



NEGOTIATING ELITISM AND FACING CHANGE: DYNAMIC IDIOMS OF POWER AND LEADERSHIP IN THE LAMIDATE OF NGAOUNDERE-CAMEROON

Gilbert L. Taguem Fah

The University of Ngaoundéré

Director of the Community Research and Development Center (COREDEC)

tafagila@yahoo.fr

Abstract: The ongoing “Democratization” and neo-liberal decentralization have structurally transformed local mode of political expression in the small city of Ngaoundéré in Cameroon. A new political identity is under construction and more than ever before, local elites are deeply engaged in the quest for creative ways of competing for leadership positions. There is a need to revise previous tentative hypotheses about transformation processes and dominant dynamics of political change in order to include new paradigms. This study falls into this frame and seeks to shed light on the new idioms of power in the Muslim peripheral city of Ngaoundere. The study derives from the progressive loss of power of the Lamido and the emergence of new political entrepreneurs. It is informed by domestic strategies of political “subjectivity” based on new determinants of power. The paper on the one hand focuses on new means of assuring political position and, on the other hand, investigates dynamic processes of negotiating elitism. Along the line, it tries to study the shift in local definitions of politics and examines new repertoires that characterize the current emergent arenas.

Key Words: Elite, Local power dynamics, Idioms of Power, Lamidate of Ngaoundere.

Résumé : *La «démocratisation» et la décentralisation néolibérale en cours au Cameroun ont induit des transformations structurelles du mode d'expression politique local dans le Lamidat de Ngaoundéré (Nord-Cameroun). Une nouvelle identité politique y est en construction et, les élites locales font preuve plus que jamais de créativité dans le développement de stratégies en vue d'accéder à des positions de leadership*

*This paper was first published in E. Uchendu (ed), 2010, *Perspective on leadership in Africa*, Nsukka, Afro-Orbis Publications Limited.

et de pouvoir. Il devient donc nécessaire de reconsidérer les hypothèses provisoires précédemment formulées sur les processus de transformation et la dynamique dominante du changement politique afin d'inclure de nouveaux paradigmes relatifs à la dynamique du pouvoir local dans son interaction avec le global. Cette étude s'inscrit dans ce cadre et cherche à faire la lumière sur les nouveaux idiomes du pouvoir dans la ville musulmane de Ngaoundéré. Dans un contexte marqué par l'affaiblissement progressif du pouvoir du Lamido et de l'émergence de nouveaux entrepreneurs politiques, l'étude questionne les stratégies de «subjectivation» politique basées sur de nouveaux déterminants du pouvoir. D'une part, l'analyse s'intéresse aux nouveaux moyens de positionnement politique et, d'autre part, elle étudie les processus dynamiques de négociation de l'élite. De façon transversale, il est question d'étudier la dynamique de la politique locale à travers ses acteurs et ses enjeux tout en examinant les nouveaux répertoires qui caractérisent les nouvelles arènes émergentes.

Mot clés: Élités, dynamique du pouvoir local, idiomes de pouvoir, Lamidat de Ngaoundéré

Introduction

This paper aims at tracking down the historical developments of chieftaincy within the interface of local and global dynamics. It hypothetically contends that African based rulers and local level leadership are fruitful ways of understanding entanglement, sedimentation and transformational processes of power in postcolonial Cameroon. Leadership rooted in local pre-colonial customs better helps in understanding the interface of local and global dynamics. It opens up room to appropriately grasp indigenous strategies of adaptation, invention and creative ways of facing changes. Chieftaincy appears to be a key institution in the study of leadership in Africa for at least two important reasons: chieftaincy is rooted in Africa's past and is being altered by new dynamics that account for a complex identity in the making; and these new dynamics of chieftaincy in Africa are clear expressions of the interaction and intertwinement between local settings, national landscapes and the global fabric.

The imbrications of the local and the global shape my perspective. I will consider complexity, entanglement and imbrications in order to tell the story of leadership in Cameroon. It is my impression that some theories take many African agencies for granted. False assumptions are often the driving force of most existing studies and their authors perpetuate ethnocentric representations of

African realities. These studies appear both cognitively questionable (self-reflected) and epistemologically situated. Their “situatedness” prevents them from breaking through the wall and researching how local agencies are currently negotiating new identities. Therefore, there is a strong need to redefine the epistemological perspective (Bogumil, 2001) and reframe the cultural backdrop in order to avoid prescriptive and ideological contentions in the study of African agencies.

Broadly speaking, studies of chiefs and chieftaincies in Africa have usually been blinded by theoretical approaches (modernist, dependency, developmental theories, etc.). These theories have regarded chiefs and chieftaincies as belonging to the pre-modern or pre-capitalist past and as doomed to disappear (Nyamnjoh, 2002). According to these theories, chiefs attempt to preserve the past and fail to adapt to present day realities. This theoretical perspective suffers from a prescriptive approach and essentialist view which regards African institutions or traditions as primitive and repressive and which assume that they will sooner or later be replaced by modern bureaucratic institutions (Nyamnjoh, 2002; Holtedahl, 1992).

It has been asserted, for example, that chieftaincies are "impoverished relics of a glorious past" (Warnier, 1993), that they are invented or appropriated by colonial and post-colonial States for various purposes (Nyamnjoh, 2002), that they have been used to promote repression or that they have prevented the evolution of individuals from "Subject" to "Citizen" (Mamdani, 1996). There is clearly a widespread assumption that chieftaincies will eventually be abolished and that citizenship based on the individual as an autonomous agent will prevail. Although there have been some arguments advanced "for or against chieftaincy in Africa" (Daloz, 1991; Taguem Fah, 2003a), scholars have tended to focus on what chiefs and chieftaincies "are not or would become and would have been" instead of on what they actually are (Mbembe, 2001).

The studies of chiefs and chieftaincies in general and Muslim chieftaincies more specifically have been restricted by adherence to such theoretical frameworks and worldviews. Subjective predictions have been valued and insufficient attention has been focused on a performative approach. Filling these epistemological and historiographical gaps is the main objective of the current reflexion. The Lamidate of Ngaoundere in the Adamawa region of Cameroon will be considered as a case study.

Origin and Characteristics of the Lamidate of Ngaoundere

The history of the Lamidate of Ngaoundere goes back as far as the 18th century when small groups of Fulani first ventured into what was later on going to become the Northern Cameroon - after the European colonisation. The creation of Lamidates in the present day Northern Cameroon started some decades before the end of the 18th century but it is in 1804, with the Djihad lunched by Shehu Ousman Dan Fodio of Sokoto, that the process seriously took shape (Njeuma, 1978; Eldridge, 1991). The appointment of Modibo Adama from Yola² by Ousman dan Fodio to lead the Djihad down south gave it a new impetus and drastically changed the dynamic already on the move in the region. As a result, many Lamidates were created within the space known as the Fombina³ or Adamawa⁴ province of the Sokoto Caliphate. The Lamidate of Ngaoundere was among the approximately fifty sub-emirates created at the time. It was created by the Wolarbe⁵ clan of Fulani under the leadership of Ardo Ndjjobdi in approximately 1883 (Taguem Fah, 2006).

After the implementation of the Lamidate of Ngaoundere, local sedentary groups, especially the Mbum, were assimilated into what is described as a Fulani dominated Muslim empire. The assimilation was violent but also carried out through soft strategies that incorporated many Mbum people and provided them with means of feeling part of the system. Despite the loss of their prestige and their self-pride, the Mbum became key players of the game. They were assigned specific roles and duties in the Lamidate and their language was the *lingua franca* within the Lamidate's compound. The political culture of the Lamidate of Ngaoundere is characterized by a kind of melting pot that underwent processes of sedimentation and entanglement and became identity markers over time and space. Other elements need to be considered to deeply understand the richness of the leadership in Ngaoundere and explain its relevance.

In their process of incorporating the conquered people into the system, the Fulani decided that the leader, known as the Lamido, should be from Mbum descent in his matrilineal affiliation. The Lamidate was settled at the center of the Mbum kingdom and the newcomers were wise enough to know that an inclusive

² Before relocating its capital city to Yola, Modibo Adama first settled in Gurin for forty years before moving to Ribadou. Later he moved to Yola.

³ Fombina means the south. It was used to refer to the southern part or province of the Sokoto Caliphate.

⁴ According to existing literature, Adamawa was the name given to Fombina after Adama. It should be a name that derived from Modibo Adama.

⁵ Other branches were the Ferobe and the Yillaga.

policy would be the most appropriate to help preserve their interests. It developed as cultural sharing within a joint conqueror- conquered venture. Furthermore, some Mbum material and immaterial cultural elements are often included in the daily rituals and symbols of power of the Lamido of Ngaoundere. Although this can be said for many other sub-emirates of the region, the Lamidate of Ngaoundere has the reputation of being the place where ethnic and cultural exchanges have more explicitly been recognized.

Geographically speaking, the Lamidate of Ngaoundere belongs to the southernmost part of Northern Cameroon. It appears to be the middle of modern day Cameroon. It opens up both to the Southern and to the Eastern parts of the country. It is a kind of junction of cultures from the South, the North and from neighbouring Northern Nigeria.

The Western education rate in Ngaoundere is one of the lowest in Cameroon. The city welcomed the railway in 1974, linking Ngaoundere to Cameroon's capital of Yaoundé, and embarked on a long process of modernization that paradoxically is rather slowly changing its way of life. A university was implanted in the city in 1993 and the city became one of the academic and research centers in Cameroon. The size of its population has doubled and modern innovative changes are currently unfolding with the growing Islamic reformist movements which are equally gaining momentum. The rapidly changing settings of the city can also be noticed through the emergence of Mosques, the creation of a regional tourist school by the Central African Monetary and Economic Development Organization, etc. The Chad-Cameroon Pipeline also significantly contributed to the rapid development of the city and many foreign nationals have settled and are carrying out their activities. Ngaoundere recently opened up to Chad through the Ngaoundere-Toubooro road funded by the European Union. The city is currently undergoing changes that can only be fully comprehended by examining some crucial elements from its colonial and postcolonial history.

Historical Dynamics of the Ngaoundere Rulership: From the colonial period to 1990

With the German occupation of Ngaoundere in 1901, the rulership system started going through a drastic shift. Lamibe (plural for Lamido) who opposed the Germans were killed or exiled. Lamido Abbo of Ngaoundere was killed in 1901 because he opposed German rule. This was the inauguration of a new era where native authorities lost their sovereignty and were subdued by the imperialist

powers. Ngaoundere faced serious changes both in its functional system and in its territorial extension. The German implemented their hegemony in the region and every anti-German reaction or behaviour was violently repressed (Temgoua: 1989). German Muslim policy was implemented until the end of the First World War when the French came in and overturned German hegemony.

After Germany had been pushed out of Kamerun, the territory was soon divided up into French and British regions with the majority of Northern Kamerun given to the French. During the French colonial administration, Ngaoundere continued to face trouble as the newcomers continued the German policy of repression. Many Lamibe of Ngaoundere were dismissed. The Lamidate was divided and a French Muslim policy was put in place that supported those who backed the French and put those who did the contrary at bay. The Lamido of Ngaoundere continued losing his prestige as a result of these policies. During the same period, the first Lutheran missionaries settled in Ngaoundere (1924). The Catholic Church joined the Lutherans in the 1940s and they both changed the political and socio-cultural settings of the Lamidate. As a policy, slavery was forbidden and later on eradicated. Many symbols of power of the Lamido were destroyed or reduced. A new judicial system was created outside the Lamido's palace that was assigned the duty of taking care of important matters like crimes, foreign policy, etc. (Taguem Fah, 2002). The Lamido was assigned minor issues like divorce, heritage, etc. Traditional taxes usually collected by the Lamido were cancelled. The prison inside the palace was destroyed and the Lamido was not allowed to continue to exercise his power of jailing his people. In this new context, the Lamido also lost his economic power, since he was no longer the richest person in his Lamidate. He had to be realistic and reduce the number of servants and followers since his income was no longer sufficient to cover both his living expenses and the costs related to his traditional functions.

Furthermore, the colonial administration's office was a stone's throw away from the Lamido's palace. It appeared to be a spatial confrontation between parallel powers which ultimately subdued the Lamido. The Lamido was forced to report to the French Administration. He was assigned the duty of collecting taxes on behalf of the colonial power. What worsened the picture was the involvement of the French administration in the process of choosing a new Lamido after the death of the former one. The *Faada*⁶ became corrupted or less important. Its size was reduced and the Lamido was not allowed to move with as many *Dogari*⁷ as

⁶ The Faada is the Council of Notables.

⁷ Traditional police or guards of the Lamido.

he used to do. The huge number of horses the Lamido kept as a symbol of his power and prestige was reduced as well.

When the first Cameroon Head of State (Ahmadou Ahidjo) took office at independence (1960), he warned the Lamibe of the Northern Cameroon, his home area, that he would move forward with or without them. Without any ambiguity, he told the Lamibe that if they are not with him, he would consider them his enemies and deal with them appropriately. This was a clear warning and he first turned his eyes towards Baba Ndjelani, the Lamido of Ngaoundere whom he dismissed in 1961. Ngaoundere entered Ahidjo's era with trepidation. Ahidjo was inspired by the French colonial policy towards the Lamibe. On the one hand he dismissed Lamibe who were against him and on the other hand, he relied on those who, for whatever reason decided to back his policy. He even went further as to enhance the power of those who could prove politically useful. His actions led to a dramatic transformation in the economic landscape of the community. Ahidjo encouraged and supported the implementation of a new category of business men in the North; he built up a group of entrepreneurs who progressively challenged the Lamido. He created conditions to facilitate the importation of goods sometimes bypassing customs or by charging duties far above the normal rate. This new category of development agents threatened the position of the traditional leaders.

Cameroon's land reform of 1974 drastically and negatively impacted the Lamibe's power. The traditional and inalienable right of owning and distributing lands was the cornerstone of the native ruler's duty. Land was an important instrument of power. The Lamibe were the legal traditional land managers and now their economic and symbolic prestige over land was threatened. In 1977, a new law was passed and Lamibe, as all native chiefs in Cameroon, became auxiliaries of the administration. They were to respond, obey and report to the local divisional officer who became their new bosses. A new patron-client relationship came into being and dramatically transformed political interaction. Local leaders started receiving a monthly pay check from the administration and by doing so; they entered the local civil service. The Lamibe became part of the local bureaucracy but, unfortunately for them, were at the lowest level as they had to obey the Sub-Prefect, the Prefect and the Governor. Elected mayors, whose geographical sphere of influence was the same as the Lamido, came into being and were responsible for local development – which was initially part of the Lamido's duty.

In fact, local rulers lost the most important parts of their original duty during and after the colonial period. Their role shifted from political and religious to administrative and symbolic. Even though some of them continue to perform their traditional duties in the modern context, the majority were challenged by the new system.

Traditional political units remained important after independence. Ahidjo strengthened the power and prestige of the Lamidate of Garoua by continuing the German policy of marginalization towards Yola. Northern Cameroon which represents approximately 1/3 of the total land surface of the country was just one province while the southern part (2/3) was divided into six provinces. Ahidjo's personal conflicts with some Lamibe were used as a pretext to weaken their position in the region. In this respect, Maroua and Ngaoundere lost their former prestige as regional political units in their respective areas.

When Paul Biya took office in 1982, he decided to split the large Northern Province into three provinces (Adamaoua, North and Extreme-North). More than a simple administrative remapping of the territory (that could be interpreted as a strategy to bring the administration 'closer' to the local population), the new configuration of Northern Cameroon was both symbolically and politically significant. Ngaoundere and Maroua felt as if they had been released from Garoua's hegemony. The prestige of Ngaoundere grew considerably since it was named capital of the new Adamaoua Province. Beyond the "divide and rule" policy, Paul Biya manipulated former conflicts between leaders and created competition. It was the politicization of historical memory and the instrumentalization of Lamibe's inter-subjectivity. Within this framework, Ngaoundere became an important administrative unit in its region. Many civil servants from the south were posted to the north. The social setting changed drastically with the settlement of many educated people who generally pay less attention to Ngaoundere's native leader. The urbanization process also seriously threatened the power of the Lamido as it brought in people who barely recognize the local ruler. This dynamic was to change with the democratization process that started in 1990.

The Democratization Process⁸ and the return of the Lamido: Between crises and rejuvenation

Before the colonial period and its devastating effects on the power of traditional rulers, the Lamido was always the richest man in his Lamidate. He was the uncontested economic leader of his community and the owner and manager of its land from which royalties could be collected. He possessed slaves who worked for him and he was the biggest cattle owner in his community together with thousands of horses that were included in his estate. Thousands of *Maccube*⁹ were at his disposal. As the representative of Allah in his community, he was the religious leader. As such he could appoint Alkalis and Imam. He collected taxes according to Islamic requirements and used them for public infrastructure and assistance for both disabled and poor people. He was the Chief of the Lamidate's army (military power) and had his own police and slave-guard. The Lamido presided over the judicial court that sat inside his Lamidate and could sentence people to prison inside his palace. His power was sacred, legitimate and mystic. He ruled with the *faada* that he appointed himself. This extensive power progressively diminished first with colonialism and later on with the post-colonial state. The 1990s which ushered in democratization and "traditional rulers" as some of the key issues became a turning point in the history of leadership in Ngaoundere.

"The Sultan's Burden" by Lisbet Holtedahl (1992) thoroughly visualizes the first years of the democratization process in Ngaoundere and critically analyses how it impacted Lamido Issa Yaya Maigari (1973-1997). The beginning of the democratic process in 1990 is a turning point in the dynamics of leadership in Cameroon. It inaugurated a new era in rulership in general and Northern Cameroon chieftaincy in particular. How was this performed in Ngaoundere?

A Multiparty political system was reintroduced to Cameroon in 1990. In Ngaoundere, pluralism expressed itself in terms of serious turmoil and rebellion. It led to ethnic dichotomization and conflict. Ethnic revivalism became visible together with strategies to overcome historical forms of domination and dependency that was implemented after the Fulani conquest in the 19th century.

⁸ For the purpose of this paper, I'll use "democratic process" to make it easy. Nevertheless, this does not mean that I share this term and agree with the content often given to it. I believe this expression has been uncritically taken for granted in African field. Unfortunately the debate about it goes far beyond the scope of this paper. For a glimpse of my thought about this notion, see G.L.Taguem Fah "Créativité artistique, Question démocratique et modes politiques clandestins" in G.L. Taguem Fah (Ed.), Cameroun 2001, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2001.

⁹ Servants that should not be assimilated to slaves.

The Mbum¹⁰ community of Ngaoundere that had been incorporated into the Fulani culture started expressing its cultural belonging and displaying its personality as a distinct historical unit. The Lamidate of Ngaoundere was seriously threatened by the Mbum ethnic revival. Lamido Issa Yaya Maigari expressed his concern about this ethnic revival and started preparing, together with some key members of his *Faada*, to face the worst. The Ngaoundere Lamidate's entrance hall was burned down. This was an unprecedented act that showed the level of discontent and disenchantment among local Ngaoundere residents. Putting the fire to the Lamidate entrance hall was the worse crime one could ever imagine.

The mystery, secrecy and symbol that often characterized the Lamido's palace were demystified. The spiritual and political symbols of the community were victims of profane acts. A similar event happened in Fouban where demonstrators nearly burned down the entire palace under the watch of Sultan Bobo Njoya Ibrahim, whose power was deeply contested. It was a sign that those who considered themselves as victims of the existing establishment were not ready to give up. Demonstrators openly expressed their anger and rumours started circulating in Ngaoundere that the Mbum were getting ready to snatch their land back from the Fulani.

Regular meetings took place in the Lamido's palace to brainstorm appropriate strategies to face the crises. Strategies included magic that could dissuade those who stood up against the Lamido (Holtedahl, 1992). Ngaoundere became one of the most important cities of Cameroon's political opposition as the majority of its population embraced or sympathized with the NUDP (National Union for Democracy and Progress) that they saw as an adequate medium to overthrow the government and generate the strongly expected change. The Lamido was in trouble. In his role as an auxiliary of the administration, he had to back up the ruling CPDM (Cameroon People's Democratic Movement); but how could this be done in the context of turmoil, rebellion against the ruling party and a quest for liberty? In his role as a traditional authority, he had to be neutral. This again was difficult in the context of crises where people thought he should openly position himself. The multiparty election was the test that showed massive disenchantment as the NUDP won the majority of seats in parliament and, at the local level, won the municipal council. The Lamido had to share his geographic space of power with elected officials from the opposition. The question of

¹⁰ The Mbum are the people the Fulani met when they conquered Ngaoundere.

legitimacy came up constantly and traditional legitimacy had to compete with the legitimacy earned from a democratic election.

This is where the “game of illusion” and the “masquerade” (Hansen, 2000) came in as the Lamido, even if officially declared to be above local political forces, had to support the ruling party without upsetting the NUDP. Leaders of both parties came to the Lamido asking for help. He used to distribute money for gasoline (used to fuel the cars of campaigning politicians) to both parties but had to personally take part in the CPDM rally on the last day of electoral campaign. Local government representatives did not appreciate this “game of illusion”.

The Lamido was in an uncomfortable position. As a representative of the ruling CPDM party, he lost the vote in the polling station that was created inside his own palace. In the African traditional community, power goes hand in hand with respect. Losing the vote inside one’s own space is more than a political matter. It is a serious “coup” to one’s respectability and an affront to the local culture. It goes beyond politics and includes social ethics. Fighting the Lamido was the symbol/expression of protest against the government in Yaounde, the capital city of Cameroon. Unlike Ngaoundere, the situation played out differently in the nearby Lamidate of Ray Bouba where Lamido Ahmadou Abdoulaye, the “Baba”¹¹ as he was reverently called, had gained power and influence with democratization process. Baba had won elections in his council by collecting over 97% of the votes cast. He was more “respected” than ever, he was still the richest person in his Lamidate, and he continued distributing wealth as tradition required. Baba did not allow the opposition in his Lamidate. He violently stopped any attempt at implementing the NUDP in his council (Taguem Fah, 2003a). He continued to behave as a “State within the State”. He was one of the strongest supporters of the Head of State and popular opinion thought both the Lamido of Ray Bouba and President Paul Biya worked in complicity with one another.

Issa Yaya Maigari of Ngaoundere was troubled by local rebellions from the Mbum people, the growing opposition, and the local bureaucracy that sought his support. With a multiparty system and elections, he found himself in contradiction with his duty. His power was threatened and his image as well. Surrounded by people who betrayed him, he was humiliated and isolated in his own community and found how devastating the new context truly was. Issa Yaya Maigari had to fight to maintain what remained of his former power and prestige. He had to negotiate a new role. But this was difficult because new nobility had taken seat

¹¹ Baba means father in Fulfulde. It is a way of showing respect to the Lamido who is often seen as a father by his subjects.

and had become as powerful as the Lamido (if not more than) thanks to their entrepreneurial dynamism and the space provided to them by their material wealth.

The Emergence of Parallel Leaders without Traditional Laamu and the “Subalternization” of the Lamido

My contention here is that the emergence of wealthy people dramatically confronts the traditional power of the Lamido and makes his position more vulnerable. Emerging nobility creates a new tropism in the community and remaps the spatial distribution and control of power. This generates new spheres of power that escape the Lamido’s control. Because this new nobility based on entrepreneurial activities emerged at a time when the Lamido had lost his economic power, some of the Lamido’s followers shifted their allegiances to follow new business men. New entrepreneurs were gaining momentum, increasing their power and prestige while the Lamido was struggling to survive. This dynamic was far from being specific to the Lamidate of Ngaoundere as a regional plutocracy had developed and gained roots during Ahidjo’s reign. Many Al Hadjis have built up huge economic empires in Northern Cameroon. Some of them have implemented their activities down south, for example in Douala where the Northern Cameroon migrants are among the richest.

This new economic aristocracy has strong connections with the local and national bureaucracy as well as political entrepreneurs. They have transformed their economic capital to political and social capital. In so doing, they have gained symbolic capital in their community. Bourdieu contends that in archaic economies, material and symbolic capital are “inextricably linked” (Bourdieu, 1977). A rich person conveys the success of the whole group (Bayart, 1978) and enters the local process of representation. The wealthy members of a group exude a kind of collective self-esteem, but wealth also implies duty assigned to the rich. Therefore, the wealthy people are required to take up duties that were initially assigned to the Lamido. They became part of the decision making circle. In a postcolonial patrimonial system, the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy are tightly linked and share a common destiny. Politics is business and business is politics. I’ll use a case study to demonstrate.

Alhadji Abbo is an industrialist. He is the founder of Maiscam, the agro-industrial giant that produces corn and other derivative products in Ngaoundere. Although he never went to school, he is a pioneer in the industrialisation of the country. As the richest men in the three northern regions of Cameroon, he is

probably also among the top first richest people in all of Cameroon. He has invested heavily in Cameroon and abroad. In Ngaoundere, hundreds of people earn their living working for his companies. Here is how Lisbet Holtedahl puts it:

Alhadji's activities, his power, his position in the North of Cameroon, all that illustrates a power even stronger than the one of a Sultan at the times of Fulbe conquest. He has a power to influence ordinary people's life independently of "democratic" rule; where they may work; if they have work. What they earn. If they vote what they vote." (Holtedahl, 1992:17).

In Ngaoundere today, Alhadji Abbo is one of the most important personalities. During the elections, his trucks carry his employees to vote at Borongo, a locality situated in the city's periphery where the Maiscam factory is based. His employees must vote for the ruling party if they want to continue earning a living in his business. In the city, he is the only member of the political bureau and the Central Committee of the ruling party. As such he collaborates closely with the Head of State whom he can contact at any time and for any purpose. He even made plans for the Head of State to visit his factory in Borongo in 1997 during the presidential campaign. Even though this visit did not finally take place, it is an example of Alhadji Abbo's importance and power. In contrast, the Head of State had no plans to visit the Lamido of Ngaoundere in his palace, despite having visited the Lamido of Ray Bouba before heading to Ngaoundere. President Biya met and exchanged with Lamido Baba Abdoulaye of Ray Bouba, who at the time had the reputation of being the Lamido who cared least about human rights. In 1996 he ordered his guards to kill a parliamentarian from the opposition (Taguem Fah, 2003a).

Alhadji Abbo has an enormous house and a private mosque in town, a big ranch in the bush (with tens of thousands of cattle), a huge compound at Borongo, a villa in Douala (the economic capital), apartments in Paris, and a castle in southern France. He has organized huge celebrations in Ngaoundere to show off his cattle to local and foreign invitees. He usually goes to Mecca every year with dozens of followers at his expense. In a way, his house is inspired by the Lamido's palace. He uses it to grant audience. He assigned himself judicial functions and usually keeps himself busy settling disputes between his people. Followers surround him like they used to surround the Lamido. They address him the same as people address the Lamido. Thanks to his wealth, his court is bigger

than the Lamido's and he covers all expenses from his own pocket. He reigns economically and politically.

Like the Lamido, he has his own *Faada*, composed of advisors, Imam, etc. He has his own guard at the entrance hall of his house. His Imam accompanies him everywhere and presides over the prayer ceremony in his private mosque. This mosque became a congregational mosque like the Lamido's and many people attend the Friday prayer in his mosque instead of the Central Mosque at the Lamidate. With spiritual power and economic power Abbo behaves like a local king and performs all the duties originally assigned uniquely to the Lamido. He has created a new power center that is far from being controlled by the Lamido. He is proud of being an illiterate who employs intellectuals.

For more than a decade, Al Hadji Abbo kept himself busy building a huge palace in the Haut Plateau-Ngaoundere. He brought in technicians, architects, etc. and was personally around to oversee the building process. His impressive palace can be estimated at tens of billions FCFA (more than 16 million Euros). Haut Plateau is the highest site in Ngaoundere where the entire city including the Lamido's palace can be seen. He wanted to be on top of the hill. As the richest man in the city, his palace should be a display of wealth and a symbol of power. Despite his leadership position, Alhadji Abbo is not seen as the representative of local population. Many people in Ngaoundere believe that he does not care about social matters such as education and health. He never thought of investing in these two vital social sectors. It is said that he is someone who uses mystic forces in his daily life and who is only interested in what he earns. In 2007 people clearly expressed their anger against him when he built speed bumps on the public road that passes in front of his house in Tongo. When a moto taxi driver was killed by this speed bump, young people gathered and destroyed it while insulting Al Hadji and threatening his life. This event shows the relationships between the leader and the local population. It reminds us of the problems of legitimacy and representation.

Despite the fact that Alhadji Abbo had to use his connections with the central government in Yaoundé to get the road in Ngaoundere city repaired, he is still not viewed as the most legitimate representative of his community. He extends his network of contacts through a subtle social capital that he builds up by marrying his daughters to emerging young elites of the city. His aim is both to control the emergence of new young elites and to become part of their social class. He seems aware of the fact that wealth is vulnerable if it is not extended to social and symbolic capital. To sustain his economic dominance, Alhadji Abbo

relies on the inclusion of emerging social forces from the region and their incorporation via the sharing process.

By using his networks of contacts in Yaounde, Cameroon's capital city, to get the roads of Ngaoundere repaired, he positions himself as the mediator or a kind of intermediary between the central power in the national capital and the provincial capital of Ngaoundere. His position as an industrialist, member of the Central Committee and the political bureau of the ruling party, clearly demonstrates that wealth is the real determinant of power. Al Hadji Abbo does not hold an elected position in his home town nor is he a member of the local bureau of his political party. But still, he is among those who make the biggest contribution to the party during elections, ceremonies, etc. He is among the highest personalities of the city and little can be done without his advice or his involvement. Unlike those who entered the aristocracy through appointments as civil servants, his political ascension depended on his economic prowess. He was asked by President Biya to act as a mediator during the rebellion following Cameroon's first "democratic" elections. This strategic position allowed him to feel as though he had contributed to solving the socio-political crises of the 1990s. He met with members of the opposition and tried to convince them to avoid violence and to create space for dialogue.

Additionally, Alhadji Abbo positions himself as someone around whom local forces gravitate. As an industrialist, he is regularly surrounded by his closest collaborators; as a spiritual role model he often takes many people with him to Mecca; as a social leader he has a court which includes many people (friends, servants, guards and poor people seeking assistance). Furthermore he combines the local and the national thanks to his strong connections with the head of state and his networks in Yaounde as a key member of the ruling party. He also connects the global to the local through his investments and industries. His economic activities put him in touch with western companies. His new palace appears as a meeting point between the global and the local, between spiritual and secular, between local culture and modernity. He then appears as a symbol of the imbrications of several contradictory forces. He is both a key player and a round-about in the process of change in his community.

Alhadji Abbo has assigned himself new roles in the economic, political and social developments of the city but still he is unable to have a traditional legitimacy like the Lamido. The Lamido is experiencing a serious loss of power but is still symbolically and traditionally the central person in the city. His presence is noticeable and he is respected as the local ruler whose power has a

spiritual and a historical background. What are the strategies used by the Lamido to maintain some influence?

Leadership Strategies in the Face of Change: Towards a New Subjectivity

Despite the loss of his power, the institution of the Lamido will still be there for a long time to come. There is a feeling that his power has increased and after the turmoil of the 1990s, he has started regaining more political space in his city. His role is becoming more and more important especially with the neo-liberal decentralization trend. Foreign investment (the Chad-Cameroon pipeline) as well as local administration often relies on him as a key person in the development process. The conflicts of succession that took place in 1997 when Lamido Issa Yaya Maigari passed away confirms that people are still very much interested in local rulership and are more than ever ready to live with it; if not to give it new meanings. This brings us to closer to Mamdani's analysis around "citizen" and "subject" (Mamdani, 1996). Theorists who thought that Lamido Issa Yaya Maigari was the last sultan of Ngaoundere now understand that prescriptive approaches are far from explaining agency in Africa.

Legitimacy of Subjectivity and Acceptance of Dependency as a Form of Agency

From 1990 until his death (1997) Lamido Issa Yaya Maigari had been paradoxically relying on Alhadji Abbo to keep what remained of his power. Alhadji Abbo provided financial support to rebuild the entrance hall that was burned down during the turmoil and the rebellion in Ngaoundere. He renewed the congregational Mosque situated right in front of the Lamido's palace. He rebuilt the public road passing in front of the palace. When the Lamido was accused of backing the opposition, he helped him and it is thanks to him that the Lamido was not dismissed by the government.

In my own perception, I believe Alhadji Abbo was aware of the importance of the Lamido even if the latter had lost the historical roots of his power. He kept on alternating between "subject" and "citizen". He was both his Lamido's subject and his country's citizen. Alhadji Abbo may have been conscious of the fact that even if the Lamido is in trouble, he is still holding a prime position in the social dynamic of Ngaoundere. But providing financial and material support to the Lamido may also be seen as a way of displaying his own power and showing off his wealth. The Lamido's economic resources have declined considerably, he is

no longer a key person in the local economic system, he can only judge minor infractions in his traditional court, and collect insignificant taxes. His power over land has been reduced. His economic decline has dramatically affected his servants and people living in his palace since he can no longer take care of them. People around him are experiencing his loss of power more drastically than the Lamido himself. They are angry about it and are deeply suffering because of it.

By all means, the Lamido must save what can be saved in order not to lose face. He has to take advantage of any opportunity that arises. For example, when the University of Ngaoundere was created in 1993, a social sciences cooperation program between Ngaoundere and Tromso (Norway) was implemented. The Lamidate became an interesting research topic. Many scholars in Cameroon and abroad were attracted to Ngaoundere for their research. The Lamidate opened up to the international scientific community and the Lamido had to take advantage of this to establish strong connections with foreigners, notably white people. Even if he had lost power in his own community, he could rely on white people to re-establish his prestige. The Lamido often uses white visitors at the Lamidate as evidence that he is still an important personality. He accepted to be the main character of the film "The Sultan's Burden" (Holtedahl, 1992). He thought that the film could give him new prestige and legitimacy especially among white people. He found the white people's interest as a sign that there is still something to take from the traditional political unit. In the framework of the afore-mentioned research and cooperation program, he got a chance to visit Norway and experience the "white man's" way of life. The Lamido went with his son and stayed for several days in Oslo and Tromso. All expenses were paid by the Norwegian partner involved in the research cooperation program. Even if most Norwegians saw his visit as a touristic trip and nothing more, he on the contrary used his trip as a medium to communicate to his people. He had been to the white man's country and his people must be proud of it. His power and recognition go beyond national boundaries. He has experienced the global system from within.

This appeared as a blessing that contributed tremendously to the revival of the Lamidate. It should be mentioned here that during the French colonial period, some Lamibe were offered trips to Paris during the French national holiday – la Bastille - July 14th. Those who were lucky enough to make the trip came back proud of the French and gained more prestige amongst their subjects. Visiting the "white man's" country then appeared as a mode of political expression.

By accepting all this financial, material and symbolic support the Lamido became a subaltern agent to new forces. It was one of the strategies necessary to

survive politically. Adaptation is often necessary to prevent total disappearance. Priority was given to coping strategies and the Lamido happily welcomed the appointment of Baba Hamadou, a native of his Lamidate, thus his subject, as a Minister in charge of special duties at the Presidency of the Republic.

The Paradox of Proactive-Legitimacy

It was not the first time a native of Ngaoundere had reached such a high position in the Cameroonian bureaucracy. What made this particular appointment relevant was the context in which it happened and the logic that it generated for local political entrepreneurs in Ngaoundere. Sadou Daoudou, a native from Ngaoundere was appointed minister of armed forces (minister of defence). For decades, he had been a “baron” of the Ahidjo regime in the region. He had held several key positions in the government during the reign of the first Cameroonian Head of State (Abwa, 2001). But a new epoch has come and with the turmoil and rebellion that characterized the beginning of the democratic process, appointments took new meanings and were to be understood within the new social and political settings.

In addition, Paul Biya strategically appointed a native of Ngaoundere, because the city had clearly divorced from his regime and ostensibly and massively supported the NUDP opposition party. Even the Lamido had been blamed by the government and nearly dismissed because he was seen as someone who had betrayed the government and the ruling CPDM party by backing the opposition. He retained his position thanks to Alhadji Abbo’s intervention. As it became a common practice to go back to one’s own village after an important appointment, Baba Hamadou, had to come back to Ngaoundere a few weeks after his appointment. This was a crucial political event and Fred Hansen thoroughly accounts and interprets it in the framework of what he calls “political legitimacy” (Hansen, 2000: 149).

Through his analysis, Hansen brings together both “modern” and “traditional” political actors and illustrates how they relate to each other (Hansen, 2000). The Minister had to be welcomed at the airport by “traditional” and “modern” political actors, civil servants, local people, etc. As usual the first visit of the newly appointed minister reveals an important aspect of the postcolonial Cameroonian political culture. But beyond its official meaning and the “protocol” it entails, the event is a clear expression of the “*mise en scene*” that Cameroon political entrepreneurs are often used to. In their manner, their style, their rhetoric and all their performance process, political actors in Cameroon respect an

unrevealed code of conduct that requires a particular deciphering before it can be understood.

The Lamido along with the governor, the Divisional Officer (prefect), the Sub Divisional Officer (sub-prefect), the mayor, military officers and police officers and prominent business men were at the airport along with his entourage. Typically, the plane carrying the minister came far after the scheduled time and guests had to wait for hours at the airport. The plane finally landed and the newly appointed minister came out: he was welcomed by the cheers of women. The delegation of officials present at the airport, the spatial occupation, the dress code, and the greetings all integrated or incorporated local political customs, traditional rituals and modern practices as requires by the colonial inspired protocol. Instead of being engaged in a “conflictual” relationship, both tradition and modernity merged in a colourful synergy that expressed the originality and the creativity of local political culture. Respect, hierarchy and status all combined in a complex and entangled scenario.

Three days after his arrival in Ngaoundere, the Minister had to visit the Lamido together with members of the *Faada* (Council of notable) in the Lamido’s palace. After a welcome address by the Lamido who asked the *Faada* to “bring its full support to a well-known native who has recently been honoured by the Head of State”, the Minister took the floor. He introduced himself as a native and well-known son by the members of the *Faada* before highlighting the risks of the ongoing democratic process. In a paternalistic perspective, he contended that a son should not disobey the father; the *Faada* should not disobey the Lamido because since childhood, they have all been educated to obey the elders, the Lamido and those who hold power.

This speech should be understood within the context of the emergence of new political forces that had challenged the local and national establishments. As the Lamido faced protest and rebellion in Ngaoundere, Paul Biya faced the same phenomenon in Yaounde as well. Civil disobedience, “ghost town” strikes, among others were modes of expressing people’s anger against the autocratic regime (Monga, 1996). Biya took over from Ahidjo in November 1982 and since then the country has been declining and getting falling deeper into sticky economic and social crises. People had lost their jobs, students were jobless after graduation, there was no new investment in the country and the existing facilities were slowly and surely disintegrating under the watch of the corrupt government. Human rights abuses had become worse in the country and the devaluation of the CFA in 1994 together with the salary cuts had dramatically changed Cameroonian’s lives

for the worse. The Ngaoundere native Minister was aware of the fact that he had been appointed to act as a mediator between his home town and the Head of State, to connect the local to the national and to convince Ngaoundere's population to follow their Lamido in backing the government. This preceded the presidential election of 1997 and Ngaoundere was a city Biya targeted for support.

On the one hand the new minister was seeking recognition and consecration from his chief. He is a son of Ngaoundere and he should first get back to his people after such a great honour. As a minister of special duties at the presidency of the republic, he had become one of the closest people to the Head of State. He now has a strategic position and his countrymen should first acknowledge it and provide him with their blessings. On the other hand, the Lamido who had been accused of plotting with the opposition in the last election took advantage of the minister's visit to show that he was still the leader and his son had just honoured him with this appointment. He asked the *Faada* members to support the minister and thus support the Head of the State. If the Lamido was no longer considered to be important, the Head of State would not have chosen his native citizen as one of his closest cabinet members.

Furthermore, a thorough deciphering of the Lamido's speech may lead to an interpretation that he took advantage of the visit for reconciliation both with his *Faada* and the government. He had been blamed by the government for having supported the opposition; he had lost the elections in his Lamidate, he felt isolated by both sides and the minister's visit appeared as a strong symbol of this double reconnection. In a strictly local level of understanding, the event was symbolically significant as it helped put together the two important segments of traditional power in Ngaoundere. In fact, Baba Hamadou is from the Tongo branch of Ngaoundere Yerima¹². The latter had lost the power at the beginning of the XXe century. They are often looked upon by the Yarban branch as weak people (politically speaking). Tongo people feel frustrated because they believe that Yarban, does not fairly share power. The principle of alternation between the two branches had been at bay. The appointment of a Tongo descendant reveals remembrance of historical conflicts between the two branches. President Biya had appointed a Tongo descendant to show to the Yarban branch that even if they still have the traditional power, the Tongo are given the modern power which is more important and which has a national audience. The Yarban can stay in the political opposition while the Tongo confiscate what Ngaoundere deserves. Thus beyond

¹² Yerima refers to princes.

simple political arithmetic, the appointment can reveal symbols shaped by remembrance.

Soon after Baba Hamadou became minister, Lamido Issa Yaya Maigari passed away in 1997 and Ngaoundere was to start a new era when Yerima Mohamadou Hayatou Issa, son of the late Lamido, took office as the New Lamido. He soon became aware of the challenges he was facing and embarked on the process of creating new idioms of power.

Self Determination and Inter-Subjectivity: The Global, the Local and the Lamido

When Mohamadou Hayatou Issa took over in 1997, the first challenge was to engage in a process of revival of the Ngaoundere Lamidate. He rapidly found that the best way of doing this was to generate revenues and increase his income. The drastic reduction of economic resources, the emergence of new business men in the city and the new context created by the multiparty system appeared to be the main reasons for the decline of the Lamido's power.

The new Lamido became an entrepreneur; his enterprises were at the center of the economic development of the city. He was no more expecting money only from the government but he was himself at the forefront. His connections with some Arab institutions and agencies provided him with means to build 5 health centers in his Lamidate. These health centers did not only help solve the problem of accessibility to healthcare for women but they also generate income for the Lamido (Taguem Fah, 2007).

Additionally, the new Lamido took over when the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline project (Schwartz, 2005 and Taguem Fah, 2007) was at its final stage. The construction of the pipeline was to start soon after he took office and since his Lamidate was to be involved in the project he thought he could benefit from it. He got involved in the process as the representative of the local community. His role was crucial both to implement the project and to protect the pipeline instalment itself. The Lamido worked closely with the pipeline authorities. He recommended many people who finally got jobs within the project. Because the pipeline project's management wanted to avoid anything that could delay the construction, they worked hand in hand with the Lamido and provided him with both royalties and other benefits related to the implementation of the project. Lamido

Mohamadou Hayatou Issa is also taking advantage from this World Bank investment¹³ to remap the local landscape.

Furthermore, within twelve years of enthronement, he has created connections with the Lamibe of Mubi and Sokoto in Northern Nigeria. He has paid visits to both and has hosted the Lamido of Mubi in Ngaoundere. This new dynamic of recreating former links with Nigerian leaders of the former Sokoto Caliphate has a strong meaning and is the expression of the use of memory as a political idiom. Remembrance is the cornerstone of local rulers' power. Their daily life is shaped and informed by the memory of their past in terms of origin, history of their power and relation to other communities, rituals, political style, spiritual life, judicial roles, celebrations, etc. Going back to history is not only a game of memory. It is a spiritual expression that hopes to reverse the negative effects of colonization. It falls into the framework of escapism that takes someone out of a complicated situation and brings them into a mental environment where they feel comfortable, safe and secure. It can be interpreted as a symbol of connection to what they consider their glorious past; an element of remembrance of the period when their power was virgin from foreign infection.

Remembrance and Revival as New Idioms of Power

Lamido Mohamadou Hayatou Issa has bureaucratized his Lamidate (modern office with secretaries, computers, etc.) He watches television in French, a language that he speaks well despite only speaking Fulfulde in public. This allows him to stick to tradition and avoid being swallowed up by the modern era. He is inspired in this strategy by the late Lamido Baba of Ray-Bouba who, prior to his position as Lamido was a teacher and parliamentarian; but who during his reign never spoke anything other than his native Fulfulde. Baba did not want to be vulnerable by using tools that are foreign to his kingdom. His *Faada* paid special attention to this and the Lamido of Ray-Bouba behaved like a Head of State in his Lamidate with the right of death or life to everything in his territory. The Lamido of Ngaoundere is similarly trying to prevent the devastating effects of modern technology while, paradoxically, using them at the same time.

Additionally, the Lamido tours his Lamidate on a regular basis. Together with his *Dogari*, servants, griots, drum players and singers; he often marches on the periphery and circles his Lamidate. He follows the line of the former city wall to show off his power and demonstrate his influence on Ngaoundere's population.

¹³ The Pipeline Chad-Cameroon appears to be the most important World Bank investment in Sub Saharan Africa.

It is also said he exercises a spiritual and mystical possession of his Lamidate. The tours made visible and confirmed the lamido's spatial control and appropriation (Bourdieu). In fact one of the key elements that show the decline in power of the Lamido is the loss of this spatial control (Hansen, 2000). Urbanization and rapid population growth in the city brought people from the south that do not depend on the Lamido or obey him. During the reign of Ardo Issa (1854-1878), Ngaoundere became active militarily. The town was fortified. The official rhetoric presented this fortification as a means of protecting the population of the Lamidate against regular attacks from outside. However, through this fortification, the Lamido gained stronger control over his subjects living inside the wall (Hansen, 2000). Walled and encircled by a moat two meters deep, Ngaoundere was like a citadel which could only be accessed through two of the four entrances that were built. It was then easy to police inside and outside the wall and the Lamido was constantly briefed by his slave-guards, his *Dogari* or spies about everything going on. Touring the city reminds one of this glorious period when the Lamido exercised full spatial and social control over his subjects. The Lamido's strategy is more symbolic than real because less than 20 percent of Ngaoundere's residents currently live within the old city space.

Conclusion

This article has investigated the dynamics of power in Ngaoundere by showing how in the face of change, elites are negotiating new identities. New idioms of power and leadership have been analysed together with emergent arenas in the Lamidate, the representatives of the modern state, and local wealthy men as key players of the game. At a certain point, this game evolved into a "game of illusion" or a simple "masquerade" of power and status, but overall it also provides us with crucial elements that determine the new socio-political landscape. The political settings are both complex and entangled. As a result, it becomes difficult to clearly define politics and understand the logic behind political entrepreneurs' actions. The power of the Lamido is saved through innovative initiatives and entrepreneurialism. It is undergoing drastic change in its modes of expression and forms of enunciation, but at the same maintaining its influence as key political agent in the urban setting of Ngaoundere. The case of the Lamidate of Ngaoundere shows that dynamic idioms intertwine with each other and generate transformation processes characterized by new political practices.

References

- Abwa, D., 1998, *Sadou Daoudou parle*, Yaoundé, Presses de l'UCAC.
- Bayart J.-F., 1978, "Clientelism, Elections and the System of Inequality and Domination in Cameroon: A Reconsideration of the Notion of Political and Social Control" In G. Hermet, R. Rose & A. Rouqiné (Eds.), *Elections without Choice* London, MacMillan Press, pp.66-87.
- Bourdieu, P., 1977, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- _____ 1996, "Physical Space, Social Space and Habitus". Vilhelm Aubert Memorial Lecture, University of Oslo, Department of Sociology.
- Bogumil, J., 2001, « Pour une pluralité épistémologique en Sciences sociales en Afrique », *Annales, Histoire Sciences sociales*, 56, pp. 625-642.
- Daloz, J.P., 1991), « Des élites locales au Nigéria », Thèse de Doctorat, Université de Bordeaux.
- Engelstad, E. & Gerrard, S. (Eds.), 2005, *Challenging Situatedness. Gender, Culture and the Production of Knowledge*, The Netherlands, Eburon Academic Publishers.
- Hansen, F.H., 2000, "The Historical Construction of a political Culture in Ngaoundere-Northern Cameroon", Ph.D. thesis, Department of History, University of Oslo.
- Holtedahl, L., 2009, " "Up as a Rabbit- Down as a Lion" Socio-Economic Determinants of new Idioms of Power. Visual Case Stories from Urban Adamaoua, Cameroon", Unpublished paper.
- _____ 1992, *The Sultan's Burden (Film)*, London, BBC.
- Mahamood, Mamdani, 1996, *Citizen and Subject. Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of late Colonialism*, Princeton, University Press.
- Mbembe, A., 2000, « À propos des écritures Africaines de soi », *Politique Africaine*, 77, pp. 16-43.
- Mohammadou, E., 1991, *Fulbe Hooseere. Les royaumes Foulbe du plateau de l'Adamaoua au XIXe Siècle*, Tokyo, ILCAA.
- Monga, C., 1994, *Anthropolgie de la colère. Société civile et démocratie en Afrique Noire*, Paris, L'Harmattan.
- Njeuma, M.Z., 1978, *Fulani Hegemony in Yola, Old Adamawa*, Yaoundé, Ceper.
- Nyamnjoh F., 2002, "Might and Right: Chieftaincy and Democracy in Cameroon and Botswana". Paper prepared for CODESRIA's 10th General Assembly on "Africa in the New Millennium", Kampala, Uganda.

- Schwartz, B., 2005, "Le Désordre est Général: An Assessment of the Socio-economic Impact of the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline in the villages of Belel and Djertou", ISP, School for International Training.
- Taguem Fah, G.L., (Ed.), 2001, *Cameroun 2001*, Paris, L'Harmattan.
- _____ 2002, "Muslim Rulers, Justice and Politics in Cameroon during French Colonialism", *Journal for Islamic studies*, 22, pp.82-95.
- _____ 2003a, « Crise d'autorité, regain d'influence et pérennité des lamidats peuls du Nord-Cameroun. Étude comparée de Ray-Bouba et Ngaoundéré » In C.-H. Perrot & F.-X. Fauvelle Aymar (Eds.), *Le retour des rois. Les autorités traditionnelles et le l'état en Afrique contemporaine*, Paris, Karthala, pp.267-288.
- _____ 2003b, « Processus politique, mutation sociale et renouveau islamique au Cameroun », *Rupture*, 4, pp. 215-242.
- _____ 2006, *Une brève histoire du Lamidat de Ngaoundéré. Des origines à Mohamadou Hayatou Issa (1997-...)*, Ngaoundéré, Ed. CAR-LSS.
- _____ 2007, "The War on Terror, the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline and the new Identity of the Lake Chad Basin, *Journal of Contemporary African studies*, 25, pp. 101-117.
- Temgoua, A.-P., 1989, « L'Hégémonie allemande au Nord-Cameroun de 1890 à 1916 » Thèse de Doctorat du 3e cycle, Département d'histoire, université de Yaoundé.