this literature. No information is available on the question of whether and how the existing chiefdoms may function as crystallisation points of ethnic identities within the context of the contemporary Cameroonian state.

Unlike many other African countries, the political leadership of the post-colonial state of Cameroon was not recruited from among the early nationalist UPC leaders. The struggle for political independence is still a taboo subject in contemporary Cameroon, due to the UPC trauma; see Mbembé (1985). This might explain why only a few studies on nationalism, composed by Cameroonians, have been published.

Alexandre, P. & J. Binet
This is an important survey of the Pahuin peoples in the Cameroonian South. Characteristics discussed include geography, climate, ethnicity, history, languages, economy, social organisation, and major cultural traits. A comprehensive, but rather dated bibliography is included.

**Asiwaju, A.I. (ed.)**

Contains a chapter about the division of the Mandara people in a Nigerian and a Cameroonian section in the early colonial period.

**Awad, M.H.**

This historical article discusses the regional integration process of many ethnic groupings in the Sudan belt under the banner of Islam and in the wake of the development of long-distance trade in pre-colonial times. The colonising powers divided the region into artificial administrative units, but for all that, the area still forms a de facto economic region, and its population an (unconscious) ethnic unity.

**Azarya, V.**

Historico-sociological study of the changing authority of the Fulbe in North Cameroon, North Nigeria, and Guinea in the political, economic, and religious field, caused by the colonial and post-colonial impact of state formation. Azarya uses the comparative method. The book is not only an important historical study, but contains also relevant information on the contemporary political power of the Fulbe on the national level.
Beek, W.E.A. van

The author examines in this social anthropological monograph the Kapsiki in North Cameroon and the Higo in Northeast Nigeria, which are ethnically closely related. The different names are a result of external political factors, notably colonialism. The study focuses on the actual functioning of the extremely atomised society of the Kapsiki and Higo.

Beti, Mongo

This fierce attack on the neo-colonialist development policy of Cameroon, was censored by the authorities. Beti rejects the Ahidjo government and the CNU domination, and extensively discusses the circumstances under which Ernest Ouandié, a former UPC leader, and the Catholic bishop Albert Ndongmo were arrested and convicted. The Paris edition from 1977 contains a comprehensive actualisation.

Breton, R. & M. Dieu
Burnham, P.


This article about the 1929 Gbaya insurrection against the many forms of colonial repression, provides a good example of political protest along ethnic lines.


This economic-anthropological study of social change among an ethnic grouping in Adamawa, focuses on the historical and social elements in the Gbaya culture which may explain the signalised conservatism. Furthermore, the author deals with the multi-ethnic character of the Meiganga society: Gbaya identity is just a way to express regional inequalities in wealth, power, and opportunities, in other words, ethnic boundaries are demarcations of regional power relations.

Burnham, P. & T. Christensen

This article discusses the anti-colonial resistance movement of the Gbaya in Adamawa.

Chaffard, G.

Chem-Langhëë, B.

This article discusses the factors which led to the establishment of a House of Chiefs in 1960 in West Cameroon. The author emphasises the central role of the chiefs in the nationalist movement in the 1950s.


The author describes the political role of the traditional chiefs in the nationalist movement during the 1950s in the former Southern Cameroons.

Chem-Langhêê, B. & M.Z. Njeuma

The article discusses the reunification of East Cameroon and the Southern Cameroons in terms of the differing nationalistic aspirations in the 1950s, including the desire to reestablish the 1914 frontiers. The authors focus on this pan-Cameroonian movement in West Cameroon.

Chia, E.N.
1983  ‘The indigenous languages of Cameroon: which are they? how many are they? where are they spoken?’, in: Annales de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, 11, p. 143-159.

Clignet, R.
The author inventories the problems which educational institutions are confronted with when they try to overcome the ethnic discord. This division is aggravated in Cameroon by the different colonial experiences of the country.

Courade, G.  

This geographical urban study discusses the contemporary spatial configuration of the city in terms of the way it expresses historical events, such as the Bakweri insurrection against the Germans in the beginning of this century, and the official promotion of Buea to the administrative centre of West Cameroon. The same article is published in: Etudes géographiques sur les villes du Cameroun. Yaounde: ORSTOM (1970), p. 41-55.

DeLancey, M.W.  

A sociological analysis of the development of attitudes favourable to ethnic mixing as a result of increased interethnic communication at the plantations of the Cameroon Development Corporation.


Dugast, I.  

This is the only comprehensive volume on the ethnic composition of the population in the Cameroonian South. The ethnographic data are, however, rather dated.
Dupire, M.  

Fardon, R.O.  

The author discusses the possibilities of comparing ethnic groups, illustrating the argument with the (ethnically defined) ethnography of the Chamba, who inhabit the frontier area between Nigeria and North Cameroon.

Fonkoué, J.  

This is an attempt to classify the nomenclature of indigenous languages and groups in order to standardise the ethnic and linguistic diversity in Cameroon. The societal backgrounds and dynamics of ethnicity are not discussed.

Gardinier, D.E.  

This political-science study deals with the international status of Cameroon as a United Nations trusteeship, and its effects on French politics in Cameroon and the postwar nationalist movement.

Image  
Johnson, W.R.

Joseph, R.A.

The author’s first publication on the UPC phenomenon.


This article paints a portrait of the paramount leader of the UPC during its clandestine period.


The article discusses the nationalist struggle, particularly of the Duala, and the rise of the UPC on the scene. It contains a section on ethnicity and class formation in the city of Douala.


The best study on the UPC and an important contribution to the study about decolonisation in general. The author extensively discusses the social and historical factors which may explain the radicalism of the party in the struggle for political hegemony. The analysis covers the period until December 1956, when the party went underground.

Kale, P.M.

The author got involved in West Cameroon politics in the early 1940s. The booklet contains his memories about the major political events, issues, and persons in the late colonial period.
Kengne Pokam, E.

Discusses the failing policy of national integration of the Ahidjo government; the author points to the hostilities which have arisen as a result of the Bamileke successes in the fields of trade and transport.

Kingue, A. & N. Numazah

This is a fierce attack on the UPC leadership in the early 1980s, written by a radical group of exiles.

Kleis, G.W.

A sociological study on ethnic networks and attitudes in Kumba and the nearby village of Kaka.


The article deals with ethnicity among the Igbo immigrants in West Cameroon. The author opposes the view that ethnicity is predominantly an urban phenomenon, making an analytic distinction between ‘incorporation’ and ‘confrontation’ as alternative patterns for activating the ethnic consciousness. The distinction is grafted upon Barth’s notion of ethnicity, which emphasises the ecological conditions of ethnic identity.

Kofele-Kale, N.
Empirical-comparative study about the relation between the place of residence and the ethnic group values in West Cameroon. Two hypotheses are examined and affirmed: (1) 'Ethnic ties and loyalty do not detract from national orientations', and (2) 'variations in national political identification reflect differences in environmental conditioning'.


Inquiry into the relation between place of residence (village, plantation, or town) and national political orientation in West Cameroon. The degree of political identification with the Cameroonian nation is measured for four political-cultural subsystems: identification, symbol, rule, and faith. The relation between environment and political orientation, which the author demonstrates, is neither explained nor put into an historical context.


The Anglophone political sociologist Kofele-Kale makes use of survey and other research techniques in this study of the compatibility of ethnic and national loyalty. Environment factors, such as the distinction between town and countryside, prove to be more important to determine the orientation vis-à-vis the national political system than tribalism. The author asserts that Ahidjo’s nation building policy works out wrongly, and that it is senseless to try to eliminate ethnic loyalties (as they are quite well compatible with national loyalties).

The author examines the major sources of political conflict in the country, and the general effects of the Ahidjo rule on the mutual relevance of these factors.

Kunde, N.

This is a glorifying portrait of Ruben um Nyobé, the Secretary General of the UPC, who was killed in 1958 by French soldiers.

Lembezat, B.

This is still a classic work about the ethnography of the non-Islamic population in the north of Cameroon. The many ethnic groupings are roughly categorised according to the natural environment (mountains, plains, and transition areas), and the author provides a general survey of their material, social, and religious life. The volume is an addition to J.-P. Lebeuf’s work on Chad.


An extensive survey of the non-Islamic populations in the Cameroonian North, providing information per ethnic grouping. The study is quite superficial, and not exhaustive, particularly as regards the peoples in the central savanna region.

LeVine, V.T.
This is an important political scientist’s analysis of the history of the political process when Cameroon was a mandated territory of the League of Nations under the auspices of France. The emphasis is thus on East Cameroon. Subjects discussed include the political institutional growth before the Second World War, the genesis of political parties between 1945 and 1955, the consolidation policy (1955-1960), the policies practiced in West Cameroon, and the problems which were raised at the time of transition to an independent republic.


The formation of political parties in both East and West Cameroon are discussed.


Describes the UPC insurrection.

McCullogh, M., M. Littlewood & I Dugast

An ethnographic survey of the residence, origins, socio-political organisation, life cycle, religion and magic of the ethnic groupings in the central parts of Cameroon. The chapter on the Bamileke is the most interesting one.

Marguerat, Y.

A short, vivid overview of the various ethnic groupings in Cameroon, in harmony with the classic classification schemes of the older ethnographic survey studies.
Mbembé, J.-A.

Mouctar Bah, T.

The author discusses the Gbaya insurrection of 1929 against colonial methods of repression.

Murdock, G.P.

Probably the most exhaustive survey of the African ethnography. Many Cameroonien ethnic groupings are discussed in their wider ethnographic context.

Mveng, E.

A well documented history of the pre-colonial and colonial history of East Cameroon, written by a Cameroonian scholar. It includes a classification scheme of the ethnic composition of the population (p. 196-251).

Ndon-Lolog Wonyu, E.

This is the autobiographical account of a politician who changed from the UPC to the UC in 1960; he was a minister for about a month in 1961, then he was suddenly dismissed. The second section contains historical documents referring to the period 1956-1961.

Nkwi, P.N.

The author examines the role which the Grassfields chiefs played in the political evolution of West Cameroon on the eve of independence. Furthermore, the formation of a House of Chiefs and the 1977 Decree, which reorganised all chiefdoms in Cameroon, are discussed.

Nwosu, H.N.

Opposition

This is a polemic reaction against Mongo Beti’s articles in ‘Peuples Noirs-Peuples Africains’ (no. 24 and 25). The young authors remain faithful to the Revolutionary Committee and the ‘Programme Général de Transition au Socialism’.

O’Sullivan, J.

O’Toole, T.

Problème

A brief overview of the Africanisation of the various government services in the 1950s in Francophone Central Africa, including East Cameroon.
Rotberg, R.I. & A.I. Mazrui (eds.)

This is a collection of 36 essays on anti-colonial resistance movements in Africa. A section on the rise of pressure groups and political parties in Cameroon is included.

Tardits, C. (ed.)

Each essay in this collection discusses trade, migration, ethnicity and other traits of one of the many ethnic groupings in Cameroon, so that the whole might be considered as a research synthesis about the Cameroonian pre-colonial history. A variety of well-known researchers, both historians and anthropologists, have made a contribution to this volume.

Ugeux, E.-X.

The article deals with the legal proceedings against Ouandié and Ndongmo in 1971.

Um Nyobè, R.

This is a collection of the most important texts and writings of the paramount leader of the UPC in the colonial period, introduced by J.-M. Mbembé. The topics discussed include the historical circumstances of the rise of the nationalist movement, the involvement of the United Nations, and the UPC demands for independence and for unification of the French and British sections of Cameroon.

UPC
The official comment of the Revolutionary Committee of the UPC on the political lawsuits against Ouandié and Ndongmo in 1971. It contains several official UPC documents.

Welch, C.E.

A political-science study of movements of political unification in West Africa, focusing on Togo, Cameroon, Senegambia, and Ghana-Guinea-Mali. The section on Cameroon, covering about one hundred pages, provides a good analysis of the electoral politics in Anglophone Cameroon before independence, and of the 1961 referendum.

Woungly-Massaga

A commentary of the Secretary General of the UPC upon the CNU crisis in the years of the power struggle between Ahidjo and Biya (1982-1984).

Zang-Atangana, J.-M.

A descriptive survey of the political parties in Cameroon in the 1950s, focusing on the UPC.

Ziemer, K.

Includes a discussion on the CNU in Cameroon.
CHAPTER 2

RELIGIOUS CHANGE

This chapter presents a survey of the available literature on 20th century religious change in Cameroon. I try to discuss this literature in the light of the following criterion: religious change in the context of the political and economic changes which the Cameroonian society has undergone during the 20th century, and what was the role of the state in this overall process. The chapter consists of three sections; the first deals with the indigenous religions, the second focuses on Islam, and the third on Christianity. Each section consists of an introduction followed by a list of references.

INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS

Religion is a topic often discussed in the ethnographic monographs which appeared after the Second World War. These works are predominantly descriptive and a-historical, i.e. the religious beliefs and rituals are largely presented as unchanging entities without being analysed in a wider societal context. In this section, I shall discuss first the literature on the Cameroonian South, then on the western regions, and finally on the north. This division is somewhat arbitrary and not wholly exhaustive; therefore, a few transition areas, such as the forest region of the West Cameroonian littoral,
and the frontier areas between Adamawa and the forested south, are slightly underrepresented.

Volumes which deal with the ‘traditional’ religions in South Cameroon are, for example, Ardener (1956) on the Kpe-Mboko, Duala-Limba and Tanga-Yasa near the coast, Koch (1968) on the Bajue and Bikele, and Dugast (1955, 1959) on the Banen. Among the southern peoples, the Beti-Bulu-Fang conglomerate has attracted most scholarly attention, and among these the Beti have been the most intensively studied. This might be due to the 19th century migrational dynamics of these peoples. The German ethnographer Tessman (1913) wrote the first significant study about the Fang, Bulu, and Beti. French ethnographers are, among others, Alexandre & Binet (1958), and Laburthe-Tolra (1977, 1981). Bochet de Thé (1971, 1985) and Vincent (1976b) discuss the position of women, Balandier (1963) devoted a study to ‘modern’ changes among the Fang of Gabon, and the American historian Quinn (1980) tried to reconstruct the pre-colonial Beti society. Tsala (1958, 1975) and Ngoa (1975) are social scientists of Beti origin, who wrote works on their people.

Initiation is a theme which has been extensively studied, particularly the So, the Beti initiation ritual for boys. This ritual was already officially prohibited in the German Protectorate period, but it was not before the end of the Second World War that the government and the Christian missions managed to completely suppress it. Therefore, it might be an interesting undertaking to reconstruct the subsequent changes of the ritual over the first half of this century in the context of its growing suppression, referring to the available older ethnographic writings. A chronological overview: Zenker (1895 — in Laburthe-Tolra 1970), Nekes (1911), Atangana & Messi (in Heepe 1919), Dugast (1929), Atangana (1942), Stoll (1955), and Tsala (1958). Recently published studies of the So, such as Laburthe-Tolra (1969), Azombo (1970), Ngoa (1975), and Mbala Owono (1980-81), are not based on personal observations. Houseman (1972, 1976, 1984) makes an attempt to analyse the extinct ritual in symbolic-
anthropological terms. The combined effort of the missions and the colonial government to suppress the ‘pagan’ rituals in South Cameroon, which is the reverse side of the rapid expansion of Christianity in these regions during the colonial period, has not been systematically examined. This aspect will be elaborated on later.

There are only a few studies available which are explicitly devoted to the magico-occult side of the religions in southern Cameroon. Native concepts like ‘evu’ (Beti), ‘hu’ (Bassa), and ‘djambe’ (Maka) fulfil a key role in the anthropological analyses of the cognitive systems in this respect. Worth-mentioning is the medico-symbolical work of the anthropologist Mallart-Guimera (1978, 1981) on the Beti, and the political-anthropological work of Geschiere (1980, 1982), which comments on the debate about the historical link between witchcraft and power.

In the gerontocratic societies of South Cameroon women have managed to develop a religious counterpower based on the belief in occult forces. They were organised in ‘societies’ with its own rituals, dances, music, jurisprudence, stories etc. The relationship between religion and feminine power is the common theme of a number of anthropological articles in a recent collection edited by Barbier (1985): Bochet de Thé and Laburthe-Tolra deal with the Beti, and Copet-Rougier (1985) with the Mkako. A key publication on this subject is Werewere-Liking & Hourantier (1982) on the Bassa; see also Vincent (1976b) and Bochet de Thé (1971) on the Beti. The feminine organisations have now disappeared, largely due to the influence of the missions and the colonial authorities. However, a sociological analysis of this process is not available.

Surprisingly, studies on the politico-economic dimensions of ancestor cults — so closely related to the patrilineal-segmentary order, and also evident expressions of the predominant position of the male elders — are non-existent. Yet, an historical analysis of the changes in ideology and organisation of these local cults might be a fruitful line of approach in studying the changing politico-economic power fields in the South Cameroonian villages.
The Fang inhabit the extreme south of the country. However, the majority of this people lives in Mbini (Equatorial Guinea) and Gabon. Religious dynamics among the Fang in Gabon has been thoroughly examined due to the rise and spectacular expansion of the Bwiti cult in that country. This religious reform movement has also spread to the Fang living on the Cameroonian side of the border. Since the early 1960s anthropological and sociological studies on this phenomenon have been published; among these, the historical analyses of Swiderski (1974) and Fernandez (1982) on the societal base and syncretic nature of the cult, are the most prominent.

The literature on the religions in western Cameroon is quite different in nature. The division of the region into a French and a British section since the First World War is clearly reflected in the social sciences: publications referring to the former area are largely written in French, whereas the literature referring to the latter area is predominantly English. The very limited amount of ethnographic literature about West Cameroon, the former British mandated and trusteeship territory, is quite remarkable.

Before 1960, the study of the religions of this region had hardly begun. Since then, studies have appeared which investigate these religions in terms of the debate mentioned in Chapter 1: the interrelatedness of the political and religious authority in the Grassfields chiefdoms, with an emphasis on the chief, the Fon. Thus, the major theme is one aspect of the ideological dimension of the political organisation, i.e. the role of the sacred king in a political context which might be situated at the fracture between a kinship and state dominated society. Unlike the literature on South Cameroon, the ancestral cults are incorporated into the analysis inasmuch as they exhibit a direct link with the political facets of the kinship system; however, the political centres’ cults of the deceased Fon draw most scholarly attention, at the expense of the commoners’ family cults. An extraordinary faculty to communicate with the supernatural is traditionally attributed to the king. Hence,
in these patrilineal societies, where ancestor veneration is of vital importance, the royal ancestors have developed into ‘national’ ancestors, to whom the king had the exclusive privilege of address. Barbier (1977), Nkwi (1977a), Chilver (1964), and particularly Maillard (1985) describe the Bamileke Fon cult, whereas Ritzenthaler & Ritzenthaler (1962), Ritzenthaler (1967), Nkwi (1976), Soh Bejeng (1972, 1984), Warnier (1975), Ellis (1974), and Mzeka (1980) provide information on the sacred nature of Tikar political authority. Hurault (1962, 1970), Maillard (1985), Brain (1972), and Pradelles de Latour Dejean (1979) deal with the Bamileke ancestor cults in the context of the kinship system. Historical analyses, which are devoted to the genesis and subsequent rise of this sacred kingship, are not available, with the exception of Tardits (1980).

Other facets of the ‘traditional’ religions have not been extensively investigated. The recent literature largely refers to West Cameroon. Some examples are: Gebauer (1964) and Krafczyk (1982) on Tikar divination practices, and Brain (1969) and Jeffreys (1963) on the religious significance of twins among respectively the Bangwa and the Bali. A collection about witchcraft, edited by Mary Douglas (1970), includes articles by Brain (on the Bangwa) and by Ardener (on the Bakweri) which analyse the observed changes in witchcraft beliefs in terms of the rapid political and economic changes brought about by European colonialism. A comparative study on the social backgrounds of variations in witchcraft beliefs is, however, not available. Baeke (1984, 1985) on the Wuli in the forest zone of West Cameroon, Geary (1979) on the We in Bamenda, and Valentin (1980) are a few examples of studies which deal with the religious rituals in the ‘societies’, which form a basic characteristic of this region’s social life. The literature about western Cameroon which has been mentioned hitherto, deals mostly with the ‘traditional’ religions in relation to the ‘traditional’ political and social institutions of the chieftaincies. Analyses in historical perspective which are devoted to the changing religious beliefs and practices in terms of the drastic social, political, and
economic changes which encroached these regional societies in the colonial era, are still to be composed.

A major characteristic of the literature on Adamawa and North Cameroon is a strong emphasis on the distinction between the Islamic and the non-Islamic sections of the population. Due to the Fulbe migrations over the first half of the 19th century, the more inaccessible areas became densely populated with a multitude of ethnic groupings, who had formerly lived in the plains. They managed to preserve their political and religious autonomy vis-à-vis the Fulbe. the Fulbe called them Kirdi, pagans, a term which has become current in the scientific literature since then. Froelich (1968) introduced the concept of ‘paleontigritic peoples’ as an historical explanation for the cultural characteristics which these Kirdi have in common with one another: he argues that they are the contemporary heirs of a largely extinct culture which had dominated the Sahel-Sudan belt about 1000 AD, and which presently continues to exist in isolated, marginal areas. In this section I intend to discuss only the (non-Islamic) religions of the Kirdi populations. Literature on the Fulbe is presented in the next section.

Quite a number of anthropological monographs have been published devoted to one or the other of the many Kirdi groupings in the Mandara mountains and the Yaere swamps. They are usually written from a structural-functionalist point of view. Thus, these studies are a-historical, and either neglect the external relations with the Fulbe and Europeans, or explain the isolated position from an historical enmity with the outside world. The next step in the argument is then that this isolation is presented as the major factor explaining the alleged persistence of the Kirdi traditions. The following ethnographies include descriptions of their traditional religious beliefs and practices: Cuingnet (1968) on the Mada, Gauthier (1969) on the Fali, Hinderling (1969) on the Mafa, Juillerat (1971) on the Muktele, Lebeuf (1961) on the Fali, Lembezat (1952) on the Mukulehe, Martin (1970) on the Matakam,
and Pontié (1973) on the Guiziga. Religious change is not in
discussion in these volumes, except in the form of a concluding
remark that the described religious system is presently in a state of
decay due to modernisation.

Recently, a number of symbolic-anthropological monographs
have appeared which provide analyses of sacrificial rituals,
classification systems, and the religious power of women; see for
example Graffenried (1984) on the Zulgo and Gemjek; Barley
(1983a) on the Dowayo; and the many articles of Vincent (1971,
1975, 1976a, 1978, 1979) on the Mofu. These studies are also a-
historical, and do not account for the influence of external
developments.

Relatively few studies have been devoted to the religions of those
ethnic groupings in North Cameroon who did not flee from the
Fulbe in the last century, but continued to live as more or less
dominated peoples in the plains and on the Adamawa Plateau.
Population density rapidly decreased during the 19th century in
these areas, due to regular slave raids, slaughters, and famines.
These Adamawa ethnic groupings, like the Vute, the Duru, and the
Mbun, remain the most poorly documented peoples in the
ethnographic literature on Cameroon, the Gbayu being the only
exception; see Burnham (1980a).

In conclusion, the inventory of the ethnic diversity in Cameroon
which was attempted by colonial power representatives since the
end of the Second World War, has resulted in a considerable
production of ethnographic monographs, both about the
traditionally stateless societies in the north and south, and the (non-
Islamic) statal societies in the west of the country. This distinction in
stateless and statal societies may possibly explain why the literature
referring to the religions in western Cameroon has a much more
political stamp than in the other parts of the country. A common
characteristic is the conservational stance of the researchers, whose
goal was to record the 'traditional society' before it had
disappeared. Hence, religion is usually presented as a traditional
in institutional complex. Most authors are Europeans, particularly coming from the former colonising countries. Surprisingly, the Americans are largely absent in the study of Cameroonian religions. Nor are Cameroonian scholars making serious attempts to examine the field of rural religions. The study of the process of change which the native religions have undergone during this century in relation to the expansion of migration, urbanisation, cash crops, state structures etc., seems hardly begun. Furthermore, the same is true of the study of religious change in an urban environment.

Albert, A.

This volume, written by a missionary, discusses religion and social structure in the Bamileke society of Bandjoon. The author pays a lot of attention to polygamy, and tries to explain how the concept of the Supreme Being could disappear.

Alexandre, P. & J. Binet

A significant survey of the Pahuin peoples in the south of Cameroon. One of the topics discussed are the traditional religions (p. 106-124).

Amato, F.

This is an ethnographic article about the traditional religious beliefs of the Yambassa in South Cameroon, including the concept of the Supreme Being, written from a missiological perspective.

This ethnographic article, inspired by Lévi-Bruhl, deals with the traditional Bassa religion. Some attention is paid to the Ngué cult, which was opposed by Christianity, and the religious power of the local elders.


Anderson, E.

Theological article about the common traits of the belief in a Supreme Being among the different peoples in the Congo Basin.

Antonini, A.R.

Ardener, E.

This ethnographic monograph about the traditional life of the Cameroonian coastal peoples, includes a section on the religious beliefs and rituals of the Kpe (p. 92-109).


The author analyses the interrelation between the witchcraft beliefs of the Bakweri, who live near Mount Cameroon, and the various forms of economic and social pressure they have been confronted with over the past fifty years.
Atabe, T.S.

Atangana, Ch.
1942 'Aken So (le rite So) chez les Yaoundés-Banés', in: Anthropos, 36-40, p. 149-157.

Austen, R.A.

The subject is the relation between the pre-colonial spread of commercial networks and the rise of religious cults which transcend ethnic and political boundaries. The author discusses the Cameroonian littoral.

Awouma, J.
1970 'La tradition de la danse chez les Bulu (Sud-Cameroun)', in: Abbia, 24, p. 119-140. bibl., Asc.

The author describes the cultic and ritual function of the various Bulu dances, but an analysis of their gradual disappearance against the background of the socio-economic changes of the Bulu society is not provided.

Azombo, S.

Ba, A.H.

A symbolic analysis of several aspects of the Fulbe world view.
Baekke, V.  

An anthropological village study, referring to the Wuli in West Cameroon, about the function of the sacrificial rituals of several secret ‘societies’ in the overall magico-religious system.


Bahoken, J.G.  

Balandier, G.  

A classic study about the ideological responses of the peoples in the Congo, Gabon, and South Cameroon to its politico-economic encapsulation during the colonial period. The syncretic aspects of the Bwiti cult of the Fang are extensively discussed.

Barbier, J.C.  

Should be read in connection with Nkwi (1977).

Barbier, J.C. (ed.)  

Barley, N.  
This is an anthropological study of the symbolic universe of the Dowayo in Adamawa, as displayed in their rituals and beliefs.


An entertaining account of the author’s fieldwork experiences among the Dowayo in northern Cameroon.

Bochet de Thé, M.-P.


A reconstruction of the ideological responses of Beti women to the societal changes which took place at the end of the German rule (around 1915)

Bot Ba Njock, H.M.

Brain, R.

Twins are regarded as ‘children of God’ and undergo special rites at birth. They are ‘the only true equals, and therefore the best friends’ (p. 206). The Bangwa conceptions about friendship are a crucial factor in the analysis of the participation of this ethnic group in the modern economy.

This is an exploratory inquiry into the psychology of child-witchcraft among the Bangwa. The author asserts that witchcraft accusations and confessions increase in times of rapid social changes; misfortune is then less interpreted in terms of the collective beliefs about the earth, the gods, the ancestors, and the spirits.

1972

Bangwa kinship and marriage. Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press. 195 p., bibl., ind., Asc 13907.

A significant analysis of the Bangwa kinship system, which is presented as being rooted in the economic and political constellation. Ancestor veneration and witchcraft are incidentally discussed.

Burnham, R.

1980a


This anthropological study about the Gbaya focuses on the historical and social factors which might explain the marked conservatism of this people. It contains casual remarks about the traditional religion.

Chilver, E.M.

1964


The article contains some information on the politico-social structure of the chieftdom of Bali-Nyong, which is incorporated into the national state. One of the subjects to come under discussion are the religious-ritual functions of the political leadership.

Collard, C.

1977

Organisation sociale des Guidars au Baynawas. Thèse 3e cycle, Nanterre.

Colombel, V. de

1985

This symbolic-anthropological study discusses the prevailing mythology among Ouldeme women.

Copet-Rougier, E.

This article provides a description of the local gender power relations among the Mkako in Southeast Cameroon. There is a feminine symbolic universe which is excluded to men, and functions as an autonomous source of power.


Includes a description of the belief system and witchcraft among the Mkako.


A symbolic-anthropological article about the supernatural qualities of the juridical domain among the Mkako in Southeast Cameroon.

Cuingnet, M.

This monograph on the Mada in the Mandara mountains, is based on fieldwork carried out at the end of the 1950s. The author provides in the second and third section a static image of the religious beliefs and rituals of the Mada.
Delarozière, R.

This is the first overview study of the Bamiléke social structure, describing the chiefdoms and the ‘societies’. The religious role of the Fon and other court officials are briefly discussed. The volume contains many errors.

Dillon, R.G.

The author provides an ‘intellectualist’ analysis of the healing rituals of the Meta. The religious beliefs of this people include an idiom to explain such complex problems as illness, infertility, and disturbed social relations. The performance of the ritual is the social occasion to recognise and resolve these problems.

Dongmo, J.-L.

This important geographical study discusses the economic success of Bamiléke immigrants in the modern life of the city, notably Douala, Yaounde, and Nkongsamba. The author himself is a member of this ethnic grouping.

Dugast, I.
1929  Documents recueillis en pays (rituel So). Dossier J. chemise IRCAM, Yaounde.


This is the first volume of a comprehensive ethnography about the Ndiki, based in fieldwork research between 1934 and 1956. The religious life is briefly described (p. 78-85).

The old religion is extensively discussed (p. 27-151), but the influence of the Christian missions is only marginally brought into the argument.

Dumas-Champion, F.

Eguchi, P.K.

This functionalist story about the Hide in the Mandara mountains is written by a Japanese museum-anthropologist. Agricultural rituals are briefly discussed.

Ellis, W.S.

The Afo-A-Kom is a group symbol of the Kom, who belong to the Tikar, and represents their politico-religious heritage.

Fernandez, J.W.

This significant anthropological study deals with the historical development of the Bwiti cult in Gabon during the colonial period. Its rise and rapid expansion are analysed in terms of the changes which were brought about by the colonial administration and the Christian missions in the Fang society.

Fourneau, J.

An ethnographic account of a Beti funeral ceremony.


A study of the social and political organisation of the Fulbe states in Adamawa. The author discusses the politico-ethnic function of Islam (p. 63-76), and the religious role of the ‘laamiido’ (p. 43-46).


This comparative study about the ‘paleonigritic’ peoples in the West African savanna zone includes references to the Chamba and the Fali in North Cameroon. The work contains several casual comments on the traditional religions of these peoples. Modern, external influences are not considered.


An ethnographic village study about the Fali. It contains some information on the religious beliefs and cults of this people.

Geary, C. 1979  ‘Traditional societies and association in We (N.W. Province, Cameroon)’, in: Paideuma, 25, p. 53-72.

This anthropological monograph about the Tikar in West Cameroon contains a functionalist analysis of divination practices. The traditional system, utilizing the falldoor spider and small heaps of specially indented leaves, is reconstructed. Only remnants of it presently function underground, due to the expansion of Islam.

Geschiere, P.L.

This symbolic-anthropological article deals with witchcraft among the Maka. Child-witchcraft is one Maka response to the the sweeping historical changes in the power structure of the society, by rearranging the old conceptions of witchcraft. This rearrangement is, however, bound to the structure of these witchcraft conceptions themselves.

1982  Village communities and the state: changing relations among the Maka of South-Western Cameroon since the colonial conquest. London etc.: Kegan Paul International. 512 p., bibl., Asc 10472.

Chapter 3 (p. 101-127) discusses witchcraft in an historical perspective.

Graffenried, C. von

The author provides a symbolic-anthropological analysis of a traditional sacrificial ritual, which is actually in the process of disappearing, of two ethnic groupings living in the Mandara mountains.

Heepe, M.
Contains a description of the So ritual of the Beti.

Hinderling, P.

Hourantier, M.-J., W. Linking & J. Scherer

The volume contains a description of the historical transformation of a Bassa healing ritual which developed into a theatrical happening.

Houseman, M.
1972   Structures de parenté et d'alliance dans une société béti. Thèse 3e cycle, Nanterre, University of Paris X.

1976   Structure sociale et idéologie patrilinéaire: le rite d'initiation So chez les Beti (Cameroun). Mémoire de Maîtrise, Nanterre, University of Paris X.


This is a symbolic-anthropological analysis of the So ritual of the Beti as a ‘rite de passage’.

Hurault, J.

This significant study is devoted to the kinship and marriage system and the politico-social structure of the two Bamiléké chiefdoms of Bandjoon and Batié. The author pays some attention to the ancestor cult (p. 23-27), and the book contains an appendix about the Bamiléké belief system.

A functionalist review of the Bamileke social system. Topics discussed include the system of kinship and descent, marriage relations, and the ward institutions, as well as the religious functions of the ‘societies’ and the social functions of the ancestor cult.

Jeffreys, M.D.W.

A descriptive article which includes some information about the religious beliefs regarding twins.

Jest, C.
1957 ‘Fête de récoltes chez les Kapsiki (Nord-Cameroun)’, in: Notes Africaines, 5, 75, p. 79-83.

Juillerat, B.

This is the first comprehensive monograph of the Muktele in the Mandara mountains, providing descriptions of the marriage rituals, agricultural rites, the ritual functions of political authority, and the religious significance of the political kinship institutions. The author, however, does not shed light on processes of religious change (see only p. 120).

Koch, H.

This ethnographic monograph, referring to the Bajue and Bikele in South Cameroon, focuses on the relation between religion and the economy, i.e. the cosmological conceptions and magical practices pertaining to the hunt are extensively discussed, but are, however, isolated from external colonial influences.

Krafczyk, P.
This article is devoted to divination.

Laburthe-Tolra, P.


The French translation of Zenker’s monograph ‘Yaunde’ about the Beti-Ewondo. One section is devoted to beliefs and superstitions (p. 58-62).

1977  Minlaaba. 3 vol. Lille.

This volume presents a comprehensive description of the pre-colonial history of the Banen, who live to the south of Yaounde.


The author’s goal is to present a reconstruction of the pre-colonial Beti society on the basis of oral traditions and archive materials.


A description of several Beti rituals which are exclusively practiced by women.

Lamaré, M.M.


Lebeuf, J.-P.

Lembezat, B.

This anthropological survey study of the non-Islamic populations in North Cameroon, is particularly devoted to the 'centuries-old' traditions, which are currently in the process of disappearing. A small section discusses the traditional religion (p. 51-61).


An ethnography of the material, social, and religious life of a small ethnic grouping in the Mandara mountains. Modern changes due to migration to the plains are not discussed.

McCullogh, M., M. Littlewood & I. Dugast

This is an ethnographic survey of the peoples of Central Cameroon, discussing such topics as the place of residence, origin, politico-social organisation, life cycle, religion, and magic of these peoples.

Maillard, B.

This is an anthropological monograph about the Bamileke chiefdom of Bandjoun. The author utilises an phenomenologist approach to elucidate the intertwinement of the traditional religion and the political state structures. Historical change is not discussed.

Mallart-Guimer, L.
This anthropological article is devoted to the cognitive symbolic system of the Evuzok people, which functions as both explanation of and cure for illnesses.

1981


This symbolic-anthropological study analyses in the structuralist tradition the Beti world of religious experience. Religion is linked with the kinship order of the society, whereas magic and witchcraft form a cultural countermode.

Martin, J.-F.

1970


One of the topics discussed in this functionalist analysis of the Matakm peoples in North Cameroon is the traditional religion (p. 185-193). Also some attention is paid to the political and economic influences of European colonialism.

Mbala Owono, R.


In this article the author, himself a member of the Beti, describes the principles of the traditional upbringing. Topics discussed include the role of the ancestors, the age sets, the circumcision ritual Akel, and the initiation ritual So. The system is in decay nowadays.

Milligan, R.H.


A study of fetishism among the Mpongwe and Fon in West Cameroon.

Mukoko-Mukeka, M.P.

A description of the fundamental philosophical concepts which anchor the spiritual life of the Bakweri in West Cameroon.

Mzeka, N.P.
1980 The core culture of Nso. Kimbo-Nso: the author. 121 p., bibl.

This functionalist analysis is devoted to the socio-political and cultural dynamics of the political structure of the Nso (who form a part of the Tikar) during and after the colonial period. One of the subjects discussed is the evolution of the religious cults and the role of the Fon.

Ndzaagap, T.

A collection of forty superstitions, forty enigmas, and forty proverbs.

Nekes, P.H.

Includes a description of the So ritual among the Beti.

Ngoa, H.

A description of this Beti ritual according to Van Gennep’s three-phased scheme of ‘rite de passage’.

Ngongo, L.

A description of the Beti ritual So, referring to purification and exorcism, in the context of the overall interest of clan solidarity.

Nguéma-Obam, P.
This anthropological study is devoted to a magico-ritual aspect of the ancestor cult: 'La bénédiction nous est apparue comme l’expression du pouvoir religieux du père. Le père pose l’Ancêtre et l’Ancêtre fonde le cult, l’espérance d’une vie future' (p. 87). The historical and social backgrounds are not discussed.


This political-anthropological monograph refers to the Tikar kingdom of Kom, where the author was born and raised. One of the topics discussed is the sacred kingship and the royal rituals (p. 48-59).


A collection of anthropological studies of the religions of several North Cameroonian ethnic groups.


A brochure, written by three Cameroonian students, containing ethnographic information about the political institutions and the central festival of the chieftaincy of Bali-Nyonga in West Cameroon.

Pontié, G.

This sociological ethnography of the Guiziga in North Cameroon describes the traditional socio-political system, and analyses the popular reaction to such external influences as the introduction of cotton cultivation, the integration into the Cameroonian state, education, and technical innovations in the agricultural production process, particularly the internal conflicts which they provoke. Small sections are devoted to the traditional religion (p. 175-193) and religiously inspired resistance to modernisation (p. 204-206).

Pradelles de Latour Dejean, C.-H.

This functionalist study analyses several sacrificial rituals of the Bangwa in West Cameroon in the context of the ancestor cult. Their function is to contribute to the persistence of the kinship system.


An analysis of the power relations between the different generations in a Bamileke chiefdom; see also Pradelles de Latour Dejean (1979).

Quinn, E.F.

This historical reconstruction of several aspects of the pre-colonial Beti society contains some information on the So initiation ritual.

Raponda-Walker, A. & R. Sillans
The authors present a description of the rituals and beliefs of the peoples of Gabon. The study contains some information on the Fang living in the Cameroonian South, notably the Bwiti cult (p 183-224).

Ritzenthaler, P.

This is an account of the life of the Fon of Bafut in West Cameroon in the decades around independence. Topics discussed include the traditions, the politico-religious rituals, the Fon cult, and the ancestor venerations.

Ritzenthaler, R. & P. Ritzenthaler

This anthropological study about a small village-state among the Tikar discusses the traditional religious life, such as the ancestor cult, divination, the Fon cult, dreams, witchcraft, magical healing, and omens. Although half of the population is presently Christianised, this profound religious change is not brought into the argument.

Rosny, E. de

This is an eyewitness account of the recent performance of a discredited Duala ritual which is meant to avert misfortune and to restore the cosmic order. The ritual was held in a quarter in Douala in connection with a cholera epidemic.


This study of Duala reglous practices in the town of Douala is the English translation of: Les yeux de ma chèvre... Plon (1981).

Ruel, M.
This political-anthropological analysis deals with the processes of individual and collective action in a political community in West Cameroon, in the context of a changing political setting due to colonialism. Topics discussed include the religious functions of a number of associations, particularly the traditional Leopard Association and the more modern Clan Unions.

1970  

This article discusses witchcraft confessions among the Banyang in West Cameroon. Misfortune is thus largely attributed to the wickedness of one’s own deeds.

Sakah, B.T.  
1963  

Contains some data on the religion and magical practices of the Nso.

Schmidt, A.  
1951  

This study, based on fieldwork research in 1938-1939 among the Nsei in Bamenda Province, tries to explore the religious values and motives — instead of profit intentions — behind the patterns of economic behaviour.

Soh Bejeng, P.  
1972  
L’organisation politique traditionnelle chez les Bafut. Mémoire de licence en anthropologie sociale et culturelle, UNAZA.

1984  

This anthropological article is devoted to those symbols which stress social distinctions and authority. The royal symbols are analysed in the context of the political systems of several Grassfields chiefdoms which exhibit varying degrees of centralisation.
Stoll, A.

Contains some information on the Beti So ritual.

Swiderski, S.

The author analyses the origin and spread of the Bwiti cult in Gabon. Originating from an ethnically defined ancestor cult, the Bwiti cult got its universalist potential by the incorporation of adapted elements from the Catholic faith.

Talbot, P.A.

A massive ethnography, written by an English colonial officer, which contains some information on the religious beliefs of several ethnic groupings in the former Cameroons Province.

Tardits, C.
1979  ‘Réflexions sur le sacrifice dans la religion traditionnelle des Bamoun (Cameroun)’, in: Systèmes de Pensée en Afrique Noire, 4, p. 117-129. bibl., Asc.

The author provides a contribution to the anthropological debate about the analysis of sacrificial rituals. The sacrifice was in the traditional Bamun religion a ritual act which was reserved to the king and the lineage heads, thus, connected with the exercise of political authority. The author also points out the processes of Islamisation and Christianisation within the Bamun society since the beginning of the 20th century.

This is an important historical study about the kingdom of Bamun which was dismantled in 1934. A major topic is the interrelation of kinship and state institutions, non-exclusive, overlapping socio-political structures. The author pays some attention to the religious functions of the king (p. 850-862).

Tessmann, G.

This ethnography describes the Fang during the German Protectorate period. The section on religious beliefs and rituals provides a slightly simplified picture.

Tsala, T.

The author, an Ewondo priest, relates his version of the old religious traditions of the Ewondo. His intention is to inform the youth, which is already strongly alienated from this cultural heritage due to the influence of the Christian missions and the educational facilities.


Tsala Adah, J.

Valentin, P. (ed.)

A collection of descriptive essays on the activities of the secret societies among several ethnic groups in the forest zone of West Cameroon, written by students from the Presbyterian Teacher Training Center in Nyasoso.
Vincent, J.-F.


This article deals with the religious-political significance of authority in the Mofu chiefdoms of the Mandara mountains. Political authority is dependent on the possession of a magical rainmaking force. This reference to agriculture manifests itself in the ritual functions of the ancestor cults.


A symbolic-anthropological article about the significance of the sacrificial rituals of the Mofu in the Mandara mountains. The author analyses the ancestor ritual in terms of an alleged internal logic, which is part of the religious system.


Vincent presents a description of the views of Beti women on the changing reality in which they live. The study consists of seventeen interviews, preceded by a general introduction. Topics discussed include the disappeared marriage practices and feminine rituals in secret societies, as well as the subjective experiences of the process of evangelisation in the colonial period. The economic changes which happened simultaneously, are only incidentally discussed.

The Mofu consider the left side as being more valuable than the right side. The author analyses this symbolism in the context of the religious system and in terms of the differences in power and status between women and men.

1979  

A symbolical-anthropological study of the ambiguous power position of Mofu women in both the social structure and mythology. The recent development that women acquire more religious power through divination, is briefly described, but not explained.

Warnier, J.-P.
1975  

This is an anthropological study about the Bafut in Bamenda.

Werewere-Liking & M.-J. Hourantier
1982  
Contes d’initiation féminine du pays bassa (Cameroun). Nguessi Ngonda: Nso Ngond. 48 p., Asc lit.1492.

A description of the dances, stories, and songs which were elements of the Koo, once the major initiation ritual for Bassa women. This ritual affirmed the occult forces attributed to women, and united them in esoteric societies.

**ISLAM**

The gradual increase in trans-Sahara trade led to the development of centralised states and to the Islamisation of the population in the Sahel-Sudan belt. Since the 10th century A.D., Islam has also begun to spread in the Cameroonian North. This centuries-old process accelerated in the first half of the 19th century, when the (Islamic) Fulbe established a large empire which extended into North Cameroon and Adamawa. This Sokoto state was divided into a
number of emirates, such as the Fombina emirate in Adamawa, each of which was in itself divided into several, more or less autonomous, lamidates, which were ruled by Fulbe kings, or laamiido’s; see for instance Abubakar (1977) for more general information. Islamologists have documented the expansion of Islam in the Cameroonian North fairly well, for example Westermann (1914), Malcolm (1921), Mouchet (1946), and particularly Braukämper (1970). Many studies are written in German. General works which include material on Cameroon, are Clarke (1982) and Hiskett (1984). Büttner (1983), Shagari et al. (1978), Kirk-Green (1958), and Lacroix (1952-53) are specifically devoted to the 19th century ‘jihad’ of the Fulbe.

The historical study of the lamidates got under way in the 1970s (see Chapter 1). The literature relating to this theme often includes a discussion of the political role of Islam as part of the argument; see particularly Mohammadou’s works. Thus, Islam is analysed in relation to its political context, so that only limited space is reserved for the interaction between religious and socio-economic change.

A central theme, as in the literature about western Cameroon, is the interrelatedness of political and religious authority, i.e. the old institution of the sacred king (on whose well-being the entire nation depends). It is a religious complex incorporated in Islam, functioning as a royal cult. As such, Islam operated as the religion of the political elite, in other words, Islam was monopolised, to a certain degree, by the Fulbe. Lacroix (1966) and Mohammadou (1982) discuss this ideological facet of Islam. Mahdism might be interpreted as a popular Islamic protest movement against this politico-religious status quo; see for example Njeuma (1971), Lacroix (1966), and Braukämper (1970). Lebeuf (1969) and Masson-Detourbet (1953) deal with the sacredness of political authority in the city-states of the Kotoko, a river people considered to be the contemporary heirs of the old Chadic Sao culture. Most studies present the ‘divine kingship’ as a traditional institution, without considering the adaptations it underwent during the colonial and post-colonial period. Such linguistic studies as P.
Eguchi (1973, 1976) and Haafkens (1983) are centered on the syncretic properties of old Islamic texts, but they do not shed light on the social backgrounds of these writings. Social-scientific studies of the strongly syncretic character of North Cameroonian Islam are non-existent.

A more recent sociological-anthropological debate refers to the interaction between Islam and ethnicity. One of the topics discussed refers to the changes that the non-Islamic Kirdi religions have undergone over the past one hundred years. The Fulbe political hegemony decreased during the colonial and particularly post-colonial period, due to the encapsulation of the Fulbe chiefdoms by the Cameroonian state. The colonial policy of indirect rule entailed that the Fulbe aristocracy was allowed to preserve its political prerogatives and that Islam maintained its elitist status, but the Fulbe monopolisation of Islam came increasingly under attack. In this political context Islam developed into a vehicle of upward social mobility for the Kirdi, who started to adopt the language, habits, and religion of the Fulbe. Blackmeister & Heine (1983) is a brief survey of this topic; for further reading, see Santerre-Veillette (1975), Azarya (1978), and Schultz (1979, 1980, 1984). Collard (1980) discusses the interethnic relations between the Fulbe and the Guider, Burnham (1980a) the Fulbe-Gbaya relations, and Dupire (1981) deals with the Fulbe ethnic identity. This debate touches upon the general theoretical discussion as to whether to put the (dynamics of) ethnicity in the context of social processes of politico-economic competition, or to merely introduce it into the argument as an a priori factor which need not be explained in itself. Moreover, the religious focus seems an appropriate starting point for research which aims at making a contribution to catching up with the research backlog in the field of regional power relations in North Cameroon. Inquiries into the Fulbe political power, and into the related theme of the political function of Islam as an elitist religion, has stagnated for the independence period. Another related theme neglected in scholarly circles is the relationship between the colonial and post-colonial state and the regionally-
based Islamic elites. Due to the established pattern of indirect rule, the Fulbe rulers managed to impose severe restrictions on missionary activities in the north, and the Ahidjo government non-officially propagated the Islamisation of North Cameroon.

The process of ethnic boundary crossing is linked up with processes of urbanisation and intra-rural migration from the Mandara mountains to the plains. Several socio-geographic studies on this topic are available, for instance, Boutrais et al. (1984) and Pontié (1979)(see also Chapter 3). Interdisciplinary studies which analyse the process of Fulbeisation-Islamisation in relation with migration, urbanisation, and other aspects of capitalist encroachment, are still to be written. Cameroonian scholars have not contributed to the debate; the political sensitivity of the theme might be a major reason for this.

In western Cameroon, Islam has been spreading to the Bamun since about 1900, but hardly at all to the other Grassfields populations. Today 90% of the Bamun profess Islam. The political dimension of this process of conversion — the political centre of the centralised state of Bamun, although incorporated into the colonial state, actively promoted such conversion in the first decades of this century — is a major topic of Dubié (1957) and Tardits (1979, 1980, 1981b). Some information on the confrontation and competition between Islam and Christianity in this region can be found in Dubié (1957) and Molla (1966), as well as in Labatut (1978) (the latter referring to North Cameroon).

A small Fulbe minority, the Mbororo, live a pastoralist way of life. Literature referring to this group is scanty. Frantz (1981) discusses the ethnic and religious change which took place among the Mbororo during the post-colonial period, due to the encapsulation in the national state of Cameroon.
Abubakar, S.

This historical study is devoted to the rise and fall of the Fombina emirate in Adamawa.

Azarya, V.

This historico-sociological study about the Fulbe in North Cameroon, North Nigeria, and Guinea includes several remarks on the Islamisation-Fulbeisation of the North Cameroon Kirdi during the colonial and post-colonial era, in connection with national government politics and urbanisation (p. 91-99, 197-199).

Azevedo, M. & G. Prater

Blanckmeister, B. & P. Heine

This is a short article about the ethnic significance of Islam in a society where the Muslims form a numerical minority. Since independence the Kirdi migration to the towns and plains is attended with a process of Fulbeisation-Islamisation as a result of the changed power relations in the region.

Bocquené, H.

An illustration, through a young Mbororo man’s life history, of several facets of ‘pulaaku’, i.e. the Fulbe model for correct behaviour and dignity.
Boutrais, J., J. Boulet, A. Beaucilain et al.

Braukämper, U.

Topics discussed in this Islamologist study include the historical expansion of Islam into Cameroon, the ethnic monopolisation of Islam by the Fulbe, the syncretic aspects of the conversion of the other peoples in the region, the privileged position of Islamic leaders under colonialism, and the influence of Islam on the various aspects of the culture.

Burnham, R.

This economic-anthropological study about social change among an ethnic grouping in Adamawa, focuses on the historical and social elements in the Gbaya culture which may explain the marked conservatism. Furthermore, the author deals with the multi-ethnic character of the Meiganga society: Gbaya identity is just a way to express regional inequalities in wealth, power, and opportunities, in other words, ethnic boundaries are demarcations of regional power relations.

Büttner, T.

Cardaire
Clarke, P.B.


Collard, C.

An historical study about the changing interethnic relations between the Fulbe and the Guidar in North Cameroon. Political revolutions are presented as the major determinant factor.

Dubié, P.

This religious-historical article about the spread of Islam among the Bamun, focuses on king Njoya’s role in this respect. It is supplemented with a literal translation of sultan Njoya’s Muslim doctrine. Some attention is paid to the diffusion of Christianity.

Dupire, M.

Eguchi, M.J.

An anthropological description of the ‘modern’ life-style and culture of Fulbe women in the Fulbe dominated quarters of Maroua. It contains a few remarks about contemporary magic (p. 85-86).
Eguchi, P.K.

A linguistic study of the chants which used to be sung at the Fulbe initiation rituals. (They are dropping out of use nowadays). The author centers on the pre-Islamic facets of this oral literature, which he recorded in 1971 in Maroua.


Analysis of the historical and religious significance of an Islamic poem which was used by the Fulbe to spread Islam.

Frantz, C.

This article deals with the pastoral Fulbe inhabiting the border areas of Cameroon and Nigeria. The author points out the ethnic dynamics of these Mbororo, and the religious influence of the urban Fulbe.

Froelich, J.-C.

This article, written by an Islamologist, is concerned with the historical spread of Islam in West Africa, and the dominant role of the Fulbe in the process. Islam generally penetrates into a society via the elites, and thus presupposes an hierarchical social structure. Hence, this religion has troubles to penetrate acephalous societies. Some information on Cameroon is included.

Haafkens, J.
This is an Islamologist analysis of several Fulbe chants. The historical context is clarified to a certain extent, but not the social circumstances in which this literature originated and was sung.

Hiskett, P.B.

Kirk-Green, A.H.M.

Includes some information on the ‘jihad’ in Adamawa (p. 126-135).

Labatut, R.

Lacroix, P.F.


This sociological article discusses the ethnic encapsulation of Islam by the Fulbe in North Cameroon, and Mahdism as an expression of protest.

Lebeuf, A.M.D.

This anthropological analysis deals with the symbolic universe in which political authority in the Kotoko kingdoms is anchored. The theoretical orientation is the structuralism of Cl. Levi Strauss.

Malcolm, L.W.G.
This article briefly discusses several of the factors which were important in the spread of Islam in North Cameroon.

Masson-Detourbet, A.

Mohammadou, E.

A cultural-historical study of the political history of the lamidate of Wandala, based on archival data and oral traditions. Topics discussed are the origin of the state, the royal family, the titles and functions at the court, the government’s principal activities, as well as the function of Islam as a royal cult.


A description of the origins of several small Fulbe lamidates, based on oral traditions, as well as a reconstruction of the regional history of the upper valley of the Benne river.

Molla, C.F.

Discusses the spread and competition of Islam and Christianity, containing several examples from Cameroon.

Mouchet, J.

Njeuma, M.Z.
Njoya, A.N.
1977 Njoya: réformateur du royaume Bamoun. Paris: ABC; Dakar-
Abidjan: NEA. 122 p., Asc 12400.

Pierre, A.
6031.

A brief overview article about the spread of Islam in North
Cameroon, and the important ‘sects’ (Tijaniyya, Qadiriyya, and
Mahdism).

Pontié, G.
1979 ‘La contestation par la migration (le cas des Guiziga du Nord-
Cameroun)’, in: Cahiers ORSTOM, 16, 1-2, p. 11-127. bibl., Asc.

This sociological article deals with intra-rural migration among the
Guiziga, an ethnic grouping near Maroua. Particularly push factors,
notably having to do with structural conflicts in the traditional
society, are presented for an explanation.

Prestat, M.G.

Santerre-Veillette, R.
1975 Acculturation-conversion de la société nord-camerounaise. Thèse
présentée à l’Ecole des Gradués de l’Université Laval.

The author analyses the political, social, and economic factors
determining the combined process of Islamisation and Fulbeisation
in North Cameroon. Conversion is interpreted as a reaction to a
conflict situation, and is attended with processes of migration and
urbanisation.

Scalabre, C.
1977 ‘Notes sur l’Islam, le Christianisme et l’Animisme au Cameroun’,
79-92.
A religious-sociological article, containing several examples of syncretism.

Schultz, E.A.
1979  Ethnic identity and cultural commitment: a study of the process of Fulbeization in Guider, Northern Cameroun. Indiana University.


This article deals with Fulbe ethnic identity vis-à-vis non-Fulbe populations in an urban society. The author presents a description of the recent changes in the criteria of membership to the Fulbe ethnic grouping, due to the growing numerical strength of the Kirdi and resemblances of identity with the pastoral Fulbe.


This article is devoted to the dynamics of ethnic identities in Guider town. The incorporation of the Kirdi into the Fulbe ethnic grouping is possible because membership rests on cultural attributes, like language, religion and urban customs, which may be internalised.

Shagari, S., Alhaji & J. Boyd

Tardits, C.

1979  ‘Réflexions sur le sacrifice dans la religion traditionnelle des Bamoun (Cameroun)’, in: Systèmes de Pensée en Afrique Noire, 4, p. 117-129. bibl., Asc.

This is a contribution to the anthropological debate on the analysis of sacrificial rituals. The author discusses, among other topics, the conversion of the Bamun to Christianity and Islam since the first decades of this century.

Includes a few remarks on the Islamisation of the Bamun in the beginning of this century, as stimulated by sultan Njoya (p. 862-877).


The article deals with political facets of the diffusion of Islam among the Bamun. The author argues that the traditional ancestor cult corroborated the gerontocracy. King Njoya stimulated his subjects to convert to Islam, and devised his own variant of this religion.

Wazaki, H.

This anthropological article discusses religious rituals in the town of Foumban. The central points of orientation in the local value system are the royal court, Bamun ethnicity, and Islam. The author analyses three rituals, making an analytical distinction between ritual process (formality) and festivity process (orgy).

Westermann, D.
CHRISTIANITY

Expansion

Missionaries were working in the Cameroonian coastal zones even before Germany annexed the country in 1884. At first the English Baptist Mission, and later the American Presbyterians gained considerable influence among the Bassa and Bulu. Since then, large percentages of the members of most ethnic groups in the Cameroonian interior were formally proselytised at a surprisingly rapid rate. The German-Swiss Basler Mission appeared on the scene when German rule was established; then, when, after about four decades, the Germans were succeeded by the French in East Cameroon, this order was replaced by the French Protestant 'Société des Missions Evangéliques de Paris' (SMEP), and the German Catholics, the Pallotines, by their French co-religionists. Meanwhile, the American Presbyterian Mission managed to rapidly expand its sphere of influence in this transitional period. In 1960, at independence, about half the population in the southern forest zone had converted to Christianity. A large amount of missiological literature discusses this success story, for example, Keller (1969), Kwast (1971), Nkwi (1977b), Reyburn (1968), Labatut (1978), Van Slageren (1969, 1972), and Wheeler (1964). The conversions were largely collective, and along ethnic lines. Analyses in terms of upward social mobility — i.e. a peripheral group’s tendency to adopt the language, customs, and faith of the dominant category, notably the Europeans — are, however, missing.

A related subject is the influence of mission-work on the intensification of ethnic identities. The use of the Duala language in the Christian cult and schools in large parts of the Cameroonian littoral, and the early standardisation of that language in the form of a popular Bible translation, have surely contributed to a strengthening of Duala ethnic consciousness, and to the development of a Duala sphere of influence along the coast. Unfortunately, no studies on this aspect of the Christian missions
are available, notwithstanding the vital role it has probably played in the formation of the independent Native Baptist Church.

There is almost no literature about the influence of Christianity on the indigenous religions in Cameroon. Although it is quite likely that the historical change of the latter took place in the context of evangelisation, no studies about syncretism are available. The study of Cameroonian Christianity is predominantly devoted to the European facet — i.e. about the missions — and largely neglects the rise of African versions of Christianity, whether within the institutional form of independent churches or without.

Bureau (1962a, 1962b) is a structural-functionalist analysis of the evangelisation of the coastal peoples in the South, and also discusses the influence of the missions on the indigenous religions; the author asserts that a real change of faith took place rather than a sycretic development, since no new religious movements have arisen in South Cameroon; see also Bureau (1964, 1968). Binet (1958) and Bureau (1962a) are religious-sociological studies of the religious practices of the new converts, but they do not bring the political and economic changes during the colonial era into the argument. Laburthe-Tolra (1983) includes some information on the Christianisation of the Beti, discussing the harmonisation of the conceptual system of Catholicism with the religious way of thinking of this people. Vincent (1976a) describes the personal experiences of several Beti women with regard to this conversion process. Reyburn (1957, 1959) devotes two articles to the socio-economic foundation of the susceptibility of South Cameroonian women to proselytisation.

After independence, the missiologically biased literature was succeeded by a number of theologically inspired studies on Christianity; they particularly refer to western Cameroon, and the authors are Christian Cameroonians who are members of the group about which they publish. In most cases the interaction between Christianity and indigenous religions is a major topic. A few examples: Fotso (1966), Ngangoum (1972), Simo Somo (1978), and Tchouanga (1979) refer to the Bamileke, and Nkwi (1971, 1977b)
is devoted to the Tikar. Studies on religious syncretism published in the 1980s, are not available.

Literature about the independent churches in Cameroon is largely non-existent. No monographs are available on even the principal denominations. The rise of institutionalised forms of African Christianity has been largely confined to the coastal regions, notably the Duala and related ethnic groupings. Studies which aim to explain this relative lack of independent churches in Cameroon, are yet to be written. *Graines* (1973) is a brief survey study of the independent church phenomenon in Cameroon. Curley (1983) analyses the function of dream narratives among the members of a West Cameroonian independent church, without, however, discussing the societal position of the church goers. Turner (1965) describes syncretic phenomena in the independent churches, just like Reyburn (1969) and Hebga (1973, 1979, 1982); the latter, a Cameroonian priest, reports on the role of witchcraft in South Cameroonian Christianity. Brutsch (1949), Kwast (1971), and Joseph (1980) discuss the Native Baptist Church, the largest independent church in the country; Keller (1969, 1981) analyses the Presbyterian Church, and Van Slageren (1972) the Evangelical Church.

**Church-state relations**

The relationship between religious authorities and the state has a political dimension. Churches are national or international organisations which have the potential to function as channels of political mobilisation, and as such they may be channels of state penetration, especially in the ideological field. Therefore, this subsection is devoted to the possibilities and limitations of the Cameroonian state in controlling denominations in the country with juridical and political measures.

The literature about political relations between the different Christian churches and the national state in Cameroon is rather extensive in comparison with the literature about the relationship
between the national state and Islam, but rather scarce in comparison with other African countries. Some general characteristics are as follows. (1) This subject has attracted mainly scholars from the former colonising powers, and that largely in the margins of missiological studies; (2) the period of the German Protectorate has been much more thoroughly investigated than later periods (including the period of independence); and (3) almost no literature is available about West Cameroon. For a review study referring to the years before the First World War, see Obdeijn (1983), whereas Joseph (1980) is a key to the whole colonial period.

Most authors characterise the relationship between state and church as being ambiguous: on the one hand, there would have been an alliance between the colonial authorities and the missions, on the other, the latter are presented as representing an autonomous power in society which has played an intermediary role between the population and the state. The Muslim-religious authorities have never made such a stand. The different studies emphasise more or less one of the two sides. Besides differences in theoretical preoccupation, this is caused by the fact that the churches were not one monolithic power vis-à-vis the state, so empirical distinctions in time and space are accounted for in the literature.

The historical studies about the commercial involvement of the missions emphasise the interlacing of Christianity and colonialism; see Epale (1974) about the pre-colonial Baptist Mission, Lewis (1930) regarding the German annexation in 1884, and Kaeselitz (1965) on trade activities of the Basler Mission in the German Protectorate. The missiological literature neglects this aspect: Berger (1978), for instance, hardly discusses the support of the Catholic Pallotines for the system of forced estate-labour, whereas Van Slageren (1972) stresses the protests of the Basler Mission against this form of exploitation near Victoria. There are no studies about direct economic involvement of the missions in more recent times.

Missionary activities in the colonial period were particularly effective in the field of education, and they have resulted in a
remarkably high level of literacy in southern Cameroon. Geltzer (1966) explicitly points out the nationalistically slanted education of the Pallotine order in the German colonial period, and Essiben (1980), a study written by a Cameroonian, emphasises the shared interest which the state and the churches had in the expansion of Western-Christian values via confessional education. Most studies about missionary education, though, stress the conflicting interests between the two 'parties'. The missiological literature emphasises the issue of which language to use in teaching; Berger (1978), for instance, points out only incidentally the identification of the Catholic Pallotine Mission with the German colonial culture policy, and Haldén (1968) contains a discussion of the Basler Mission's resistance against government interference at the missionary schools.

The autonomous societal power base of the Christian denominations vis-à-vis the state, a position which enabled them to set up intermediary activities between the native population and the colonial state in certain situations, is the explicit subject of the volume of Ngongo (1982), a Christian Cameroonian. The topic is also dealt with by Prouzet (1974). In fact, this regard for the interests of the Cameroonian people was often prompted by the wish to promote Christian values vis-à-vis the state, notably in the fields of education and marriage. Chilver (1963), Nkwii (1976, 1977b), and Labatut (1978) provide a concrete case: the conflict between the authorities and the missions over the English indirect rule system in West Cameroon, which implied legitimation and official support for the 'pagan' sacrality of the traditional chiefs.

Because of this potentially critical stance it might be interesting to investigate how far the churches have taken sides with the political opposition. The small amount of literature on this subject is entirely devoted to the relation between the Catholic Church and the rising tide of postwar nationalism in the form of the UPC. Mfoulo (1978) and Retif (1956) emphasise the mutual hostility; Zoa (1957) tries to counter the anti-nationalist image of the Roman Catholic Church; Alima (1970a, 1970b), M. Beti (1974), LeVine (1971), Ugeux
(1971), *Condamnations* (1971), and Bayart (1972) all discuss the sensational arrest and conviction of the Catholic Bamileke bishop Ndongmo for his active support to the UPC guerrillas.

There are surprisingly few studies devoted to the post-colonial relationship between the churches and the Cameroonian state available. Officially Cameroon is a secular state; nevertheless the Jehovah Witnesses, who are quite popular among the Bamileke, have been banned since 1970. In Cameroon, where political pluralism is officially prohibited, the churches are one of the few domestic forces which are able to criticize the government. This position of autonomous power, built up in the colonial period, still manifests itself in dominance in the fields of education, health, and the press; secularisation of these domains by the state are as yet impossible for financial reasons. Notwithstanding all that, Bayart (1972, 1973) argues that the ‘fonction tribunitiennne’ of the Christian denominations is steadily declining in the independence period, because the socio-economic autonomy of the churches is increasingly affected by the single-party state.

In the previous sub-section it has been mentioned that the literature concentrates much more on missionary Christianity than on African Christianity. There is not one study about the activities of the independent churches at the grassroots level of the nationalist movement, although it is quite clear that the Native Baptist Church has been quite prominent in this regard. Also it is largely unknown if these churches have a predominantly ethnic following, or if they overcome subnational identities.

It is remarkable that there is no literature concerned with the specific problems of Christianity in North Cameroon. At the time of the German Protectorate, it was, for example, prohibited for Christian denominations to work in that part of the country. Nowadays the Roman Catholic Church in the North strongly sympathises with smallhold farmers, and is intensively involved in projects for agricultural development; see e.g. *Propos* (1986).
Alima, J.-B.
An article in journalistic style about the arrest of a Catholic Bamileke bishop, who was accused of actively supporting for the UPC guerilla war.

About the arrest of Ndongmo, bishop of the diocese of Nkongsamba, in 1970.

Bahoken, J.C.

Balz, H.
This missiological study deals with the Basler Mission’s attitude towards Bakossi witchcraft and ‘secret societies’ in West Cameroon.

Bayart, J.-F.
This political-science article discusses the political relations between the Christian churches and the East Cameroonian state in the time of the federation. In spite of an easy and friendly relationship, the author stresses a structural conflict. The state’s ultimate goal is to limit the churches’ autonomy in the fields of education and health, so that the latter’s ‘fonction tribunitienne’ is increasingly going to the wall. The arrest and sentence of bishop Ndongmo is briefly discussed.

Benoist, J.-R. de

Berger, H.

A missiological study of the Pallotines in Cameroon, emphasizing the theological backgrounds in Germany and the Catholic mission theory. The author pays only slight attention to the identification of this Catholic order with German colonial politics in the fields of forced estate labour and education ('Erziehung zur Arbeit') (p. 328-333), and only a little more to the Church's role to promote the interests of the population vis-à-vis public officers and traders (p. 268-299).

Beti, M. (pseudonym for A. Biyidi)

One of the subjects of this novel, written by the most famous Cameroonian oppositional writer, is the conflicting interests of the colonial government and the missions in expelling polygamy. The English translation is: The poor Christ of Bomba. London (1971).


This fierce attack on the (neo-colonial) Ahidjo government pays some attention to the circumstances of the arrest and conviction of bishop Albert Ndongmo, who was accused of having supported the UPC. The French edition of 1977 is profoundly actualised.

Binet, J.
A sociological description of the spread of Christianity in South Cameroon. Topics discussed include the competition between the various denominations, the social structure of the Christian communities, and the degree of intensity of conversion (which the author correlates with the degree of criminality and polygamy).


A functionalist, religious-sociological study of the Duala conversion to Christianity. The author, a colonial civil servant, discusses the devastating effects of the missions on the traditional religious institutions, and provides a syncronic description of the religious praxis of the evangelised Duala.


This study includes a description of the conflict between Catholic converts and the chiefs in several West Cameroonian chieftaincies.
Comité pour l'Evangélisation Urbaine de Yaoundé

Condamnations

An account of the Ndongmo lawsuit.

Curley, R.T.

A sociological analysis of dream narratives among the members of a Christian independent church in West Cameroon, the True Church of God, which originates from Nigeria. These narratives function as a mechanism for social mobility.

Dah, J.N.

Dubié, P.

This religious-historical article is devoted to the spread of Islam among the Bamun, paying some attention to the diffusion of Christianity.

Epale, S.J.

This article discusses the economic influence of missionaries of the Baptist Missionary Society on the pre-colonial trading states along the Cameroonian coast.
Essiben, M.

This study examines the intellectual careers of leading Cameroonian politicians. The author emphasises the existence of an alliance between the colonial government and the missions for the promotion of the Western-Christian civilisation through schooling.

Fauré, J.

A theological study of the pre-colonial history of Protestantism in Africa, including Cameroon.

Fotso, M.

Gelzer, D.G.


Geschiere, P.
This monograph of the Maka includes several remarks about the harmony of interests between the missions’ activities and the economic goals of the French colonial administration, i.e. the promotion of agricultural productivity and marketing. The author briefly mentions the autonomy of the mission stations in the region vis-à-vis the colonial state (p. 161-162).

Graines


Haldén, E.


Contains a description of the cooperation of the Basler Mission with the colonial authorities. The author thus interprets the mission as a vehicle for the German culture policy. But, on the other hand, there were also conflicts with the government about such issues as education and the interests of the native population.

Hebga, M. et al.


1979 Sorcellerie, chimère dangereuse ...? Abidjan: INADES. 304 p., bibl., Asc 11374.


Hebga is a Cameroonian priest who describes, with a Christian eye, a number of healing rituals in African Christianity, as he had witnessed it in the Yaounde region.

Joseph, R.A.


Includes several brief comments on the tensions between the American Presbyterians and the French colonial government (p. 30-31).

This article is a key to the study of the relations between the colonial state and the different Christian denominations in East Cameroon. The intermediary role of the missions between the government and the population is clarified. Other topics discussed are the conflicting interests between the two in the fields of schooling and language, and the position of the Native Baptist Church and its charismatic leader Lotin Same vis-à-vis the state.

Kaeselitz, R.

This dissertation is devoted to the role of the missionaries in German colonial politics. The Basler Mission established a trade company which managed to monopolise the supply of commodities to its converts; thus, commercial interests were very important in the mission’s policy. The theoretical orientation of the study is Marxist, i.e. the missions are regarded as pillars for capitalist imperialism.

Kalu, O.U. (ed.)

This is a reprint of 21 formerly published articles.

Keller, W.
1969 The history of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon. Buea: Radio and Literature Department of the Presbyterian Church. 154 p., bibl.


A missiological study of the Presbyterian Mission before and during the German Protectorate (1841-1914), its way to independence (1925-1957), and the independent church itself (1957-1979).
Kraft, C.H.  

Kwast, L.E.  

Labatut, R.  

The study includes a chapter on ‘the colonial impact and the Christian mission’, which discusses the conflict between the missions and the colonial government regarding the traditional Tikar rulers in West Cameroon.

Laburthe-Tolra, P.  
1983  ‘De la conversion chez les Béti (Cameroun): ambiguïtés dans le transfert d’une religion à l’autre’, in: Cultures et Développement, 15, 1, p. 3-10. Asc.

The author reconstructs the central principles of the pre-colonial Beti religion, and indicates how far it harmonises or conflicts with the conceptual world of Catholicism.

LeVine, V.T.  

Contains some data on the specific political status of the Roman Catholic Church in Cameroon. The tense situation is illustrated by the many critical articles in the Catholic newspaper ‘L’Effort Camerounais’ and by the Ndongmo affair in 1970-1971 (p. 129-131).

Lewis, Th.  
The author was a prominent member of the Saker Baptist Mission, which was important in the pre-colonial history of Cameroonian Christianity. The book contains a description of the German conquest and the SBM’s role in it.

Maimo, M.

Mfoulo, J.

The article deals with the development of the relationship between the Catholic Church in Cameroon, which was predominantly run by French missionaries, and the anti-colonial UPC.

Mirbt, C.

Mohr, H.

Molla, C.F.
1966 'Les régions en voie d'Islamisation et l'église', in: Flambeau, 10, p. 82-94.

Discusses the spread and competition of Christianity and Islam. Several examples taken from Cameroon, are included.

Mvondo Nyina, B.

Contains some information on the important role of the missions in the field of education.
Ndi, A.

Nestvogel, R.

The author discusses the long, sometimes troubled cooperation between the administration and the missions in the time of the German Protectorate.

Ngangoum, B.F. & P. Tchouanga Tiegoum

Ngongo, L.

This historical study is devoted to the political role of the Christian denominations in the French colonial period. Topics discussed include the intermediary role of the missions between the government and the population ("fonction tribunitienne") and the conflicting interests between the government and the churches in the fields of marriage law and educational policy (regarding the instruction language). The author thus stresses the autonomy of the churches vis-à-vis the state.

Nkwi, P.N.
1971  Kom religion and Christianity. Dissertation presented to the Faculty of Theology, Pontificia Universitas Urbaniana, Rome.

Two of the topics in this political-anthropological monograph of the Tikar chiefdom of Kom, are the sacred kingship and royal rituals (p. 48-59), and the conflict between the missions and the state about this religious dimension of political authority (p. 158-170).


One of the few local studies of Christianity in Cameroon.

Nomenyo, S.

Nyansako-ni-Nku (ed.)

This is a jubilee publication of the history of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, containing 20 essays written by leading figures in the church, among whom are S.T. Muna (former prime minister of West Cameroon) and V. Mukete (former president of the Cameroon Development Corporation).

Nyom, B.

A theological study of the traditional Bassa religion.

Obdeijn, H.L.M.

A bibliographical essay of recent publications (after 1950) about the political role and activities of the missions over the period 1850-1914. This review also contains indications of important sources of information. on Cameroon, see p. 61-62.
Propos

An inventory of the structural problems of agriculture and proposals for improvement, drafted at the initiative of the North Cameroonian Catholic Church.

Prouzet, M.

This study includes a section on the power relations between the Christian churches and the Cameroonian state. The former are interpreted as ‘un état dans un état’ (p. 102-112).

Retif, A.

This article discusses the mutual accusations of the Catholic Church and the UPC of being respectively colonialist and communist-atheistic.

Reyburn, W.D.

A majority of the members of Christian denominations among several peoples in Cameroon (the Bulu, Yaounde, Bafia, Meka Gbaya, and Kaka) consists of women who either have a high status or a low economic valu.


Rudin, H.R.
1938 Germans in the Cameroons, 1884-1914: a case study in modern imperialism. London: Jonaphan Cape. 456 p., bibl., ind., Asc 6492.

This significant analysis of German colonial rule in Cameroon, contains a section on the political involvement of the Basler Mission. Topics discussed include the cooperation with the government, and the promotion of the Duala interests in the case of land expropriations and the establishment of estates, as well as the conflict about the instruction language in the Presbyterian Mission schools (p. 261-382).

Sanneh, L.

Scalabre, C.

Several examples of syncretism are presented in this religious-sociological study.

Simo Simo, A.

Slageren, J. van

The second section deals with the history of the European missions in Cameroon.

This religious-historical study is devoted to the origins and further development into an independent church (in 1957) of the Evangelical Church of East Cameroon, emphasising the situation among the Bamileke. The orientation is missiological, so that political issues are only incidentally dealt with. Topics discussed include the change of denominations in the wake of a change in colonial rule, the ambiguous relation between the German colonial authorities and the Basler Mission, and the origin of the Native Baptist Church.

Stummann, F.  

Stumpf, R.  

This study is devoted to the language issue in the missionary schools during the colonial period.

Stürzinger, U.  

Tardits, C.  
1979  ‘Réflexions sur le sacrifice dans la religion traditionnelle des Bamoun (Cameroun)’, in: Systèmes de Pensée en Afrique Noire, 4, p. 117-129. bibl., Asc.

This is a contribution to the anthropological debate about the analysis of sacrificial rituals. One of the topics discussed is the Islamisation and Christianisation of the Bamun society since the beginning of this century.

Tchouanga, P.  

Trépanier, G.  
The article deals with the ways Bassa women view their own lives in a rapidly changing socio-cultural environment. The coming of Christianity is also briefly discussed.

Troisch, W.A.

The author’s goal is to reconstruct the traditional attitude of the Bassa, Bulu, and Bamileke toward sex before marriage on the basis of interviews with male students at a mission school.

Turner, H.W.

This study is devoted to sycretism in the African independent churches. ‘Pagan’ characteristics include divination, ecstasy, spirit possession, and purificatory rites.

Ugeux, E.-X.

About the law-suit against bishop Ndongmo.

Umezinkwa, W.A.

Vernon-Jackson, H.O.H.

This volume contains information about the continued use of English by missionaries after the establishment of the German Protectorate in Cameroon, and their emphasis on using African languages instead of German as the instruction language in schools.
Vincent, J.F.

Vincent presents a description of the views of Beti women on the changing reality in which they live. The study consists of seventeen interviews, preceded by a general introduction. Topics discussed include extinct marriage practices and feminine rituals in secret societies, as well as the subjective experiences of the process of evangelisation in the colonial period. The economic changes which happened simultaneously, are only marginally discussed.

Wazaki, H.

This anthropological article discusses religious rituals in the town of Foumban. The central points of orientation in the local value system are the royal Court, Bamun ethnicity, and Islam. The author analyses three rituals, making an analytical distinction between ritual process (formality) and festivity process (orgy).

Wheeler, J.M.

Wilbois, J.

Zoa, J.
CHAPTER 3

URBANISATION AND LAND TENURE

This chapter consists of two sections. First, urbanisation, migration, and urban society are all briefly discussed; the second section then goes on to discuss land tenure, both in rural and urban areas. As before, each section and subsection is made up of an introduction and a list of references.

THE URBAN SOCIETY

As everywhere in Africa, Cameroon has witnessed heavy urbanisation over the last few decades. Since independence the total amount of urban dwellers has greatly increased. As a result, researchers started to explicitly devote themselves to questions of the new urban society. The phenomenon of migration has been most thoroughly studied since then by demographers and geographers. Just a few significant studies can be listed here; a very extensive survey is the bibliography of Gubry (1984), Bako (1984), Barbier et al. (1981-2), Bessat & Trouve (1982), Dongmo (1981), Marguerat (1979), and Tandap (1982) investigate urbanisation on a national level. The regional studies of migration include Boutrais et al. (1984) and Beuvilain (1980, 1983-4) about North Cameroon, and Gwan (1980) about West Cameroon. Dongmo (1980) is a comparative study of the Yaounde and Douala migration fields.

The trade centres along the coast were the nuclei around which the first cities in Cameroon developed since the middle of the 19th century. These centres of mercantile capitalism were the cradle of an emerging native petty bourgeois class, which no longer complied
with old social structures and traditional values. Douala, being the
major port, became the largest city; westernisation had its strongest
impact here. Until the 1960s Yaounde and Douala remained the
only ‘true’ cities in the country. Hence, the older urban studies are
largely confined to these two metropolitan towns. The classic works
exclusively refer to Douala, and discuss the problems the colonial
municipal authorities were confronted with as a result of rapid
urbanisation, such as overpopulation and (neo-traditional) land
tenure conflicts in the immigrant quarter of New Bell. Rivalries
over a host of scarce socio-economic resources and opportunities
offered by the colonial state, were most intense in Douala. These
struggles came to be structured according to ethnic labels.
Confrontational ethnicity — the term is introduced by Kleis (1980),
see Chapter 1 — is most manifest in the case of the Bamileke. They
migrated from their home territories to the Mungo Valley and to
Yaounde and Douala, and managed to increasingly dominate the
petty trades and handicrafts; see Nkwi (1976) in particular. The
voluntary organisations for mutual assistance are an important
explanatory factor for their economic dynamics; some information
on this ethnic professional solidarity, which intensified ethnic group
boundaries, is provided by the afore mentioned Nkwi (1976) and by
Soen et al. (1971). The social tensions which are aroused by the
thrust and aggressiveness of the Bamileke in pursuit of economic
opportunity, are usually referred to as ‘le problème bamiléké’;
Dongmo (1981) is the major study on this topic. The indigenous
population of Yaounde, the Beti, regard the Bamileke as a major
economic threat. Many recently published geographic studies
briefly discuss contemporary relations between indigenous and
immigrant town dwellers, usually focusing on social stratification
and ethnicity, i.e. the relative socio-demographic and economic
retrogression of the indigenous categories due to the rapid growth
of the immigrant population. Gouellain (1961), Merlo (1962),
refer to Douala in this respect, and Franqueville (1979, 1984) to
Yaounde. In West Cameroon the receptivity of the Igbo to
economic change and opportunity are a major cause for ethnic frictions; this was a decisive factor in 1961 when the majority of the population of the Southern Cameroons opted for joining East Cameroon instead of Nigeria; see Kleis (1980). Most geographical urban studies include discussion of the spatial manifestations of ethnicity, notably the phenomenon of concentrated housing along ethnic lines; some of these works present a description of intensified ethnic rivalry. However, they generally lack an analysis in terms of the prevailing socio-economic circumstances.

In the 1960s the study of the city was a by-product of the study of rural development, which was a major field of inquiry for economists, sociologists, and geographers in those days. Exceptions are, among others, N’Difo (1966) and Franqueville (1968) — both referring to Yaounde — and Gardinier (1969) — which is devoted to Douala. In the 1970s the city, as a separate field of inquiry, attracted growing numbers of social scientists. This trend coincides with an increase in attention for the internal social problems of the cities by the national government authorities. Nearly all studies, which are predominantly socio-geographical in discipline, are devoted to the topic of urbanisation and its direct social effects. A key concept is ‘néo-citadin’. The three most significant works have been composed by the French geographers Mainet (1981) about Douala and Franqueville (1984) about Yaounde, and by the sociologist Gouellain (1974) about Douala. The majority of urban studies have, however, been written by Cameroonian geographers (in the broad French meaning of the word, i.e. it also includes research which is informed with economic, sociological and anthropological issues); it includes many unpublished dissertations, which are not available outside of Cameroon.

Many geographical studies about Douala take the ward as the unit of analysis, usually a ‘quartier spontane’, and discuss the social problems by which urbanisation is attended. Those studies which explicitly analyse the problems of land tenure in Douala, are presented in the next section. The problem of housing the urban poor has drawn most attention; see, for example, Mainet’s articles
(1976a, 1977a, 1977b, 1978b, 1979b, 1980b), and also Kilama (1982), Mouaf (1981), Moulogoué (1977a, 1977b), Ngalle Edimo (1974), and Tchounkoué (1978). There are not that many quarter studies available about Yaoundé; see, for example, Franqueville (1972) and Mbono Samba (1971). However, there are several housing studies which are not confined to a single quarter, such as Douandju (1977), Eyango-Kouo (1970), Nsutebu Fru (1985), and Maximy & Mougoué (1980). Comparative studies of Yaoundé and Douala are few; an example is Clignet & Jordan (1971).

The cities' growing inability to absorb the population influx gave rise to such problems as alcoholism and prostitution, and generally problems within the field of incomes and employment. Hence, in the 1970s the informal sector of the urban economy was 'discovered' as a field of inquiry. Since the middle of that decade a large amount of socio-economic literature about this theme has been published, notably referring to Douala and particularly Yaoundé. See, for example, Bengam et al. (1976) about Douala, and Abado (1982), Braakhuys et al. (1979), Lachaud (1982), Laval (1985), Nihau et al. (1982), Penouil (1982), Demol & Nihau (1982), and Steel (1982) about Yaoundé. The informal sector of other cities has been much less explored; Schamp (1983), about Bamenda, and Baumann (1985), about Saa, are two notable German articles. In the terminal colonial period the social tensions in Douala led to a radicalisation of the immigrant section of the population; to strikes, revolts and other forms of social unrest. The growing popularity of the UPC among these ranks in the 1950s coincides with this development; see Melo (1961), Sween & Clignet (1969), and Joseph (1974, 1977).

The city as a social phenomenon is difficult to demarcate. This is one of the reasons why studies which are not primarily devoted to urban life may contribute to a better understanding of the urban society. Many migration studies, regional studies, and urban periphery studies take part in the general debate of the relation between town and countryside. Barbedette (1980), Moby-Etia (1976), and Vernière (1973) are migration studies about Douala. Yaounde is the focus of a number of geographical studies which
analyse the town as the centre of a region with an asserted socio-economic cohesion; most refer to Lekiè, a district specialised in commercial horticulture; Bosch (1980), Delpech (1978), Franqueville (1973), and Morinière (1972) are but a few examples.

A new impulse to the study of the city phenomenon was the appearance of urban studies about secondary Cameroon cities since the early 1970s. Most were dissertations written by young Cameroon students from the Sub-Faculty of Geography of the University of Yaounde. The common theme was, again, the socio-spatial effects of population growth upon the urban society. Nowadays almost every province or district capital has been the focus of one or more of these studies, except for the south of the country where the rate of urbanisation is still small. The following list is far from complete.

Bafang  Tchamgme Njende (1973)
Bafoussam  Kamga Souop (1972, 1977, 1983)
Bagangte  Nganso (1977)
Bamenda  Schamp (1983)
Buea  Courade (1972a, 1972b)
Kousseri  Pabo Sale (1974)
Kumbo  Bongfen Jumbau (1973)
Mbandjok  Barbier & Tissandier (1977)
Mbouda  Nofiele (1973)
Nkongsamba  Tchamgme Njende (1979, 1984)

A number of these geographical studies analyse secondary towns as the centre of a socio-economic region. The major examples are the following.
Edea Minoué (1970)
Eseka Tjeega (1971)
Mokolo Steck (1972)
Nanga Eboka Tissandier (1972)
Ngaoundere Hino (1984)
Victoria-Bota Courade (1979)

Urban-anthropological studies are largely non-existent. Cameroonian scholars usually do not preoccupy themselves with anthropological issues. Two examples, referring to secondary cities, are Lagerhuis & Wilms (1974) about Kumba and M. Eguchi (1973) about Maroua. Both studies discuss the rise of neo-traditional life styles — without utilizing the term —, a development which is closely bound up with the earlier stated formation of novel forms of social conscience in urban centres, notably ethnic identities and loyalties. Much more research could be directed toward this theme.

A comparative survey study of secondary cities is not, as yet, available. Only Marguerat (1974b) is concerned with the absolute and relative decline of a number of small cities in Cameroon as caused by the monopolisation of the ‘exode rural’ by Douala and Yaounde.

To sum up: the urban study of Cameroonian cities is dominated by social-geographers; focuses on the process of urbanisation; is quite productive since the rise of a new generation of Cameroonian students in the early 1970s; and includes since that time the secondary cities of the country. Pioneering theoretical studies have as yet not been produced.

The following references are divided into four distinct lists under the following headings: migration and urbanisation; cities (general); Douala; Yaounde; other cities.
Migration and urbanisation

Bako, H.

The author provides a Marxist analysis of the causes and effects of migration to the cities in Cameroon: ‘The rural exodus is first of all a product of the development of neo-colonial capitalism in Cameroon’.

Barbier, J.-C., G. Courade & P. Gubry

Beauvilain, A.


Bessat, C., & J. Trouve

Biyong, B.

Boutrais, J., J. Boulet, A. Beauvilain et al.
Includes an extensive discussion of migration in North Cameroon (p. 305-374).

Champaud, J.

The rise of the Bamileke in agriculture and commerce is closely related to the massive migration of this ethnic group. The author explains the success by the integration of traditional social structures into the modern commercial system.

Chendi Nde, F.

Dongmo, J.-L.

A geographical article about the migration fields of Yaounde and Douala.


A rather superficial analysis of migratory movements, based on data from the 1976 census. Most important are the inter-departmental migrations within provinces. The major emigration regions are the Grassfields, and the Bamileke and Bassa territories. Central reciprocatory areas are Littoral, Sud-Ouest, and Mfoundi.

Franqueville, A.
Gubry, P.

Gwan, E.

A short historical overview of the migratory movements which have occurred in West Cameroon.

Marguerat, Y.

A general quantitative analysis of the rural exodus in Cameroon, and the causes of the urban pull. The author tests several hypotheses.


Podlewski, A.M.
1966 ‘La dynamique des principales populations du Nord-Cameroun (entre Dénoué et Lac Tchad)’, in: Cahiers ORSTOM, 3, 4, p. 3-194. bibl., Asc.

In the first section the demographic dynamics of each important ethnic group in North Cameroon is explained, and in the second section thematic comparisons are made.


A demographic study about civil status, marriage, birth and fertility rates, natural growth, and migration in Adamawa
Pontié, G.

This sociological article deals with intra-rural migration among the Guiziga, an ethnic group living near Maroua. The author concentrates on push factors to explain the phenomenon, i.e. conflicts within the traditional society.

Tandap, L.T.


An evaluative study about the impact of urbanisation on population distribution in Cameroon. The author briefly discusses the migratory effects of administrative decentralisation in the public service.

Vincent, M.

Cities: general

Beauvilain, A. et al.

An image of the diversity of the cities and the countryside of Cameroon, utilizing aerial photos from the period 1952-1982.

Chendi Ndé, F.
Cotten, A.-M. & Y. Marguerat

A geographical system analysis in which the authors try to functionally compare the urban patterns in Ivory Coast and Cameroon. Some attention is paid to decentralisation and the ‘administration territoriale’.

Koenig, E.L., E. Chia & J. Povey (eds.)

This collection of articles deals with the social aspects of language and language policies. The topics discussed include the spread and role of Pidgin English and the usage of language in the cities.

Marguerat, Y.


The author proposes five criteria to measure the degree of ‘cityhood’ of a town.

Tjeega, P.

Includes 248 titles which are alphabetically ordered according to author’s name.

Douala

Barbedette, L.

This socio-psychological study of youth migration is based on fieldwork. Migration is regarded as a transitional ritual, made up of different phases.

Bengam, P.M., J. Jover, J.M. Pouymiroo & E. Tanging

This study discusses the informal sector in Douala, notably the wood-working industry.

Bory, P.

Cameroun

Discusses the government’s response, in the form of services and projects, to the massive migration to Douala.
Clignet, R. & F. Jordan

Derrick, J.

Direction de l'Urbanisme et de l'Habitat

Diziai, R. & A. Cambon

A geographical study of the problems which have emerged in the fields of employment, housing, public services, and land tenure in an immigrant quarter in Douala, due to rapid urbanisation.

Dongmo, J.-L.

A significant geographical study of the economic successes of Bamileke immigrants in modern urban life in Douala, Yaounde, and Nkongsamba. The author is a member of this ethnic group.

Fodouop, K.
1977 Bonaberi dans Douala: autonomie et interdépendance. Thèse 3e cycle, University of Bordeaux III. 299 p., bibl.

Gardinier, D.E.
Gouellain, R.

A sociological study about the largest immigrant quarter of Douala. The author notes increasing tension between traditional group formation based on ethnicity and kinship, and new group formation on the basis of neighbourhood and profession.


An historical reconstruction of the adventures of the autochthonous population, the Duala, when the town of Douala was created and expanded during the colonial period.


A sociological study of the social history of Douala for the pre-colonial and colonial era.

Guidon Lavallée, M.

Guilbot, J.

Haeringer, P.
A comparative geographical study of Abidjan, Brazzaville, San Pedro, and Douala. Topics discussed include the problems which the municipality faces for effective city planning in the overpopulated residential quarter of New Bell in Douala, such as 'illegal' housing, lack of public services etc.

Joseph, R.A.


The best study of the UPC and a significant contribution to the study of decolonisation in general. The author extensively discusses social and historical factors which may account for the party's radicalism in the struggle for political hegemony. The analysis runs until December 1956, when the party changed over to violent resistance.

Kilama, A.
1982 Quartiers spontanes et quartiers périphériques à Douala, Cameroun: l'exemple de la zone Nylon. Thèse de 3e cycle, University of Toulouse. 184 p., bibl.

Lacan, M.

LeVine, V.T.

Contains some remarks about the socio-economical and ethnic tensions in Douala, Yaounde, and Kamba (p. 49-53).

Mainet, G.


A geographical article about the economic significance of the port for Douala’s development.


This geographical article is devoted to patterns of intra-urban migration and of indigenous-immigrant social interaction. It contains a few remarks about city planning by the municipal authorities.

1979b New-Bell, prototype des quartiers des étrangers à Douala. Yaounde: University of Yaounde. 31 p., bibl.


A geographical study about an immigrant quarter in Douala, based on fieldwork in 1977. The theme is the spatial manifestation of a number of social characteristics of the population, namely ethnicity, incomes, house construction, and length of residence.


Mansvelt Beck, J.
1980 Wonen in Douala (Kameroen). Amsterdam, University of Amsteram. 16 p., bibl., Asc 2632.

A geographical study of the role of ethnicity and social stratification on the utilisation of the urban space for housing in New Bell, Douala.


Marguerat, Y.
1969 Analyse numérique des immigrants de Douala. Abidjan: ORSTOM.

Melo, J. D.

Merlo, R. D.

Moby-Etia, P.
Mouafo, D.

Mougoué, B.


Nana, A.

Ngalle Edimo, S.

Nkwi, P.N.

An important political-anthropological monograph about the Kom, written by a scholar who is himself affiliated to this people.

Soulilhou, J.

A survey of more than hundred black and white photos of the history of Douala from 1860 until 1955. Little information on the residents of the city is included.

Sween, J. & R. Clignet
Tchounkoue, P. S.
1978 La zone Nylon à Douala. Thèse 3e cycle, University of Yaounde. 110 p., bibl.

Teixeira, P. (ed.)

Tsémo, A.
1972a Le quartier de New Deido. DES, University of Yaounde.


Vernière, M.

Yaounde

Abado, A. T.

An economic study of the informal sector of Yaounde.

Bopda, A.

Bosch, R.
A sociological study of migration. Land scarcity in the Lékié district stimulates youth to migrate to Yaounde, hoping to earn a bridewealth there.

Braakhuis, N., J.-P. Lachaud & P. Mettelin
1979 Recherches sur les activités informelles à Yaoundé. Talence: Institut d'Études Politiques de Bordeaux, Centre d'Étude d'Afrique Noire. 491 p., bibl., Asc A3048.

Three distinct socio-economic studies of the informal sector of the Yaoundé economy.

Buys, D.

Cameroon Urban and Rural Lands Authority
1978 Yaoundé household and housing characteristics. Yaounde.

Clignet, R. & F. Jordan

Composition
1984 'La composition urbaine dans le schéma directeur (d'aménagement et d'urbanisme (SDAU)) de Yaoundé', in: Cahiers de l'Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la Région d'Ile-de-France, 73, p. 107-114.

Delpech, B.

A sociological analysis of migration. Topics discussed are the arrival of Eton migrants in Yaounde, their ethnicity structured patterns of cooperation, their circumstances of life, and their aspirations.
Nemol, E. & G. Nihau

Direction de l’Urbanisme et de l’Habitat

Dongmo, J.-L.

A significant geographical study of the economic success of Bamileke immigrants in urban modern life, notably in Douala, Yaounde, and Nkongsamba.

Douandju, J. L.

Eyango-Kouo, Ph.

Fouda, A.

A high civil servant’s view of urbanisation policies in Yaounde.

Franqueville, A.

A geographical study of the history of Yaounde. The author pays some attention to leasing and land tenure (p. 144-145).

A geographical analysis of three sections of an immigrant quarter in Yaounde, which is largely inhabited by Bamileke residents. The author shows that professional dynamics correlates to the immigrants’ region of origin.

1973

This article discusses patterns of migration and re-migration of the rural population in the Lékié district, a heavily populated area with intensive cocoa cultivation.

1979

1984

This geographical study, composed by order of the Yaounde municipality, is devoted to the social problems which accrue from the rapid growth of the city. Topics discussed include land holding relations and the stagnatory effects of Yaounde on the development of nearby secondary towns.

Lachaud, J.-P.
1982

Laval, B.
1985

A socio-economic study of the dynamic interplay of the formal and informal sector of the Yaounde economy. The author concludes that the latter does not drag on the further economic development of the town.
LeVine, V.T. 

Contains some remarks about the socio-economical and ethnic tensions in Douala, Yaounde and Kamba (p. 49-53).

Maetur 
1978 Enquête sur les caractéristiques socio-économiques des ménages et les conditions actuelles d’habitat à Yaoundé. 3 vol.

Maximy, R. & B. Mougoué 
1980 L’habitat à Yaoundé. 16 p.

Mbono-Samba, M. 

Mey, G. & H. Spirik 

Morinière, J.-L. 

N'Difo, M. E. 

Nihau, G., E. Demole & A. Abado Tabi 
1982 Le secteur non structuré ‘moderne’ de Yaoundé. BIT-ILG, Genève.

Nsutebu Fru, Z. 
Penouil, M.

A socio-economic study of the Yaounde informal sector.

Steel, W.

A sociological study of the informal sector of the urban economies of Accra and Yaounde.

Ze Nguene, R.

Other cities

Barbier, J.C. & J. Champaud

Barbier, J.C. & J. Tissandier

This study is devoted to the social problems which have emerged in a recently established industrial centre one hundred kilometres to the northeast of Yaounde. Topics discussed include the failure of the parcelling out of land and the municipality’s inability to control the expansion of the ‘quartiers spontanes’.
Baroung, J.

This is a juridical overview of the housing policies of the East Cameroonian government in relation to urbanisation policies.

Bassoro Modibbo, A. & E. Mohamadou
Paris: CNRS. 208 p., bibl., Asc A2845.

A compilation of Fulbe oral traditions in Garoua.

Baumann, E.

About the informal sector of the rural economy of the township Saa in the Lékié district.

Beauvilain, A.

This demographic study is devoted to the North Cameroonian cities. The data are based on the 1976 census, and comparisons are made with census material collected in the early 1960s.

Bongfen Jumbau, L.

Champaud, J.

An extensive survey of the cities and countryside of this region. Rural-urban migration is one of the topics discussed.
Courade, G.

This geographical study discusses the present-day spatial configuration of urban quarters in Buea, which is argued to express major historical events, notably the Bakweri insurrection against the Germans in the beginning of this century, and the promotion of the town to the administrative capital of West Cameroon. The article was also published in: Etudes géographiques sur les villes du Cameroun. Yaounde: ORSTOM, 1970, p. 41-55.

1972b The urban development of Buea: an essay in social geography. Yaounde: ORSTOM. 27 p

This booklet is a concise survey of the towns in the Fako district (Buea). The author is a French geographer with many years of fieldwork experience in Cameroon.


The author tries to explain the relative decline of Victoria-Bota since 1960, and describes the modest population growth which the city nevertheless has witnessed, i.e. ‘growth without development’.

Dongmo, J.-L.

A significant geographical study of the economic success of Bamileke immigrants in urban modern life, notably in Douala, Yaounde, and Nkongsamba.

Eguchi, M.J.
An anthropological description of the ‘modern’ life style and culture of women in a number of Fulbe residential quarters in Maroua.

Enyegue Mongo, L.

Froelich, J.C.

Gondolo, A.

Hamel, H.
A description of the development of the township of Belabo since the construction of the Transcamerounais railway between Yaounde and Ngaoundere.

Hess, P.

Hetzel, W.
A monograph of recent urban developments in the fields of trade, transport and relations with the surrounding region, and the impact of these infrastructural and economic factors on the ethnic differentiation of the city, i.e. the decreasing political and economic hegemony of the Fulbe.

Hino, Sh.

Kamga Souop, A.
1972 La croissance de Bafcussam: étude géographique. Yaoundé, University of Yaounde. 129 p., bibl.

1977 Bafoussam: étude géographique. Thèse 3e cycle, University of Bordeaux III. 154 p., bibl.


Kengne, F.

An analysis of the commercial opportunities of this new town along the Transcamerounais railway. However: ‘La promotion urbaine et administrative sera ... freinée par Bertoua, chef-lieu et principale ville de la Province de l’Est’.

Kleis, G.W.
The article deals with ethnicity among the Igbo immigrants in West Cameroon. The author opposes the view that ethnicity is predominantly an urban phenomenon, making an analytic distinction between incorporation and confrontation as alternative patterns for activating the ethnic identity. The distinction is grafted upon Barth’s notion of ethnicity, which emphasises the ecological conditions of ethnic identity.

Lagerberg, C.S.I.J. & G.J. Wilms

There is also a Dutch version of this study: Profiel van een handelsstad in West-Cameroon: verslag en verantwoording van een sociaal-antropologisch onderzoek in Kumba (1972). 92 p., Asc A841.

LeVine, V.T.

Contains some remarks about the socio-economical and ethnic tensions in Douala, Yaounde, and Kamba (p. 49-53).

Minoué, A.
1970 L’industrialisation d’Edea et ses conséquences géographiques sur la ville et sa région. University of Bordeaux III.

Nganso, E.

Nkili, R.

Nofiele, D.
Pabo Sale, M.  
1974  Kousseri, étude de géographie urbaine. Yaounde, University of Yaounde. 106 p., bibl.


Prestat, M.G.  

Soh, P.B.  

Schamp, E.W.  

A geographical study of the informal sector of the capital of Northwestern Province.

Steck, B.  

Tchamgme Njende, D.  
1973  La ville de Bafang: étude de géographie urbaine. Yaounde, University of Yaounde. 201 p., bibl.

1979  Nkongsamba: étude de géographie urbaine. Thèse 3e cycle, University of Bordeaux III. 373 p., bibl.

Tissandier, J.

About the township of Nanga Eboka.

Tjeega, P.

Vennetier, P.

About the trade in fire-wood and its ecological impact on the environment.
LAND TENURE

The second section of this chapter is devoted to: (1) the prevailing indigenous systems of land tenure in rural areas; (2) state intervention through nationwide legislation into these unwritten judicial systems (preceded by a short subsection on private law in general); and (3) land holding relations in the urban society.

Indigenous systems of land tenure

The literature about indigenous systems of land property rights in Cameroon is rather dispersed: the topic is usually discussed in the context of the traditional agricultural systems, descriptions of which can be found in many early anthropological monographs. The unit of analysis is the tribe, which is implicitly presented as a static entity; an exception is Boutrais (1973, 1978). The possible impact of land tenure on ethnicity is not explicitly discussed. The information is largely descriptive and a-historical, and hampered by the utilisation of such unclear concepts as the dichotomies modern vs. traditional and individual vs. collective. The land is primarily interpreted as a means of production — i.e. land property rights are presented as part and parcel of the agricultural structure — in the context of a putative overall process of rural modernisation. Thus, traditional systems of land holding relations are regarded as a disappearing phase in a unilineal process of agricultural development. Historical change of land tenure systems is largely attributed to external factors which may be capitalised under the common denominator of modernisation; particularly land scarcity and the introduction of cash crops and arboricultures are mentioned in this respect, as they further the individualisation of property rights.

A comparative survey study of the different prevailing systems of land tenure in Cameroon is not available. Short descriptions of such systems are, among others, included in the following books and articles: Alexandre & Binet (1958) about the Pahuin; Dugast

One of the topics which has attracted considerable attention is the issue of the appearance or non-appearance of individual property rights in African traditional land tenure systems. The issue was considered urgent because individual property rights of land was generally seen as a general prerequisite of agricultural development. The majority of the afore-mentioned monographs depicts land as an inalienable asset to which individuals have only limited and temporary rights. Binet (1951) explains the appearance of individual rights of property by the rate of population mobility in the pre-colonial period. This theory, which has recently been adopted by Weber (1977), argues that individualisation of rights goes hand in hand with sedentarisation of the population, appearing in a situation of increased land scarcity and/or the introduction of perennial crops for export (the latter implies permanent cultivation of the land). The prevalence of individual property rights among the peoples which inhabit the heavily populated Mandara mountains in North Cameroon, has been an intriguing object of study in the light of this debate, as witness the many studies available on this marginal part of the country; Martin (1970), Boulet (1970), and Hallaire (1970, 1971) are all examples which have been recently published.

The foregoing discussion of the individualisation of land property rights is closely connected to the theme of the impact of the introduction of cash crops. Nearly all afore-mentioned studies devote some pages to this topic. Furthermore, Delpech (1982-83, 1985) discusses the conflicts which accompany the individualisation of property rights between the different parties involved which
claim the land, in the case of the Eton. Boutrais (1973, 1978) describes the conflicts over land in the North Cameroonian plains, which result from the introduction of export crops and a massive migration from the Mandara mountains.


Land tenure systems are intricately interwoven with structures of kinship and descent. Land holding relations exist only in the framework of socio-political interaction patterns among and between family groups. Delarozière (1949) and Hurault (1962, 1970a, 1970b) provide a functionalist analysis of land tenure in terms of its interrelatedness with the social structure of a number of Bamileke chiefdoms. Froelich (1954) discusses the politico-religious role of the centre of a Fulbe chieftaincy with respect to the land. There is a complete lack of any literature that analyses the land holding rights in the context of the legal order which was established in the chiefdoms of West and North Cameroon after their incorporation in the colonial and post-colonial state organisation. Guyer (1984) discusses the relationship between land, kinship, and households in the general context of a socio-economic analysis of the Beti agricultural system. Finally, S. Melone (1972) and Pougoue (1977) are significant studies of the territoriality of kinship groupings, with the intention of providing a juridical contribution to the study of the (restricted) opportunities to modernise society through the production of novel legislation on a national scale.
Alexandre, P. & J. Binet

A significant survey of the geography, climate, ethnicity, history, languages, economics, social organisation, and major cultural traits of the Pahuin peoples in the Cameroonian South. It includes an extensive, but outdated bibliography. A small section refers to land tenure (p. 73-75).

Anyangwe, C.

A general description of the nature of group and individual holding and interest in land in the traditional Cameroonian society.

Auber, Y.

Bawden, M.G. & I. Langdale-Brown
1963  An aerial photographic reconnaissance of the present and possible land-use in the Bamenda area, southern Cameroons, Tolworth, Dept. of Technical Cooperation, Directorate of Overseas Survey, Forestry and Land Use Section.

Bertant, M.

Contains the hypothesis that individual property of land does not exist in African customary law.

Binet, J.
This article, composed by a French colonial civil servant, discusses aspects of the customary land tenure in East Cameroon, providing illustrations from the Bamileke, Fang, Yaounde, and Fulbe. One of the topics discussed is the individualisation of the usufruct of land due to the introduction of cash crops.

Boulet, J.

A geographical village study of the traditional adaptation of an agrarian community to the ecology of the Mandara mountains. Includes some remarks about the structures of land holding relations.


Boutrais, J.

A geographical monograph of the migration from the Mandara mountains to the North Cameroonian plains, based on fieldwork in 1968-1969. Contains a few remarks regarding land tenure.


An interesting article about the developments in the land tenure system prevailing in the Mora Plain within the context of the migration from the Mandara mountains and the introduction of cotton cultivation. The author also discusses how these socio-economic changes influence the interethnic relations in the region.

Buijtenhuis, R.
An analysis of the relation between land scarcity, systems of land tenure, and peasant revolts. The author discusses two cases, the Kikuyu (in Kenya) and the Bamileke, and concludes that land scarcity, not land tenure, provokes political unrest.

Delarozière, R.

This is the first survey study of the Bamileke social structure, notably the chiefdoms and the societies, compiled from official reports. Traditional land tenure is one of the minor topics (P. 28-32). The study contains many errors.

Delpech, B.

This is an analysis of local conflicts among the Eton through archival research at a customary court. One of the main sources of tensions is the individualisation of land property rights due to the introduction of cocoa cultivation and rapid population growth.


Dikoumé, C. & Ph. Lippens

A description of systems of land tenure in East Cameroon, focusing on the religious dimension: the land belongs to the ancestors, and hence it is inalienable. The second section briefly describes the history of land legislation: the authors indicate that it is meant to harmonise customary law, public land property, and individual property rights. A somewhat revised version is: ‘Les hommes et la terre: éléments sur les problèmes fonciers au Cameroun Oriental’. Douala: Institut Panafricain pour le Développement. (1972), 41 p.
Dugast, I.


This is the first volume of an extensive ethnography of the Ndiki, based on fieldwork between 1934 and 1956. Many aspects of traditional land tenure are discussed, but, nevertheless, the changes which occurred during the colonial period remain unclear.


Several aspects of traditional land tenure are discussed (p. 500-516).

Eguchi, P.K.


A functionalist description of the Hide, a tribe inhabiting the Mandara mountain region, focusing on the integrative impact of collective regular celebrations at the end of the dry season. The author makes a few comments on agricultural rituals.

Eléments


Includes a small section about land tenure as it existed in the early decades of this century.

Froelich, J.-C.


This study is devoted to the social and political organizaton of the Fulbe chiefdoms in Adamawa. It includes a few remarks about the political dimension of the traditional land tenure system prevailing in these states (p. 29-31).

A comparative study of the ‘paleonigritic’ peoples in the savanna belt of West Africa, including the Chamba and the Fali in North Cameroon. It contains a few remarks about the land tenure systems of these ethnic groups. Modern, external influences are not taken into consideration.

Garine, I. de

This ethnographic monograph, based on fieldwork research in 1957-1960, intends to explain the idiosyncrasies of the Massa society in North Cameroon from three external factors, notably the impact of neighbouring peoples, Muslim chieftoms, and European colonialism. Some attention is paid to traditional land tenure (p. 51-56).

Geschiere, P.
1982 Village communities and the state: changing relations among the Maka of South-Eastern Cameroon since the colonial conquest. London etc.: Kegan Paul International. 512 p., bibl., Asc 10472.

This is the revised translation of Geschiere’s dissertation, which is written in Dutch. (Stamgemeenschappen onder staatsgezag: veranderende verhoudingen binnen de Maka dorpen in Zuidoost Kameroen sinds 1900. Free University, Amsterdam, 1978). It is the first extensive monograph about the Maka. German and French colonisation resulted in the encapsulation of the egalitarian political system of the Maka into the authoritarian structures of the colonial state. This tension is still discernible in the early 1970s. The author briefly discusses the pre-colonial system of land tenure (p. 39-41).

Gleave, M.B. & M.F. Thomas

A description of the agricultural system on the local level of the Ngemba, and the recent changes due to the introduction of coffee cultivation. Includes a few remarks on the prevailing land tenure system (p. 665-666).
Guyer, J.I.  

This study of the historical interaction between family structures and the Beti agricultural system, focuses on the agricultural activities of women. Land tenure is comprehensively discussed in the fourth and fifth chapter.

Hallaire, A.  

A geographical village study of the Ouldme in the Mandara mountains. The land tenure system, operating in a situation of land scarcity, is briefly discussed.


A local level study of the agricultural system prevailing in the Mandara mountains. The section on land tenure (p. 45-57) concludes that the sale and purchase of land is closely related to the opportunities to actively cultivate the soil. Village leaders sometimes aid the weak and impoverished who are in need of land.

Hurault, J.  

This is an important volume about the kinship and marriage system and the socio-political structure within the two Bamiléké chieftainships of Bandjun and Batié. The study is based on fieldwork in 1955.


A functionalist overview of the Bamilèke social system. The author discusses the system of kinship and descent, marriage relations, ward institutions, and the system of land tenure (p. 11-16).

This is a socio-economic study of the Bamileke. Land tenure is an aspect of the 'organisation du terroir', which is a spatial translation of the Bamileke social structure and culture, which are, in its turn, influenced by the geographical environment.

Jeffreys, M.D.W.

Succession, land tenure, and twins are briefly discussed.

Juillerat, B.

This is the first extensive monograph about the Mouktele in the Mandara moutains, including descriptions of marriage rituals, agricultural rituals, the religious functions of authority, as well as the traditional land tenure system.

Kaberry, Ph. M.

This article discusses the rights and duties of lineage heads with reference to the traditional land tenure system in the chiefdom of Nsaw in West Cameroon.


A description of the problems which have emerged in the traditional land tenure system in Nsaw due to the introduction of coffee cultivation and the Mbororo demand for pastoral rights.
Kouassigan, G.A.

A juridical survey study of the principal characteristics of the various systems of land tenure in West Africa as well as the general trend towards individualisation due to socio-structural change. Several examples from East Cameroon are presented.

Lembezat, B.

An extensive survey of the non-Islamic populations in the Cameroonian North, providing information per ethnic grouping on the natural environment, language, economic life, social organisation, and main cultural traits. The rubric ‘procédures juridiques’ includes occasional remarks on land tenure.

Mandessi Bell, E.

Martin, J.-F.

A functionalist analysis of the Matakam peoples in North Cameroon. One of the topics discussed is the traditional land tenure system (p. 124-127). The author gives some attention to the political and economic impact of European colonialism.

Meek, C.K.

The second section of the book (p. 343-410) discusses the evolution of the indigenous systems of land tenure in colonial West Cameroon as well as the history of land administration by the German and British colonial government.
Melone, S.

This is a juridical article about the opportunities to strengthen the societal position of women through legislation. The author argues that changes in family law should be accompanied by more rights for women with regard to the land they cultivate.


This is a significant juridical study of the traditional intertwining of kinship structures and land tenure in Cameroon, as well as the impact of the colonial and post-colonial government on these relations through legislative measures.

Melone, Th.

An analysis of the religious and social significance of land in the literary works of Mongo Beti, the most important oppositional Cameroonian writer.

Mitchell, N.P.

An outdated description of the systems of land tenure. Topics discussed are expropriation, native segregation, surveys, and land registration. Includes examples from West Cameroon.

Nkwi, P. N.
This political-anthropological monograph of the Tikar chiefdom of Kom includes some remarks on traditional and modern land holding relations within the perspective of government control (p. 59-63, 197-199).

Ouden, J. H. B. den

Discusses how the tenure and utilisation of land provides opportunities for the government to control the population.

Pahai, J.

Penant, M.
1946 'La propriété foncière indigène au Cameroun II', in: Recueil Penant, 51, p. 17f.

Pontié, G.

This is a functionalist sociological ethnography of the Guiziga in North Cameroon. The author describes the traditional socio-political system, and analyses people's reactions to general processes of incorporation, such as the introduction of cotton cultivation, the integration into the Cameroonian state, schooling, and technical innovation in agriculture, particularly the internal conflicts they provoke. Traditional land tenure is briefly discussed (p. 124-128).

Pougoue, P.G.
1977 La famille et la terre: essai de contribution à la systématisation du droit privé au Cameroun. DES, University of Bordeaux.
Rowling, C.W.

An official report on, among other things, traditional land tenure among the Nsaw. The study is based on unpublished research data collected by Ph. Kaberry.

Tardits, C.

The author concludes in a small section (p. 69-72) that the prevailing land tenure system offers sufficient security to stimulate investments, and possesses enough flexibility to adapt itself to increasing land pressure.

Tonye Mbu, N.
1973 Le serment en droit camerounais. Thèse 3e cycle, DEPA, University of Paris I.

This dissertation discusses traditional contract law, including the supernatural sanctions which are associated with the procedures for the transference of land.

United Nations

This working paper was published by the secretariat of the United Nations Trusteeship Council.

Weber, J.

A sociological study of the historical evolution of land tenure systems in Central and South Cameroon. The introduction of commercial cocoa cultivation led to individualisation of land property rights and to sedentarisation of the population.
State intervention with reference to land tenure

The majority of the literature on the prevailing indigenous land tenure systems either do not take into account the changes these systems have undergone during this century, or these changes are only analysed in terms of economic and demographic developments. But these factors cannot be seen apart from the process of state formation in Cameroon over the last hundred years. National legislation makes the state visible and its authority felt on the local level, but it also manifests the limits inherent in state penetration; the official aspirations for legal hegemony have not, as yet, resulted in an effective power monopoly for the state. Ethnicly confined systems of land tenure function beside and through the official system, a situation which is generally defined as legal pluralism. The discussion of this process of state intervention and the concomitant legislative measures is preceded by a small subsection containing some introductory notes on the most significant juridical studies on private law in Cameroon, as legislation relating to land tenure might be considered as a specific aspect of private law.
Private law

General information on the legal system in Cameroon in a supranational context, is provided by Anderson (1963), Salacuse (1971), Allott (1962, 1970), and the many volumes of the 'Encyclopédie Juridique de l'Afrique' (1982). The article of Pannier (1973), on the sources of law, is more specifically related to Cameroon. Surveys of laws and decrees can be found in *Documentation* (1958, -), in the 'Journal Officiel' (1916, -), and in several juridical periodicals, like 'Penant', 'Revue Juridique et Politique', and 'Revue de Droit Camerounais'.

The earlier literature, written by Europeans, usually depicts the indigenous legal systems as isolated, coherent entities. Most of these studies refer to South Cameroon, perhaps because of the relatively early spread of the Christian missions in that part of the country. Some examples of this kind are Nicol (1929) about the Bakoko, Bertant (1934) about the Bulu, Jaeger (1967) about the Bulu, and *Eléments* (1963) about the Bassa. A dominant theme in the most recent literature on private law, which is predominantly composed by Cameroonian students, is the mutual impact of official written law and the many unwritten indigenous legal systems; this theme touches upon legal pluralism and legal syncretism. First, there are a number of articles which discuss the problems of law codification which are provoked by the sheer existence of this multitude of customary law systems playing a prevailing role in daily life and social relations; see Langoul (1966), Dipanda Mouelle (1986), and Melone (1986). Secondly, there are a few studies about this interplay in the context of an ethnically confined unit of analysis; see, for example, Kwayeb (1960) and Kanga (1957, 1959) about the Bamileke, Dillon (1979) about law of legal proceedings among the Meta, and Bekombo (1984) on family and succession law among the Duala. Thirdly, there are a few general studies; Nguini (1972) on modern vs. traditional law, S. Melone (1982) on personal and family law, Ngongang-Ouandji (1972) on law of succession, and
André (1980) and Doumbé-Moulango (1972) on law of legal proceedings.

The recently published literature almost exclusively derives from Cameroonian scholars who have studied in France. Imbert (1979) is an article which discusses the contemporary judicial training-course in Cameroon.

The available literature on the organisation of the judiciary and on law of legal proceedings is not very extensive. Over the colonial period, only Waltz's study (1981) on the German Protectorate is of interest. Nguini (1973) and Ngongang-Ouandji (1969b) refer to the Federal State, and Kaha (1985), Guermann (1974), Kamden (1984), and Bringer (1981) to the Unitary State of Cameroon.

Allott, A.N. (ed.)

A general study of the judicial system in the Anglophone countries of Africa. Includes a section on the Southern Cameroons, written by W.C. Daniels.


Anderson, J.N.D.

A general juridical study of Islamic law in the African English colonies. Islamic law is still quite influential in large parts of Central and North Cameroon. Given the absence of specific literature on Islamic law in Cameroon, this book provides significant background material.
André, B.Y.

This article discusses the attitude and reactions of the rural population to modern criminal law in Cameroon.

Bekombo, M.

This study analyses an aspect of the legal evolution among the Duala: the law of succession has evolved in heritage law under the influence of European penetration and the introduction of a Western legal system based on the principle of individual right of property. Both legal systems function beside and through each other within one socio-cultural reality.

Bertant, M.

A juridical monograph on traditional law among the Bulu.

Boum, E.N.

Bringer, P.

Dillon, R.G.

A description of the different types of conflicts and disputes which were not resolved through the performance of a ritual in the pre-colonial Meta society. The cases presented refer to theft, witchcraft, adultery, and land disputes between different kingroups.
Dipanda Mouelle, A.

This juridical article deals with the different techniques of codification in order to make legal texts harmonise with the many (unwritten) legal practices and habits in Cameroon.

Documentation
1958,- Documentation législative africaine. Dakar: Université de Dakar, Centre de Recherche, d'Etude et de Documentation sur les Institutions et les Législations Africaines.

Cameroon is one of the fifteen countries discussed in this yearly overview of laws and decrees.

Doumbé-Moulango, M.

This article discusses the traditional political system, family and marriage law, and law of succession in the Cameroonian South.


Eléments

This article, based on data obtained from a research among the Bassa in 1907, discusses various aspects of the traditional legal system, such as family and person, estate and crime, as well as public and intertribal law.

Encyclopédie
This legal encyclopedia about Francophone Africa consists of ten volumes which each discuss one facet of the legal systems. Since there are no indexes, it is hard to find information referring to a specific nation.

Guermann, M.

Imbert, J.

A juridical article about the goals, contents, structure, and methods of legal education at the faculty of law of the University of Yaounde. ‘Le rôle des juristes camerounais semble essentiellement de fournir les structures juridiques nécessaires au développement harmonieux du pays. Il ne s’agit pas ... de substituer brutallement des cadres juridiques modernes aux cadres juridiques traditionnels, mais de remodeler les moeurs anciens pour les adopter aux nécessités de la vie moderne’(216).

Jaeger

The translation of a German colonial official document from about 1910, which was intended as a continuation of a similar earlier article about Bassa customary law (see *Eléments* 1963). Topics discussed are family and personal law, law on estate, criminal law, judicial procedures, and public and intertribal law.

Journal Officiel

Kaha, A.

Kamden, J.-C.

Kanga, V.

A monograph on Bamilke tribal law.


Kwayeb, E.K.
The first section of this book describes Bamileke traditional legal institutions, focusing on institutions with political, judicial and employment functions as well as specific social and governmental functions. The second section discusses the adaptations of these traditional institutions to the institutional framework and practices which were introduced by the colonial powers. The study concludes with a description of the establishment of urban and rural Communes in the Bamileke region.

Langoul, E.

This essay discusses the position which customary law should have in the long-term codification project, which has been underway since 1960 in the fields of criminal law, civil law, and commercial law.

Melone, S. (ed.)

This is the sixth volume of the ‘Encyclopédie Juridique de l’Afrique’, which is confined to the Francophone parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Many references to Cameroon are included.

Melone, S.

Ngongang-Ouandji, A.


In Cameroon, written law of succession applies to only a small minority of the population, and systems of customary law to the majority. The determination of heirs is rather diffuse, except for the Fulbe and the Bulu.

Nguini, M.

A short sketch of Cameroonian law, discussing both its modern written aspects and its unwritten customary facets.


This article discusses the structure and development of the Federal Court of Justice which was established in 1961, as well as the legal reforms which accompanied the establishment of the Unitary State in 1972.

Nicol, Y.

A monograph of the legal system of the Bakoko.

Nsutebu Fru, Z.

Pannier, J.

Rubin, N. & E, Cotran (eds.)

A review of the legal developments in sub-Sahara Africa during 1967. A small section on Cameroon is included.
National legislation in rural areas

The colonial authorities stimulated the individual ownership of land, for the sake of the spread of capitalist relations of production. Modernisation was, in fact, an other word for the introduction of cash crop production in rural economies. Individualisation was regarded as a prerequisite of the establishment of a land market; and land could then also start functioning as a security for credit allowance to the modernizing farmer. The literature mentioned in the former section — an exception being Geschiere (1982) — implicitly accepts these general development goals as good and desirable, and even plays a legitimating role for public intervention in pre-existing land tenure systems. An important study with regard to state penetration is Den Ouden’s article (1981) on the impact of public interference in the politico-economic power relations of a Bamileke chieftainship.

The colonial state could choose from among several legal mechanisms to penetrate on the local level of the society. But in fact there were only two ways to enhance the rate of individual property of land. The first way was the transformation of customary rights into individual rights via land registration (‘régime foncier’). The other way was the nationalisation of the land and the subsequent granting in concession with the promise of ultimately transferring the concession into individual property rights (‘régime domanial’). The fifth volume of the ‘Encyclopédie Juridique de l’Afrique’
on ‘Droits des Biens’, contains a lot of historical information about land legislation in colonial and pre-colonial Francophone Africa, including chronological overviews of land legislation in Cameroon. The early juridical studies about state intervention in Cameroonian rural societies did not appear before the latter half of the 1950s. They generally focus on the technical interpretation of the law and its jurisprudence, and fail to critically question the state’s role in spreading ‘modern’ land tenure rights. Stockhardt (1920) is an historical review of the land legislation enacted during the German Protectorate, and Krauss (1966) covers the English and French mandatory period. Ballhaus (1968) discusses the land concession policy of the German colonial government around the change of the century, whereas Meek (1957) and Ardener et al. (1960) concentrate on the ‘régime foncier’ in the former British Cameroons. Aka’a Owoundi (1970a, 1970b) focuses on the ‘régime foncier’ in French Cameroon and the Federal State of Cameroon. He approves the attempts of the post-colonial government to push back the influence of pre-existing land holding relations, thus distancing himself from Blanc (1959, 1961, and P.B. 1957), the major authority on land legislation in late colonial Cameroon, who had argued in favour of showing as much respect as possible for the prevailing systems of land tenure. A survey of recent land legislation is the official publication *Cameroon* (1981). An official review of the management of the ‘régime domanial’ in French Cameroon is *Cameroon* (1957); P.B. (1957) is a juridical comment upon this report. Jouhoud (1966) and Aka’a Owoundi (1970a) discuss the public land category of ‘patrimoine collectif national’, which was established by the Federal State regime. Tjouen (1979, 1981) describes the management of the Public Domain over more recent years. Fisiy (1984, n.d.) and Nforti (1984) discuss the impact of the new unified land legislation of 1974 and 1976 on the prevailing land holding relations; the latter focuses on West Cameroon. Analyses in the field of land expropriation — a phenomenon which goes hand in hand with the expansion of the Public Domain — are Beb A Don (1957), Prouzet

In conclusion, the juridical study of land tenure and public intervention has only begun in the last decade of the colonial period. The government’s role is taken for granted, and evaluations are made in terms of modernisation. This holds true for both foreign researchers in the colonial and post-colonial period and for Cameroonian jurists who started publishing since about 1960. It is remarkable that the theme of the socio-economic impact of national land legislation on rural populations has not been a major field of inquiry; only Barbier & Tissandier (1977) briefly discuss the effects of land expropriations on behalf of an agro-industrial project undertaken during the Ahidjo epoch. There are no analyses which attempt to collate the literature on the prevalent systems of land tenure and the literature of official land legislation with the aid of the concept of legal pluralism. In other words, the limits inherent in legislation as a vehicle for socio-economic change is as yet a largely neglected subject in the juridical literature.

Aka’a Owoundi, L

A description of the legislation of 1932, 1959, and 1963 with regard to customary land rights. The author attempts to clarify a general evolution.

A description of the history of the legislation with regard to public expropriation. The law of 1922 proved to be ineffective since it only referred to registered land. Therefore, the 1959 law also covered procedures to expropriate communal lands. The 1966 law is a simplification and rationalisation of the 1959 law.

Ardener, E., S. Ardener, & W.A. Warmington

Includes a chapter on the history of land legislation and land tenure in the Victoria District in West Cameroon (p. 309-335). The interests of the local population, the Bakweri, were subordinated to those of the European estate holders during the German Protectorate period.

Ballhaus, J.

This Marxist analysis is devoted to the German colonial policy of opening up rural regions for capitalist exploitation by attracting investors through the granting of monopolistic land concessions.

Banoun, D.S.

Barbier, J.-C. & J. Tissandier

Contains some information about land expropriation of small-holder farmers by the state on behalf of a large-scale agricultural project, the sugar agro-industry SOCUCAM in the region of Vulé.

Beb A Don, Ph.
Bekombo, M.

One of the topics discussed in this socio-juridical article is the complementary relationship of neo-traditional customary rights on land and modern written legislation.

Blanc, P.

This article discusses the juridical problems of the granting of land concessions by the French colonial government.


A juridical interpretation of the 1959 law on land.


A description of the development of land legislation in post-colonial Francophone Africa, including Cameroon.

Cameroon, French
1957  Recueil des textes législatifs et réglementaires relatifs au régime domaniail, foncier forestier et à l’urbanisme (mis à jour au 1er juillet 1954). Yaounde.

Cameroon, Government Department of Lands

A survey of land legislation. These laws and decrees are significant for the procedures which they provide for the tranference of communal land into private property.

Denoyer, J.F.
Dikoumé, C. & Ph. Lippens


Encyclopédie Juridique de l'Afrique

A collection of articles on customary land rights, the impact of colonial legislation, and the legislative reforms on public land enacted in post-colonial Francophone Africa. It includes an historical survey of land legislation until 1978, and contains a lot of information on Cameroon.

Fisiy, C.P.
1984 The juridical nature of native land rights and responses to the 1974 land ordonnances in Cameroon. Yaounde: ISH-CRESS.

n.d. Land reforms and social differentiation in Cameroon. Yaounde: ISH-CRESS.

Food and Agriculture Organization

Jouhaud, Y.
The author depicts the notion of ‘domaine collectif national’ as a significant legislative innovation meant to harmonise customary land rights and the desire among official circles and certain categories of the population to have exclusive rights of property.

Konings, P.

This article analyses the incorporation of Bamileke peasants into the capitalist system. The author focuses on an agro-industrial tea complex of the Cameroon Development Corporation, which was established with the aid of the Cameroonian government and the World Bank. The proletarisation of the peasants is the result of land expropriation and production on a contract basis for the C.D.C.

Krauss, H.

This juridical study discusses the evolution of land tenure in rural East Cameroon under the impact of land legislation enacted in the colonial and early post-colonial era. It contains a few comments on legal pluralism (p. 107-108). There is an English translation: ‘Land legislation in the Cameroons 1984-1964’. Berlin: Springer,(1966).

Meek, C.K.

The second section of the book (p. 343-410) discusses the evolution of the indigenous systems of land tenure in colonial West Cameroon as well as the history of land administration by the German and British colonial government.

Melone, S.
This is a juridical article about the opportunities to strengthen the societal position of the woman through legislation. The author argues that changes in family law should be accompanied by more rights for women with regard to the land they cultivate.

**1972**

This is a significant juridical study of the traditional intertwining of kinship structures and land tenure in Cameroon, as well as the impact of colonial and post-colonial governments on it through legislative measures.

**Mitchell, N.P.**

**1931**

An outdated account of land tenure systems in, among other countries, Cameroon. Topics discussed are expropriation, native segregation, surveys, and land registration.

**Nforti, N.**

**1984**

The author discusses the effects of the present land tenure reforms, contained in three Ordinances passed on 6 July 1974 and three Decrees of Application which followed on 27 April 1976, on the status of customary land rights, the concept of full property rights, and the question of jurisdiction in land matters in West Cameroon.

**Nkwi, P. N.**

**1976**
Traditional government and social change: a study of the political institutions among the Kôm of the Cameroon Grassfields. Freiburg: The University Press. 233 p., bibl., Asc 8452.
This political-anthropological monograph of the Tikar chiefdom of Kom includes some remarks on traditional and modern land holding relations in the perspective of government control (p. 59-63, 197-199).

Onalaja

This study includes comments on the land concession policy of the French colonial government in Cameroon favouring French colonists, for the sake of agricultural modernisation.

Ordonnance
1975b 'Ordonnance no. 74/1 du 6 juillet 1974 fixant le régime foncier', in: Revue Camerounaise de Droit, 7, p. 82-84. Asc.


1975a 'Ordonnance no. 74/3 du 6 juillet 1974 relative à la procédure d'expropriation pour cause d'utilité publique et aux modalités d'indemnisation', in: Revue Camerounaise de Droit, 7, p. 84-85. Asc.

Ouden, J. H. B. den

Discusses how the tenure and utilisation of land provides opportunities for the government to control the population.

P.B. (= P. Blanc)
This is a critical juridical interpretation of the 1955 and 1956 land laws. The author asserts that the legislator does not sufficiently take into account the customary land rights of the population when it attempts to nationalise all "terres vacantes et sans maître".

Peux, B.

Prouzet, M.

This is a juridical interpretation of the 1966 expropriation law, which contains specific regulations with regard to East Cameroon. Public expropriation is an administrative, and not a judicial procedure.

Stockhardt, W.

Tjouen, A.D.
1979 Le régime domanial et foncier de la République Unie du Cameroun. DE, University of Paris.


United Nations Organisation


1951c Law, policy, and practice relating to land tenure and utilisation in the trust territories under British administration: memorandum submitted by the United Kingdom delegation. T/AC. 36/L. 10. 100 p.

Report of the United Nations Trusteeship Council


A note of the United Nations Trusteeship Council


Report of the United Nations Trusteeship Council


Report of the United Nations Trusteeship Council


A report, compiled by A.C. Bessis, on land legislation and its application in East Cameroon.

This report, written by A.C. Bessis, discusses agricultural structures in Cameroon and the problems encountered during agricultural reform in the fields of land tenure and new land legislation.

1965


This report, composed by M. Brouwers, recommends the registration of land rights, and discusses the Fulbe culture.

Verdier, R.

1971


This juridical article is concerned with the development of land tenure in colonial and post-colonial Francophone Africa, including Cameroon. French land legislation oscillated between the maintenance of traditional land tenure systems and the introduction of Western notions such as land registration on behalf of individual land property rights. After independence the notion of ‘terres vacantes et sans maître’ was replaced by the ‘domain collectif national’, a category referring to all lands without individual property claims which do not belong to the state domain.

Land tenure in urban areas

There is almost no literature which focuses on the actual land tenure situation in Cameroonian urban society. During the colonial period this topic was largely neglected. Only in the 1950s a few studies appeared which were devoted to the residential quarter of New Bell in Douala. Since then this case ranks among the international classics. In the years prior to independence, this ‘spontaneous’ immigrant quarter had become a problem for the municipal authorities in Douala, because they had not been able to direct the process of settling. This is the general background for the quarter confined studies of the geographers Goullain (1956a, 1956b, 1961)
and Diziain & Cambon (1960). These authors discuss the diffuse land tenure situation, particularly the conflicts due to the claims on land of the indigenous population of the area, the Duala. This problem dates back to the early decades of this century when the German colonial government deprived the Duala of their customary land rights in the city of Douala; since then a decent settlement has never been effected by the German nor subsequently by the French government. The Duala resistance under the leadership of the famous Mongo Bell was the first manifestation of ethnically restricted anticolonial protest, and might thus be interpreted as an herald of the nationalist movement; see e.g. Austen (1977), Lobe (1977), Rüger (1968), Joseph (1977), and Derrick (1980). The construction and subsequent expansion of the European quarter of Douala during the colonial period is extensively discussed by Gouellain (1961, 1973, 1974, 1975); this author also describes the Duala land claims in the city.

Significant research of land tenure conditions has rarely been undertaken in the 1960s, notwithstanding the rapid rate of urbanisation at the time. Since the beginning of the 1970s, land tenure is back on the scene. In such geographical studies on Douala as Dongmo (1981), Haeringer (1972), Mainet (1978b, 1979b, 1980b), Mougoué (1977a, 1977b), Mouafo (1981), Nana (1979), and Tsémo (1972a, 1972b) some attention is drawn to this subject. Many of these studies, which were predominantly composed by Cameroonian scholars, once again refer to the immigrant quarter of New Bell. Four brief studies explicitly discuss the conflicts between municipal land policies and the operative land tenure systems in the city, and, thus, might be relevant for the debate on legal pluralism; they are Haeringer (1973), Lippens (1973), and Mainet (1982, and 1986). This rekindling of scholarly interest is probably prompted by a growing concern on the part of the municipal authorities for the land tenure problems in the rapidly growing urban periphery. No doubt many official documents and reports on this topic might be consulted in Douala itself.
There are hardly any publications on land tenure conditions in Yaounde. The geographer Franqueville (1968, 1984) makes some comments on the subject, and Vincent (1984) discusses land tenure in the urban periphery. It is not clear if this scientific neglect should be explained by a lower level of conflict on this issue in Yaounde compared to Douala, or by a less attentive Yaounde municipality; possible factors which act upon this situation, are the relatively recent growth of the city of Yaounde, the absence of an indigenous population as defensive as the Duala, and the traditional political power relations in which the chiefs held a key position. A comparative study about the municipal land policies in Douala and Yaounde is Petit (1976); see also some casual comments on this subject in S. Melone (1972).

The situation of land holding relations in the Cameroonian secondary towns is also still largely unexplored. The recent wave of geographic urban studies of Cameroonian students hardly pays attention to the ‘problème foncier’. A few casual comments can be found in Bongfen Jumbau (1973) about Kumba, Enyegue Mongo (1971) about M’Balmayo, and Barbier & Tissandier (1977) about Mbandjok.

In conclusion, little scientific attention has been paid to land tenure conditions in Cameroonian cities, and it is a relatively recent phenomenon, except in the case of Douala. Socio-geographical urban monographs dominate the field, and Douala has attracted the most attention. The available literature does not relate the urban land tenure situation to the land tenure systems in rural areas (see the former section of this chapter). Hence, almost nothing is known about the changes to these systems when they are ‘transplanted’ to the city. Studies which critically explore the opportunities and limitations of a viable municipal land tenure policy in the light of legal pluralism in the urban peripheries, are not, as yet, in existence.
Austen, R.A.

A description of the attempts of German colonial officers to expropriate Duala owned real estate in the town of Douala in the beginning of this century.

Barbier, J.C. & J. Tissandier

This study is devoted to the social problems which have emerged in a recently established industrial centre one hundred kilometres to the northeast of Yaounde. Topics discussed include the failure of the parcelling out of land and the municipality’s inability to control the expansion of the ‘quartiers spontanes’.

Blanc, P.

Bongfen Jumbau, L.

Denis, J.

This geographical survey study of urbanisation in Central Africa contains some information on the policies of land distribution and housing in Yaounde and Douala (p. 299-301, 310-322); legal pluralism with regard to the land in Cameroonian towns (p. 318-319); and the construction of a public services apparatus (p. 323-333).

Derrick, J.
Direction du Cadastre

Diziain, R. & A. Cambon

This geographical study is devoted to the social problems due to rapid urbanisation, which had arisen in an immigrant quarter of Douala, in the areas of employment, housing, public services, and land tenure.

Dongmo, J.-L.

A significant study of the economic success of Bamileke immigrants in urban modern life in Douala, Yaounde, and Nkongsamba. The second volume contains some comments on land tenure in Douala (p. 42-45).

Enyegue Mongo, L.

Franqueville, A.

A geographical study of the history of Yaounde. The author briefly comments on land tenure and rents (p. 144-145).

A significant geographical study of Yaounde on the social problems created by the recent rapid growth of the city. Topics discussed include the stagnatory impact of Yaounde on the development of nearby secondary towns, and land tenure, i.e. private property of land, customary rights elements in leases, and the social relations between the Ewondo and Bamileke (the land owners) on the one hand, and other ethnic groupings on the other. Includes an extensive bibliography.

Gouellain, R.

1956b New-Bell, Douala, enquête sociologique. Yaounde: ORSTOM.


A sociological study of the major immigrant quarter of Douala. The author notes an increasing friction between traditional group formation on the basis of ethnicity and kinship, and new group formation on the basis of neighbourhood and profession.


This historical-sociological study is devoted to the spatial organisation of the Duala on the eve of the German occupation, the process of urbanisation during the colonial period, and native resistance against the Douala municipality’s policy with regard to land tenure.


A sociological study of the social history of Douala during the pre-colonial and colonial period.

Haeringer, P.


A comparative geographical study of Abidjan, Brazzaville, San Pedro, and Douala. Topics discussed include the local government’s difficulties with city planning in the overpopulated quarter of New Bell in Douala, i.e. the ‘illegal’ construction of houses, the lack of public services, and land holding conflicts.


One of the few studies explicitly devoted to land tenure in an urban setting. The author presents an historical review of the Duala claims for land tenure rights in the city, discusses the municipal land policies during the French period, and analyses the contemporary administrative applications of several systems of land tenure at the same time (legal pluralism).

Hernandez, M.


Joseph, R.A.


Lafier, F.

This study discusses the legal framework of land tenure, the actual land tenure situation in several Douala residential quarters, and the procedures for land expropriation. Chronological surveys of the legislation in the areas of the organisation of the Central Administration, the Communal Administration, and land tenure are included.

Lippens, P.

Lobe, I.K.

This is an account of chief Manga Bell’s resistance against the politics of land expropriation and native segregation by the Germans in the city of Douala. He was arrested and executed in 1914.

Mainet, G.

1979b New-Bell, prototype des quartiers des étrangers à Douala. Yaoundé: University of Yaounde. 31 p., bibl.


A geographical study of an immigrant quarter in Douala, based on fieldwork research in 1977. The subject is the spatial manifestation of a number of social characteristics of the residents, notably ethnicity, income level, house construction, and duration of residence.

A description of the conflicts over land between the Duala population and immigrant ethnic groups in the quarter of New Bell, as well as the municipality's inability to codify the actual situation of land tenure rights in the urban periphery. The author asserts that the absence of individual property rights facilitates slum formation.


Chapter 13 discusses the problems of land tenure in Douala, such as the contradiction between customary and modern rights.

Melone, S.

This is a significant juridical study of the traditional interrelatedness of kinship structures and land tenure in Cameroon, as well as the impact made on them by the legislative measures of the colonial and post-colonial governments.

Moby-Etia, P.

Mouafo, D.

Mougoué, B.

Nana, A.  

Nsutebu Fru, Z.  

Petit, J.G.  

Prouzet, M.  

Rüger, A.  

Schamp, E.W.  

Contains some casual comments on land leasing (p. 3).

Tsémo, A.  
1972a Le quartier de New Deido. DES, University of Yaounde.


Vincent, M.  
1984 Formes et fonction de la production foncière et immobilière à Yaoundé, Cameroun. p. 45-52.
EPILOGUE: RESEARCH GAPS

I would like to conclude this study with a brief enumeration of the major research gaps mentioned in the preceding chapters. These gaps indicate areas for future research.

State formation processes

- The pre-colonial past of West Cameroon, and the regional histories of most of the ethnic groups in the southern and northern areas of the country.
- The origins of the chieftaincies in the Grassfields, including the rise of the institution of the ‘sacred king’, the economic foundations of these pre-colonial states, as well as their persistence — as incorporated forms of indigenous political structures — under colonial and post-colonial rule. The latter point also holds true for the North Cameroonians lamidates.
- The social impact of French and British colonial rule, especially in the north and west of Cameroon.
- The process of increasing centralisation of the administrative-legal structures; a related theme are the limitations of this aspect of state penetration that can be witnessed in the Fulbe dominated north of the country.
- The increasing interference with democratic freedoms by the Ahidjo government, Biya’s policy of limited democratisation, and the considerable political influence wielded by the army behind the scenes.
- Ethnicity

- The impact of 19th century migration patterns on the genesis of the country’s ethnic diversity.
- The rise of such regional vernacular languages as Duala and Fulfulde, and its effects upon ethnic consciousness.
- The rise and scope of indigenous resistance movements against the establishment of colonial rule in the early decades of this century.
- The rise of an indigenous politico-administrative elite due to the spread of Western education, and the heightened ethnic competition in the 1950s in the form of ethnically-based political machines.
- The nationalist struggle for political independence in the 1940s and 1950s, and the Bassa and Bamileke uprisings against the colonial and post-colonial governments in the form of a guerilla warfare.
- The interethnic relations in North Cameroon, notably the related process of Fulbeisation and Muslimisation, and the (supposed) impact of the chieftaincies in the north and west of the country on the strengthening of ethnic identities.
- The rise of novel forms of social conscience in urban centres, notably ethnic identities and loyalties, and the intensification of ethnic rivalries in Cameroonian cities due to increased socio-economic competition.
- The delicate ethnic equilibrium in the national political arena under Ahidjo and Biya.

- Indigenous religions

- The magico-occult facets of the South Cameroonian indigenous religions, the political and economic foundations of ancestor worship in West and South Cameroon, and local variations in witchcraft beliefs in relation to divergent politico-economic developments.
- Processes of religious change in Cameroonian cities.
- The indigenous religions of several small ethnic groups in the north of the country.

**Islam**

- The correlation between Islam and socio-economic changes in 19th century North Cameroon.
- The syncretic character of North Cameroonian Islam, its legalistic aspects, and its position as an elitist religion vis-à-vis the colonial and post-colonial authorities.
- The political and economic backgrounds of the process of Fulbeisation-Islamisation in North Cameroonian cities.

**Christianity**

- The phenomenon of massive collective conversion to Christianity along ethnic lines in South Cameroon during the colonial era.
- The economic involvements of the missions.
- The syncretic nature of Cameroonian Christianity.
- The establishment of independent churches in Cameroon, notably the formation of the Native Baptist Church and its role in the nationalist movement.
- Church-state relations in the north and west of the country.
- The degree of oppositional stand taken by the churches against the colonial and especially post-colonial government.
Land tenure

- The different types of indigenous land tenure systems prevalent in Cameroon.
- The impact on the prevailing land holding relations of the incorporation of the North and West Cameroonian chieftaincies into the Cameroonian state, and of the massive migration movements in these areas.
- The socio-economic effects of national land legislation in rural areas, or, in other words, the opportunities and limits inherent in official land legislation as a vehicle for socio-economic development.
- The actual land tenure situation in the Cameroonian cities, particularly the urban peripheries, and the impact of rural land tenure systems on these complicated urban systems.