

LOCAL ELECTIONS IN THE BAMILEKE REGION OF CAMEROON, 1960-1966: A POST-INDEPENDENCE SURVEY OF ELECTORAL COMPETITONS IN AN UNSTABLE AREA¹

Pascal Nzeucheu

Email : pascalnzeucheu@yahoo.fr

Résumé

Cet article analyse les compétitions électorales locales postindépendance dans la région Bamiléké du Cameroun. La chronologie (1960-1966) et le contexte historique de cette région montrent qu'elle était caractérisée par la lutte contre la subversion. En effet, lorsque le Cameroun français est devenu indépendant le 1^{er} janvier 1960, la situation politique de la région Bamiléké était instable en raison des mouvements nationalistes radicaux dirigés par certains dirigeants de l'UPC (Union des Populations du Cameroun). A partir des données empiriques, cet article fait une analyse approfondie de la participation des populations aux élections locales, à savoir les élections municipales et législatives. L'étude met l'accent sur les élections politiques organisées dans un système multipartite dans une région instable. Les résultats des enquêtes révèlent que de nombreux partis politiques ont été créés pour occuper des postes électoraux. De plus, les mouvements nationalistes ont aussi causé la faible participation aux compétitions électorales.

Mots Clés : Elections, multipartisme, Région Bamiléké, Cameroun.

Abstract

This paper points out local electoral competitions in the Bamileke Region of Cameroun during the post-independence period. The time line (1960-1966) and historical background of the said region show that it was characterised by the fight against subversion. Indeed, when French Cameroon became independent on January 1, 1960, the political situation of the Bamileke region was unstable because of the radical nationalist movement led by some UPC (Union des Populations du Cameroun) leaders. With empirical data, this paper makes a thorough analysis of the participation of the population in local elections namely municipal and legislative elections. The study emphasizes on political elections organised in a multi-party system throughout an unstable region. The results of the investigations reveal that many political parties were created in order to tackle electoral positions. Therefore, the nationalist movements all over the region caused the low participation in electoral competitions.

Key Words: Elections, multiparty, Bamileke Region, Cameroun.

Introduction

From 1960 to 1966, there were major political developments in Cameroon including the achievement of independence in 1960, the permanent creation of new councils and Assemblies and the

Reunification of the Republic of Cameroon with Southern Cameroon on 1st October 1961. Therefore, elections were organised to choose Cameroonian leaders aiming at replacing the former colonial representatives. In the Bamileke Region,² while using cultural identifications in politics, the population became fully involved in political actions. Their activism led some to create political parties and other to involve themselves in nationalist movements. Yet, the research object emphasises on the enforcement of multi-party elections during the fight against radical nationalist in the Bamileke region. Thus, how did the population participate in local elections in the Bamileke Region during the post-independence period? Hence, how did the nationalist struggle influence local elections in the Bamileke Region? Several issues are raised in a diachronic and deductive approach in order to straighten this paper. In a similar way, the paper used multiple sources: archives, interviews, books, journals, articles, and internet sources. The results of our inquiries and discussions are developed in three sections: the creation of political parties from 1960 to 1966 (1); the unfolding of parliamentary elections in the Bamileke Region (2); and the municipal electoral competitions organised within the aforementioned period in the same region (3).

1- Founding of political parties in the bamileke region, 1960-1966

The study of political parties in French Cameroon after 1960 is complex. The first difficulty is definitional; distinguishing parties from tribal associations and lobbies. Even establishing an inventory of these parties is challenging because many were transitory, or not very active, or re-appeared under other labels, or finally gave their support to different political parties according to the period indicated. However, V. T. Le Vine (135) identified 117 political parties in French Cameroon between 1945 and 1962. For this reason, the study limits itself to the political parties which participated in local elections.

1.1. Regionalisation of New Political Parties Created in the Bamileke Region from 1960

Before the creation of the CNU on September 1st, 1966, several political parties were created in the Bamileke Region especially between 1960 and 1963. Though the major Bamileke political parties and

parliamentary group³ decided to join the *Union Camerounaise* (UC), many regional and tribal political parties were created in order to participate in local elections. Therefore, many parties which undertook electoral contestations found themselves only in municipal elections.

Besides, as regards their political trends, the regional parties in the Bamileke region could be grouped into three categories following their ideas: the restoration of peace by opposing the UPC, labour solidarity of farm workers and the consolidation of ethnic affiliation. The restoration of peace resulted from the climate of fear which characterised the region. During the various electoral competitions, parties campaigned on the concept of peace, concord, harmony tranquillity and reconciliation. This pushes some scholar to speculate that the creation of these parties was sometimes encouraged by administrative authorities so as to eradicate the UPC. The parties which fell under this tendency included: *Réconciliation Pour la Paix Populaire*, *Réconciliation pour la Tranquillité et la Paix*, *Paix-Concorde*, *Union fait la Force*, and *Pacification*, all in Mbouda.⁴ There were also *le Peuple Bamileke vers la Lumière et la Justice* and *Pour l'Amour et la Paix* (PAP) in Bafang; and the *Parti des Démocrates Chrétiens*, represented in Bafang by Atangana, a Lawyer (Yamdjieu 39). This last case in particular constitutes evidence regarding the political inclination of leaders to politicise religious movements in the Bamileke Region. This did not succeed because the majority of the Bamileke were known as traditionalists. Therefore, the Jehovah Witnesses refused to be enrolled on the electoral registers also explained their non-participation in elections. This non-participation was considered as subversive attitude after the implementation of subversive laws and a state of emergency in 1960.

The most significant of all the parties mentioned above was the Popular Front for Unity and Peace (FPUP), the parliamentary group formed in 1960 by the Bamileke elected in the National Assembly of the independent Republic of Cameroon. It intended to restore peace in the Bamileke Region. The FPUP called for UPC members to lay down their arms and join the population. It also advocated for amnesty for those who decided to give up the struggle.

Some political parties sought to embolden ideas of farmers' solidarity so as to enhance their domination in electoral competitions. Those parties aimed at grouping individuals like farmers. In this line, they included *Paysans Indépendants*, *Travailliste*, and *Progressistes*. Their intention

was to improve solidarity between workers, especially cash-crop farmers in cocoa and coffee plantations. Some people used trade unions⁵ to create political parties in order to get themselves in representative positions and to influence the political life of their localities. The results of municipal elections in the Bamileke Region indicate that a lot of farmers were elected (Luc Ngaha, Mayor of Kekem from 1963 to 1976 and Jean Mbouende, Mayor of Bafang from 1961 to 1965) (Nzeucheu 135).

In the third category, some political parties bestowed significance to the idea of consolidating ethnic solidarity. In this line the following parties were prominent: *Défense des Intérêts des Paysans Batcham* in Batcham; *Kumzse*, and *Rénovation et Progrès des Populations Bamboutos* in Mbouda; *Défense des Intérêts Commun* in Bangangté and the *Union Ouest Camerounaise* chaired by Ngayewang (Noumbissie 421). They used the tribe as a major political power during elections. However, those parties had to challenge overpowers parties nationwide represented.

1.2. Overpowering Political Parties in the Bamileke Region

In addition to the above-mentioned political parties, several others existed and contested for political seats in the Bamileke region. These parties which claimed a nationwide representation were influenced by the political game in the Bamileke Region from 1960 to 1966. The UPC had functioned in the Bamileke Region since it was officially recognised by the administration, and subsequent to the abrogation of the decree which banned it⁶ and the general amnesty granted by Ahidjo in 1960 (Atangana 114). Therefore, UPC candidates were elected as Deputies in April 1960 in the National Assembly. The UPC won eight out of hundred seats in the entire territory. Nonetheless, from 1964, only the UC (*Union Camerounaise*) was represented everywhere in Bamileke Region.

Apart from the UPC and others, the UC was one of the parties well represented in the Bamileke region as from 1964.⁷ The spread of the UC in this part of the country faced several difficulties due to the fact that population welcomed the UPC though it used violence to impose its doctrine. Thus, the UC spread in the Bamileke Region thanks to the conferences, and congresses organised by its leaders to reconvert the Bamileke already involved in the UPC party. Besides, from that, the militancy of the Bamileke in the UC was hardly difficult because of the

existence of many political tendencies and the leadership struggle amongst the Bamileke personalities in their native towns. However, many people were in the UC by opportunism and others used parties' card while remaining members of the UPC. This resulted from the fact that people feared repression both from the UPCists and the authorities. Local administrative authorities were instrumental in the spread of the UC in the Bamileke Region they used the "carrot and stick" policy in order to get a large number of militants that are participating in electoral competitions in their respective areas of competence.

2- Legislative Elections in The Bamileke Region 1960-1966

In 1960, people became more realistic and envisioned holding seats in the National Assembly, the Federal National Assembly and the ECHA (East Cameroon House of Assembly). The National Assembly had 100 members and the ECHA created after the Reunification was made up of 40 members called representatives. These were determined by the rules governing elections at that period.

2.1. Dynamism of Rules and Regulations of the Parliamentary Elections

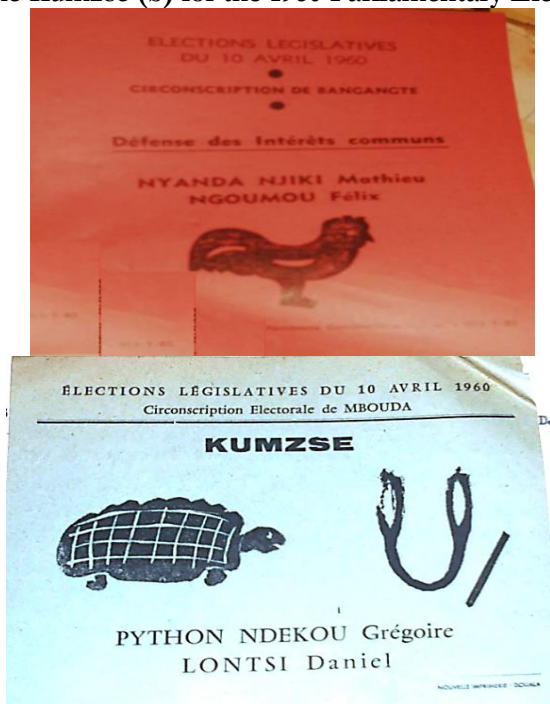
It was the divide and rule policy (Bethke 4) that governed the multiparty elections from 1960 to 1966 in Cameroun. Ordinance No. 60-21 of 4th March 1960 on the election of MPs in the National Assembly, Law No. 62-OF-14 of 12 March 1962, and Law No. 64-LF-I of 24 March 1964⁸ guided parliamentary elections in East Cameroon where the Bamileke Region was located. They defined the requirements necessary for the legislative elections, and the power of the various Assemblies. As far as the third law was concerned; it stated that holders of the 50 seats in the Federal National Assembly were to be elected by a list system through universal, direct and secret suffrage for a term of five years. Therefore, the West Cameroon Constituency had 10 Deputies whereas East Cameroon was represented by 40.⁹ The standard was 1 Member of Parliament for every 80.000 people (Akwo 96). From 1960 to 1966, legislative elections in Cameroon were held on 10 April 1960 and 24 April 1964 in Cameroon because in 1962, the

president of the republic appointed the members of the Federated Assemblies¹⁰ to the National Assembly.

2.2. The April 10th, 1960 Legislative Election into the National Assembly

This election was conducted in areas formerly known as French Cameroon. In the Bamileke region, there were several parties like the FPUP, the UPC, the UC, Cameroonian Party of Democrats (PDC), *Kumzse*,¹¹ the Progressive Group of Cameroon (GPC) which grouped the *Mouvement d'Action Nationale du Cameroun* (MANC). Also, some regional political parties like *Défense des Intérêts Communs* (plate 1a) in Bangangté and independent candidates took part in the vote.

Plate 1: Ballot Papers Used by *Défense des Intérêts Communs* (a) and the *Kumzse* (b) for the 1960 Parliamentary Elections



Source: Sub-divisional Archives Mbouda and Bangangté

The *Kumzse* introduced two candidates in the Bamboutos Division namely Grégoire Python Ndekou and Daniel Lontsi. Their Ballot Paper (plate 1b) was important because it indicated the traditional and tribal values developed by the *Kumzse*. They used two symbols: the Tortoise and a musical instrument of the Bamileke custom. The tortoise is a significant animal in the Bamileke culture because it is used in the traditional justice called *cadi* (Tardits 1960). Yet, its use in politics was not accepted everywhere in the Bamileke society (Nzeucheu 84).

Bouopda describes the violent characteristic of these elections (72) because prior to the vote, many railways were blocked, bridges were cut and houses were burned. Nevertheless, the FPUP¹² got a total of 145.752 votes amounting to 10.8% of the votes and 19 seats out of 100 because they allied themselves with Ahidjo's regime (Bayart 704). In Bangangté, Nya Nana Thaddée and Jean Pierre Wandji Nkuimy were elected. In Mbouda, those elected were Etienne Juatio and Josué Tetang. In the Mifi Division, Noé Mopen, Gaston Tonpoba Youta, Abraham Tagne, Victor Kanga and Eloi Tamouffe Soffo were elected. In the Upper-Nkam Divisions, the Deputies elected were Jean Chamba, Jean Pierre Kamdem Ninyim and Emmanuel Tanawa. In the Menoua Division, the Deputies elected were: Philippe Achingui, Julienne Keutchu and Jean Louis Schumele (Tegna 204).

The analysis of the first parliamentary elections in the Bamileke Region after the independence of French Cameroon makes it obvious that they allowed several colonial representatives to strengthen their elitist position in the Bamileke Society. The 1960 elections in the Bamileke Region contributed to the political domination of traditional leaders, civil servants or educated elite and outgoing MPs. Their influence during the other electoral competitions came from their connection with the administrative authorities in the fight against UPC members and those who were accused of subversion. In a similar way, the elected Bamileke belonging to the FPUP, *Union Bamileke* and the *Paysans Indépendants* joined the UC as from 1961 (Bayart 691). As a result, all candidacies in the Bamileke Region during the 1964 legislative elections were introduced under the UC.

2.3. The April 26th, 1964 Parliamentary Elections into the National Assembly

The UC monopolised the electoral process in the Bamileke Region. It was the lone political party to present its candidates in East Cameroon. It was thus considered as a “dominant party” (Duverger 341). This domination was the result of a process put in place by Ahidjo, with the goal of forming a “Great National Party.” As a result, the UC won all the 40 seats for the East Cameroon House of Assembly with 93.50%. It is therefore important to note that in 1961, after Reunification, Ahidjo’s government did not organise elections to choose the representatives of ECHA and WCHA; it relied on co-opting representatives and chose the moderate Deputies elected in 1960. The policy of co-optation adopted by Ahidjo actually aimed at eliminating opponents to his plan to create a national political party and at the same time centralizing power around him. The co-optation of eight Deputies in the Bamileke Region in 1961 was based on their loyalty expressed through their fighting against their “UPCist brothers” in their different home villages and Divisions. Among them were: Abraham Tagne, Sébastien Ndéfo, and Victor Kanga, who represented the Mifi; Julienne Keutcha from the Menoua; Louis Kemajou Happy in the Upper-Nkam; Thaddée Nya Nana in the Ndé; as well as Josué Tétang and Max Batonga in the Bamboutos. With a few exceptions, these representatives were re-elected in 1964.

In the Bamileke Region, Nya Nana Thaddée was elected in the Ndé Division but he was accused of assassinating Thomas Noutong, the principal of a mission school, and was publicly shot by the government in 1965 in Bangangté. Julienne Keutcha was the first woman to be elected Deputy in Cameroon and represented the Menoua Division (Konde 131). Christian Fenkam and Abraham Tagne were elected in the Mifi Division; Celestin Poualeu and Raymond Kuete Mekong were elected in the Upper-Nkam Division; in Bamboutos, the elected were Grégoire Momo and Siméon Zébazé. Therefore, because of its competitiveness (Sindjoun 89), the 1965 legislative elections in the **ECHA** brought a change in the political dynamics within the Bamileke Region.

2.4. ECHA and the June 6th, 1965 Elections in the Bamileke Region

The main characteristics of these elections were the domination of elite, traditional leaders, and farmers. They were given legitimacy by local administrative authorities. Also, the UPC continued to destabilise the electoral process by riots, burning of public services. Hence, multiparty politics seemed to be drawing towards its end, as all the parties¹³ and their members joined the UC. People vested a lot of interest particularly within the framework of the Federal National Assembly. Also, the struggle for power became a major stake for the candidates (Gaxie 10). In this competitive context, 180 candidacies were recorded for the 17 seats in the West Region. Consequently, the selection of candidates was elitist for the reason that after shortlisting candidates, educated personalities, Businessmen, civil servants and traditional rulers were maintained. Table 1 shows the list of candidates finally presented and elected for the UC in the Bamileke Region.¹⁴

Table 1: The Bamileke Elected in 1965 into ECHA under the UC Party

| Divisions | Number of seats | Candidates Elected |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Bamboutos | 2 | Josué Tetang |
| | | Thomas Tapeo |
| Menoua | 3 | Philippe Achingui |
| | | Joseph Fondjo |
| | | Christophe Job Kolla |
| Mifi | 5 | Joseph Kanga |
| | | Joseph Tamegue Tessah |
| | | Moïse Ngnepi |
| | | Fidèle Takoundoum |
| | | Jean Sopoui |
| Ndé | 2 | Fabien Wanda |
| | | Thomas Yatchoua |
| Upper-Nkam | 2 | Paul Nouaga |
| | | Samuel Denis Naoue |

Source: RAB, Report No. 165/CF/PS/DSFO of 5th June 1965, Bimonthly Information Bulletin from the 16th to 31st May 1965, 3-4.

3- Pluralist municipal elections in the bamileke region, 1960-1966

Municipal elections from 1960 to 1966 revealed the ethnic, elitist and liberal perceptions of local politics amongst the actors. Therefore, in the Bamileke Region, between 1960 and 1966, there were two municipal elections: on 9th April 1961 and 21st July 1963.

3.1. Political Participation in the 1961 Municipal Elections in the Bamileke Region

The 1961 and 1963 municipal elections were quite democratic because of the local representation, the plurality of parties and the participation of independent candidates. The municipal electoral law of June 17, 1959 indicated that elections were to be held on a list system, not a majority ballot as was the case in 1956.¹⁵ To be eligible, potential candidates were to be at least 21 years old; have resided in the council area for at least the five previous years; enjoyed political and civic rights; and be registered on the electoral lists of their constituency. The vote was relatively fair, with proportional representation that was neither mixed nor preferential.¹⁶ This meant that, elected candidates (both independents and party-affiliated candidates) got vote independently from their political belonging. Hence, the constituencies were carved according to the number of ethnic groups and cantons existing in a Council.

However, in the Bamileke Region, the carving up of Constituencies was indeed difficult because of the existence of multiple ethnic groups. The application of the municipal law proved problematic to the SDOs who had to structure these constituencies before informing the Minister of Interior. This was because in several councils, the number of ethnic groups surpassed the number of municipal councillors to be elected. Consequently, in order to prevent possible contestations or minority, the Minister of Interior, Arouna Njoya instructed the SDOs to split the constituencies according to geographical area and avoid excessive apportionment to ensure equal representation of the people. Table 2

below shows the number of seats for the councils in the Bamileke Region in 1961.

Table 2: Number of Seats by Councils in the Bamileke Region in 1961

| Divisions | Councils | Population | Number of Seats |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Bamboutos | Mbouda Mixed Rural Council | 77.900 | 35 |
| Mifi | Bafoussam Full Exercise Council | 11.068 | 27 |
| | Bafoussam Mixed Rural Council | 33.886 | 27 |
| | Bandjoun Mixed Rural Council | 28.700 | 25 |
| | Bamendjou Mixed Rural Council | 32.039 | 27 |
| | Bangou Mixed Rural Council | 40.904 | 29 |
| Menoua | Dschang Mixed Rural Council | 125.977 | 44 |
| Ndé | Bangangté Mixed Rural Council | 72.507 | 37 |
| Upper-Nkam | Bafang Full Exercise Council | 10.945 | 27 |
| | Bafang Mixed Rural Council (Bana) | 65.982 | 35 |
| Total | 10 | 499.908 | 313 |

Source : *Journal Officiel de la République du Cameroun* of 22 March 1961, 377-385

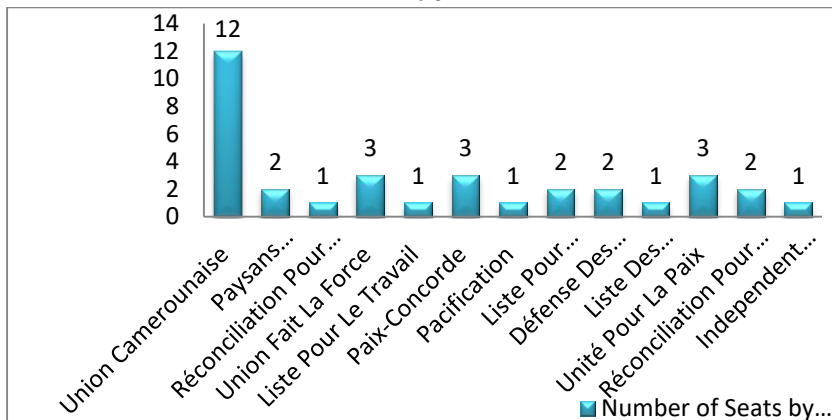
The table above displays the imbalance in representation among councils of the Bamileke region in 1961. It reveals the extent to which administrative authorities managed to carve up of constituencies according to the number of the population and the different ethnic groups. For instance, the Mbouda Mixed Rural Council with an

estimated population of 77.900 inhabitants had 35 seats while the Bangangté Mixed Rural Council had 37 seats with 72.507 inhabitants. In the Bamboutos Division, there were 12 political parties and an independent candidate (David Kuete) for the 35 seats in competition. The *Union Camerounaise* was the only party that had a list in almost all the constituencies. In some localities like the urban centre of Mbouda, Bamenyam-Bamedjing-Bati and Bangang (South), the UC introduced two lists that challenged each other. The others parties were: *Réconciliation Pour la Paix Populaire*, *Kumꝛse et Réconciliation pour la Tranquillité et la Paix*, *Progressistes*, *Défense des Intérêts des Paysans Batcham*, *Liste pour Rénovation et le Progrès des Populations Bamboutos*, *Paix-Concorde*, *Liste pour le Travail*, *Union fait la Force*, *Paysans Indépendants*, and *Pacification*.¹⁷

Looking at the designation of political parties in the Bamileke Region, it is obvious that all of them were influenced by the idea of peace, reconciliation and tribal considerations. As for peace, parties were influenced by the violent movement led by the UPC. That was the reason why many parties called for peace, concord, tranquillity and reconciliation. In the same way, the symbol used by the *Union Camerounaise* on its ballot paper was also significant in the search of peace in the Bamileke Region.

As regards tribal considerations, it is necessary to notice that many parties were regionalist. They built their political approach on ethnic perceptions. That explains why they introduced their list only in their ethnic groups. Regional parties also developed the principle of ethnic solidarity and identity within the electoral competitions. Their ideas were actually based on the fact that people of the same ethnic group should be ruled by a party belonging to that group. Accordingly, those who did not identify themselves with any party (like the Jehovah Witnesses) were always pressurised by the authorities and leaders of parties.¹⁸ The results of these first post-independence council elections in Mbouda revealed their competitiveness (cf. graph 1).

Graph 1: Political Representation in the Rural Council of Mbouda in 1961



Source: Divisional archives of Bamboutos; File on the Municipal Elections on 9 April 1961.

The graph above reveals the complex composition of the 9th April 1961 vote in the Bamboutos Division and notably the political configuration of the Mixed Rural Council of Mbouda during that period. Of the 35 seats in the Division, the representativeness of political parties was significant because the council was composed of 12 political parties each with a different number of seats. Everywhere in the Bamileke region, administrative authorities tried to profile the councils such that governmental policy would not be compromised specially in 1963 when new councils were created.

3.2. The Municipal Elections of 21 July 1963 in the Bamileke Region

The 1963 partial and complementary municipal elections in the Bamileke Region exposed the domination of the UC. This influence was especially due to the intimidation strategy used by local administrators and police forces towards the opposition parties. Hence, people were obliged to get the UC card within a context where Ahidjo intended to form a “unified party” (Takougang 271). Consequently,

when new councils were created from 1962 to 1963, only the UC presented its candidates and the electoral competition was not contested.

These elections in the Bamileke region became more complex because of the appointment of Mayors after the electoral process. Consequently, it impacted on political relationships in the area and the behaviour of political actors. DOs and SDOs played a great role in the choice of Mayors because except being candidates in their Sub-divisions, they also wrote reports on other liable candidates to held mayoral position. In accordance with Letter No.7/INT/DAC of 16 July 1963, after the municipal council vote, the SDOs or Heads of District of the locality concerned had to organise a council wherein three candidates would be elected and proposed to the government for the appointment of Mayors.

Therefore, candidates had to proof their competences by providing information involving their militancy, political leanings, popularity, administrative proficiencies, level of education, collaboration, and subversion history as well as the contribution of candidates in the fight against the radical UPC movement.¹⁹ However, the appointment of Mayors and their deputies led to a political confrontation between the administrative authorities, the population and traditional leaders in the Bamileke Region.

The appointment of mayors and their deputies actually opposed several political and administrative actors. Thus, their behaviour in the political game became more awful. The spreading context of nationalism in the Bamileke region and the fight against subversion contributed to the final appointment of Mayors in that part of the country. By 1965, the UC was represented everywhere in the Bamileke Region thanks to elected representatives and the contribution of administrative authorities.

Conclusion

Although the Bamileke region underwent post-independence nationalist struggle from 1960 to 1966, it was transformed into a competitive political area. A lot of regionally settled political parties were created in order to contest electoral competitions. They identified themselves with the restoration of peace, labour solidarity of farm

workers and the consolidation of ethnic affiliation. The population's participation in electoral competitions reveals their enthusiasm and dynamism towards political issues. They undertook elections by using their cultural items as political values. However, the nationalist struggle has caused the low electoral participation in some localities of the region. Consequently, electoral competitions in the Bamileke Region became a major stake for those who intended to hold electoral positions as member of the Parliament, Mayor or municipal councillor. Legislative and municipal elections turn out to be more competitive and realistic. The political dynamics in Cameroon in general buckled with the creation of the CNU (Cameroon National Union) in 1966 putting an end to the multiparty system.

References bibliographiques

- Akwo Henry** (2008), *The Cameroon Parliament (National Assembly) A Political and Administrative History 1940-1990*, Vol. 1, Limbe, ANUCAM and Presprint.
- Atangana Martin** (2010), *The End of French Rule in Cameroon*, America, University Press of America.
- Bayart Jean François** (1970), « L'Union Nationale Camerounaise » in *Revue Française de Science Politique*, 20th Year, no. 4, pp. 681-718.
- Bethke Felix.** (2012), « The Consequences of Divide-and-Rule Politics in Africa South of the Sahara » in *Peace Economics Peace Science and Public Policy*, Vol.18, no. 3, pp. 1-25.
- Bouopda, Pierre K.** (2006), *La Quête de Libération Politique au Cameroun : 1884-1984*, Paris, L'Harmattan.
- Bouopda, Pierre K.** (2008), *De la Rébellion dans le Bamiléké*, Paris, L'harmattan.
- Daniel Gaxie** (1984), « En jeu, enjeux. Esquisse d'une problématique pour une analyse de la production des enjeux politiques dans une élection municipale » in *Enjeux Municipaux. La Constitution des Enjeux Politiques dans une Election Municipale*. Edited by D. Gaxie and P. Lehingue, Paris, P.U.F.
- Duverger Maurice** (1969), *Les Partis Politiques*, Paris, Armand Colin.
Journal Officiel de la République du Cameroun of 22 March 1961, pp. 377-385.

Nzeucheu Pascal (2019), *Politics in the Bamileke Region of Cameroon, 1946-2013: Dynamics and Implications*, PhD Doctorate in History, the University of Bamenda.

Pigeaud Fanny (2011), *Au Cameroun de Paul Biya*, Paris, Karthala.

Sindjoun Luc (1997), « Elections et Politique au Cameroun : Concurrence Déloyale, Coalitions de Stabilité Hégémonique et Politique d'Affection » *African Journal of Political Sciences*, Vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 89-121.

Takougang Joseph (1993), « The Post-Ahidjo Era in Cameroon: Continuity and Change » *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 268-302.

Tardits Claude (1960), *Contribution à l'Etude des Populations Bamiléké de l'Ouest Cameroun*, Paris, Editions Berger-Levrault,

Tchouake Noubissie M. (2005), *Mouvements d'Oppositions et de Répressions dans l'Ouest-Cameroun : 1922-1970*, Paris, Université de Paris 1.

Tegna Edith Mirelle (2010), *Parlementarisme et Pouvoir Parlementaire au Cameroun entre 1942 et 1972* PhD Doctorate in History, University of Yaoundé 1.

Yamdjieu, Sabine (2008), *Itinéraire d'un Homme Politique du Haut-Nkam (Ouest-Cameroun) : Jean Mbouende (1890 ? -2004)*, Maîtrise Dissertation in History, University of Yaoundé.

¹ This paper is part of my PhD thesis entitled “Politics in the Bamileke Region of Cameroon, 1946-2013: Dynamics and Implications” defended in 2019 at the University of Bamenda.

² The Bamileke Region is a part of the West Region in the administrative apportionment of Cameroon not including the Noun Division. Throughout this paper, when used to refer to the geographical area, “region” is not capitalised. But when it refers to a specific political division under administrative units, “Region” is capitalised. This precision is significant because the “Bamileke Region” existed as an administrative unit from 1946 to 1959 under the French colonial administration in Cameroon. But in August 1959, it was transformed into the “Bamileke Division” following a governmental decree. Also, the same decree transformed the administrative posts and Sub-divisions into Districts and Sub-divisions respectively managed by Divisional Officers and Head of Districts. In addition, Law No. 60-70

of November 30, 1960 cancelled the Bamileke Division and transformed its five Districts into Divisions.

³ *Paysans Indépendants, Paysans Camerounais, and the Front Populaire pour l'Unité et la Paix.*

⁴ Consult the File on the Elections of 9 April 1961 in the Sub divisional archives of Mbouda.

⁵ *Syndicat des petits planteurs de Bafang* founded on 15 September 1944

⁶ See the Decree No. 60-46 of 25 February 1960 abrogating the Decree of 13 July 1955 on the dissolution of the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (UPC), of the *Jeunesse Démocratique du Cameroun* (JDC) et de *l'Union Démocratique des Femmes Camerounaises* (UDEFEC), *Journal Officiel du Cameroun*, of 16 March 1960, 385.

⁷ Consult the Report No. 2/R/CF/ABF, Monthly Political Report of November 1964 from the Regional archives of Bafoussam.

⁸ See L-4.23/64, Law No. 64-LF-I of the 24th March 1964, Making Provision for the Election of Members of the Federal National Assembly.

⁹ The Bamileke Region was given 14 seats for about 500.000 inhabitants.

¹⁰ALCAMOR (Assemblée Législative du Cameroun Oriental) and WCHA (West Cameroon House of Assembly).

¹¹ It was a cultural Bamileke association that aimed to group Bamileke notables and defend their population's interests. For a deep understanding, read Fogang, M.N. "Le *Kumꝛꝛse* Assemblée Traditionnelle du Peuple Bamiléké (1947-1960)." DIPES II in History, ENS of Yaoundé, 1989.

¹² It was composed of the 14 Bamileke elected in the Bamileke Region and 5 Deputies of the UPC and *Mouvement d'Action Nationale* du Cameroun (MANC) elected in the Mungo and Wouri Divisions elected in the National Assembly.

¹³ Except the UPC.

¹⁴ See the Report No. 0153/CF/PS/DSFO of 22 May 1965, Bimonthly Report of Information from May 1st to 15th, 1965, 4-5, Regional Archives Bafoussam.

¹⁵ Order No. 537 of August 21, 1952 Creating Mixed Rural Councils in Cameroon, Regional Archives Bafoussam.

¹⁶ See Law No. 59-44 of 17 June 1959 ruling the Mixed Rural Councils, Regional Archives Bafoussam.

¹⁷ File on the Elections of the 9th April 1961, Sub divisional Archives Mbouda.

¹⁸ The Jehovah Witnesses suffered especially in the Bamboutos and Ndé Divisions where Deputies and administrative authorities stood against them.

¹⁹ Circular No. 45/CF/INT/SC, Appointment of Mayors of the Mixed Rural Councils after the 9 April 1961 elections, Divisional Archives Baham.